

*Revive Our Hearts™*

# ESTHER

TRUSTING  
GOD'S PLAN

Leader Guide

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## Dear Friend,

Welcome to the Women of the Bible series!

We're excited you've chosen to lead women through *Esther: Trusting God's Plan*. Our team has prayed for you, and we're here to support you on the six-week journey ahead.

Through this study you'll be reminded of these seven truths.

- *You are in a battle.*
- *God has a sovereign plan.*
- *You are a part of God's plan.*
- *God's plan will never fail.*
- *It's a beautiful thing to live under God's caring providence.*
- *There is no situation so desperate God cannot redeem it.*
- *Don't judge the outcome of the battle by the way things look right now.*

Consider praying through this list, asking God to deeply embed truths in the hearts of the women who will soon join you in this study.

As you step out to lead, it won't be your personality, your razor-sharp leadership skills (or killer brownies!) that will produce fruit from this study. You can rely on the Word of God to accomplish the work of God ([Isa. 55:11](#)) and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit ([2 Peter 1:3-4](#)) as you depend upon Him. It will be your teachable heart, humility, authenticity, prayerfulness, and genuine love that will become the channel of blessing for your group members.

If you're new to leading a group and aren't sure where to start, we've got you covered! We created a handbook, [Small Group Leadership Made Simple](#), with answers to the questions you may be asking—including answers to the ones you haven't yet thought to ask.

Included in this guide to *Esther: Trusting God's Plan*, you'll find:

- A suggested schedule for your group time.
- Prompts to prepare your heart to lead.
- Ideas for setting expectations and growing in community.
- General tips for leading a women's Bible study.
- Optional activities to spur growth and personal application.

Your commitment to shepherd women as they dig into God's Word matters. We're behind you and trust that the Lord will work in the hearts of the women in your group, as well as in your own heart, in the weeks ahead.

Blessings,

Leslie Bennett

Manager of Women's Ministry Initiatives



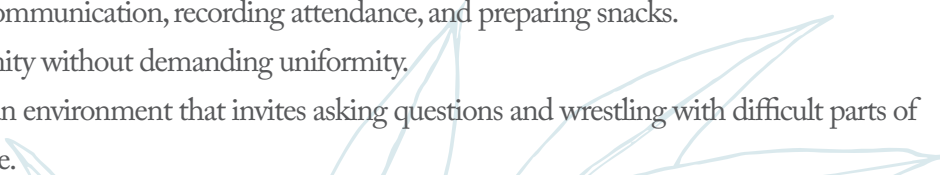
## PREPARE YOUR HEART TO LEAD

- If possible, pray daily for your members by name and for wisdom and anointing of the Holy Spirit to serve them.
- Consider identifying a Scripture passage to pray over the group throughout the study. Here are some suggestions:
  - [Jer. 17:7-8](#)
  - [Psalm 25:8-9](#)
  - [Hosea 10:12](#)
- Pray for God's love and sensitivity toward each woman you will shepherd.
- Be genuine. Leaders aren't expected to know everything, so learn to say, "I don't know the answer to your question but I'll find out." Then report back to the group the following week.
- Study thoroughly and know the material.

### OPTIONAL PREP

- Listen to the *Women of the Bible* podcast, hosted by Erin Davis, and gain insights for leading your group. In a style that feels like grabbing coffee with your favorite wise women, Erin and friends will walk through the study with you and share their own journeys toward trusting God's invisible hand. Episodes are also available on video. Listen or watch Season Two: Esther at [ReviveOurHearts.com/Esther](http://ReviveOurHearts.com/Esther).
- Check out Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth's audio series "[Esther: God's Woman at God's Time](#)," which offers further teaching on how God uses ordinary and imperfect people to accomplish His purposes.

## TIPS FOR LEADING WELL

- Don't try to carry the full load alone. Find ways to involve others by delegating things like group communication, recording attendance, and preparing snacks.
  - Build unity without demanding uniformity.
  - Create an environment that invites asking questions and wrestling with difficult parts of Scripture.
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- In love, guide conversations to the Word as our plumb line for all of life.
- Allow for silence while women formulate their thinking.
- Rephrase questions or invite sharing of incomplete thoughts to draw out discussion.
- Between sessions, have a touchpoint with each member or the group as a whole.
- Be transparent so that others will feel invited to be real about their fears, insecurities, and inadequacies.
- Have fun, laugh, cry, and find times to enjoy life together outside the group.

## CREATE A PLAN FOR A POSITIVE GROUP EXPERIENCE

### SAMPLE SCHEDULE

#### 15–30 MINUTES | CONNECT

- Encourage community.
- Offer refreshments (optional).

#### 45–60 MINUTES | DISCUSS

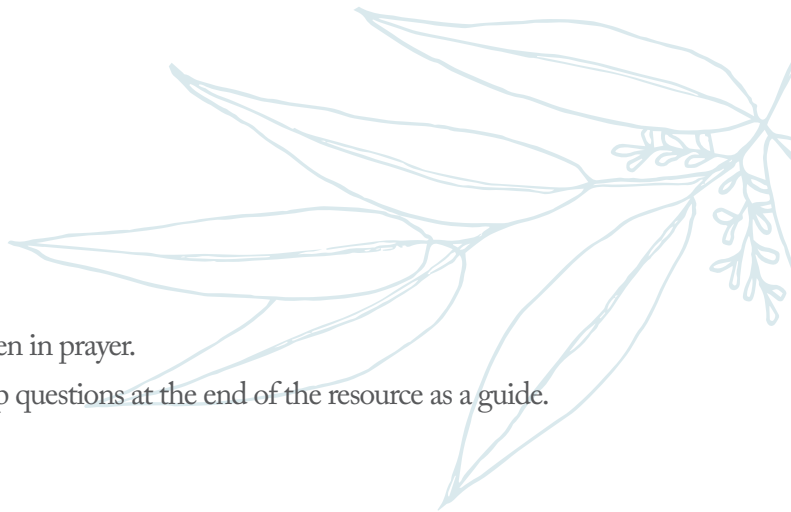
- Start consistently on time.
- Welcome everyone warmly and open in prayer.
- Lead the discussion using the group questions at the end of the resource as a guide.

#### 5–10 MINUTES | WRAP-UP

- Introduce next week's topic.
- Clarify the homework assignment.
- Relay your enthusiasm for the truths we'll glean as we dig into the study and meet again.

#### 15–30 MINUTES | PRAY

- Pray for each other.
- End consistently on time.
- Invite members to linger for informal fellowship (optional).



## SET EXPECTATIONS FOR GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

Consider asking your group to affirm these prompts at each meeting.

### WE WILL:

- Study lessons weekly.
- Engage with God's Truth in openness and honesty.
- Stay grounded to the authority of Scripture instead of opinions or experiences.

## SET GUIDELINES FOR GROWING IN COMMUNITY

### WE WILL:


- Listen intently to one another.
- Respect different perspectives.
- Create a safe place where each woman can be known and loved.
- Join the discussion without dominating.
- Keep what is shared confidential.
- Refrain from dishonoring people we love or using this study to gripe about life's disappointments. Instead, we will place our hope and trust in Christ.

## OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITIES

### ICEBREAKER IDEA FOR THE FIRST SESSION

Depending on the number of participants in the study, you may want to subdivide into smaller groups for this activity which illustrates God's providence. To prepare in advance, start with a large completed puzzle. Separate one section of 10-20 interlocking pieces. Use multiple sections if there is more than one group. Unlock the pieces of a section and place in a ziplock bag.

To start the icebreaker, distribute the puzzle pieces to the group without revealing the puzzle subject or finished design. Once the group completes the mini-puzzle section invite them to guess the subject matter of the puzzle.



This activity drives home the truth that while we cannot always understand the big picture of God's plan, we can trust God's heart and know His invisible hand is working for our good and His glory.

## THE HEART GOD REVIVES ACTIVITY FOR WEEK 5 "THE TIDE BEGINS TO TURN"

On Day 3 of Week 5, "The Problem with Pride", we consider Haman's pride that ultimately leads to his downfall. We may not be arrogant like Haman but traces of pride can be detected in us, followers of Christ. Use this assessment exercise, **Brokenness: The Heart God Revives**, as a self-examination activity for each participant. Instruct each woman to ask God to reveal which characteristics of a proud heart are true of her and then circle the proud statements that apply.

Lead with wisdom by encouraging participants to humble themselves before the Lord. Allow for a time of silent prayer to:

- Agree with how the Spirit convicts of the evidence of pride and ask for forgiveness.
- Ask the Lord to continue to reveal anything that indicates pride in my life.
- Ask God to show the practical steps to take to humble yourself before Him and others.

**The Heart God Revives bookmarks** are available for purchase from the *Revive Our Hearts* store.

## A PURIM CELEBRATION

The Purim festival commemorated the Jewish people's deliverance from their enemies. It was celebrated by feasting and giving gifts to each other and to the poor. Consider adding an extra session for fellowship, food and offering testimonies to God's goodness in sending His Son to rescue us. Christians anticipate the day when our sorrow turns to joy as Christ returns and the kingdom of darkness is finally destroyed (**Esther 9:22; Rev. 11:15**).

Another way to mark Purim is to plan an outreach activity to serve and bless the poor in your community.

