

"You Are Enough"
What Women of the Bible Teach You About Your Mission and Worth
By Danielle Bean

Welcome to the Holy Trinity Women's Book Journey for Winter 2019!

We encourage you to "*come as you can, come as you are*" each week.

We hope you delight in this read and that the Holy Spirit will guide you through the key messages of each chapter. Here are the group questions we will consider each week. Enjoy the journey!

Week 1: Introduction

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What does the phrase "God loves me" say to you?

2. What struggles do you hope this book with help you overcome?

3. How do you feel that women of the bible are depicted?

Week 2 (Chapter 1: God Calls You In)

God calls you... Just as you are

Reflection and Discussion:

1. It hurts to feel like we don't "fit in." Have you ever done something you regretted in an attempt to fit in or be accepted by others? What brought on that temptation, and in what ways might God have been calling you closer to him through that pain of being on the "outside"?

2. Rahab might have considered herself an outsider to people of faith because she was a prostitute. Are there any negative labels you put on yourself that separate you from God and his Church? What are they?

3. Have you ever suffered as a result of someone else's sin and weakness, as Abigail did? What lessons can we learn from the example of her response to her husband's harshness and stubbornness? How might you respond similarly the next time you find yourself victimized by someone else's sins?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Have you ever felt hurt or rejected in a romantic relationship with a man? Take a moment to recall that time and write the words that describe how you felt in your moment of pain.

2. What do you think of the “me too” movement? What is your response to news stories about women who have been victimized by powerful men in the workplace in in personal relationships? Why do you think this has been tolerated in the “enlightened” society like ours?

3. How do you feel about King David’s actions in the story of Bathsheba? Have you ever felt “used” like that, or have you witnessed other women being “used” similarly? What do you think made healing possible in he relationship between the relationship between Bathsheba and David? What, if anything, has made healing possible for you?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Have you ever felt strength of solidarity when sharing with other women your own stories of hurt or when hearing their stories? Explain what made that sharing and solidarity possible.

2. Think about the ways in which men and women approach sex differently. In what ways are women more vulnerable than men in sexual relationship? Have you ever experienced this difference personally? What was that like for you?

3. Is there a time when you felt hurt or used? Do you carry the wounds of someone who has betrayed you? How can you use the story of Tamar to heal?

Week 5 (Chapter 3: God Gives You Strength) pages 42-56

God gives you power to do great things and the freedom to choose.

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Have you ever felt uniquely powerful as a woman—not in spite of being a woman, but because you are a woman? Describe that time. What did it feel like? How did you respond to that experience?
2. What comes to mind when you hear the words “strong woman”? Do you know a woman you would describe as strong? What makes her that way? What do you admire about her?
3. How shocked are you by the story of Judith? What details stand out to you? In what ways might God be using this strange character and this strange story of her triumph in battle to call out to some kind of “battle”?
4. Have you ever witnessed the actions of a woman like Delilah? What do you think motivated her? What does her story teach us about womanly strength?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What do you pray for? Are there things you hold yourself back from praying about because you don't think they are "worthy" of God's attention?
2. How do you feel about bringing your wants and needs to God? Are you ever tempted to approach prayer with a "gumball machine" mentality—Put your prayers in, turn the handle and whatever you want comes out? In what ways might God be calling you to a more real relationship with him that that?
3. Have you ever experienced pain in your motherhood or through longing for motherhood? In what ways does Sarah's story reflect your own experiences?
4. In what ways does Hannah's story give us an example of "hope in the Lord"? Do you identify more with Hannah or with Sarah (who struggles to hope)? How might God's response to both of these women give you greater hope for the things you long for?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What kind of worries occupy your thoughts? Who you bring these worries to? God? Other women?
2. What is your personal response to Jesus' words in Matthew 6 (pg 77), where he teaches us to imitate the birds of the sky and the flowers of the field? What thoughts come to mind when you "consider the lilies"?
3. Can you identify with the widow of Zarephath and her "almost empty" jar of oil? In what was do you feel depleted weak, and "almost empty) How might God be calling you to greater trust through that emptiness?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Have you ever admired someone else's trust in God? What do you think is the person's source of strength? In what ways and with what parts of your life do you struggle to trust in God?
2. In what ways can you relate to the Shunammite woman, who appears to be strong, confident, and self-sufficient yet holds back her greatest desire (for a child) from the Lord? What longings do you "hid" from God and others out of self-protecting fear of them not being fulfilled?
3. Like the Shunammite woman, have you ever felt that you have been thrown on a path of pain you did not ask for? What way is God present in your pain, disappointment, and discouragement. How can you draw closer to him through these experiences?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Do you have a "best friend" or at least a close girlfriend you can share your heart with? If so, describe what that relationship means to you. If not, write down some things that get in the way of your finding female friends.

2. Have you ever been wounded in your friendships with other women? How have these wounds hurt you that were different from any hurts you have experienced in relationships with men?

3. Think for a moment about Mary's visitation to her cousin Elizabeth (pg. 95). Place yourself here with the two women as Elizabeth calls out her joyful greeting and Mary shares her joy in the words of the Magnificat. What do you think we are meant to learn from Mary's example and her story?

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Have you ever joined forces in a positive way with another woman to accomplish something good (running a conference, holding a fundraiser, organizing a trip)? What kind of encouragement did you experience by working closely with another woman on that good thing? In what ways did you "get" each other as you worked toward a goal?
2. Can you relate to Rachel and Leah? Do you have a sister or a girlfriend whom you have experienced competition, jealousy, or rivalry? In what kinds of circumstances are you tempted to feel jealous? Describe some of the ways in which jealousy can distract you from good things you might otherwise accomplish.
3. Women tend to compare themselves to each other, even women we don't know. How has society and media influenced our attitudes towards other women.

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Think of the women in your life that influence you. Who helps make you a better version of yourself. Who brings you down?
2. Have you ever experienced the kind of loyalty in friendship that Ruth demonstrations in her relationship with Naomi? In what ways do you think God might be calling you to imitate her example of friendship, love, and loyalty with the women in your life today?
3. We have a unique calling to love and encourage other women. How can you put this into play this week?

Week 12: Chapter 7: God Made You For Life-Giving Love (pages 114-128)
God blesses others with the gift of you.

Reflection and Discussion:

1. What is/was your relationship with your own mother like? How have you grown in your understanding—good or bad—of what it means to be a woman and a mother through her example?
2. In the Garden of Eden, Satan tempts Eve by telling her that God does not have her best interests in mind, and that he has lied to her. In what ways are you sometimes tempted to withhold trust in God? How does this affect your relationships with God and others?
3. In what ways do you believe that God has made women unique and different from men? How do you see these feminine strengths at work in your own life and in the lives of others?
4. Do you believe, as St. John Paul II said, that the world is “hungrier than ever” for motherhood (pg 124)? In what ways might God be speaking to you through the needs of others about your mission?

God calls you to greatness.

Reflection and Discussion:

1. Do you struggle with perfectionism? In what parts of your life are you tempted to see yourself as a “failure”? Where do you feel you fall short while others succeed?

2. What do you think when you read about the woman described in Proverbs 31? Do you feel encouraged or discouraged? What do you think God wants you to feel? What obstacles might get in the way of you hearing what God is saying to you?

3. Do you believe you have unique gifts and strengths that are particular to you as a woman? Think about some of the ways God might be calling you to use those gifts and strengths to love and serve others.