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# ZEAL

A BIBLE STUDY ON TITUS FOR WOMEN

KERI FOLMAR

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Bible Study



# **Zeal**

*A Bible Study on Titus for Women*

**Keri Folmar**

To my son, Andrew:  
May you hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught.

– Keri Folmar

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## *Praise for Keri Folmar's Inductive Bible Studies for Women*

“With simple clarity, Keri Folmar guides us in learning to study the Bible...Keri encourages us to read God’s Word carefully, to understand clearly, and to apply prayerfully...she encourages her readers first and foremost to listen well to God’s inspired Word.”

**Kathleen Nielson** is author of the *Living Word Bible Studies*; Director of Women’s Initiatives, The Gospel Coalition; and wife of Niel, who served as President of Covenant College, 2002 to 2012.

“Keri’s Bible study will not only bring the truths of [Scripture] to bear upon your life, but will also train you up for better, more effective study of any book of the Bible with her consistent use of the three questions needed in all good Bible study: Observation, Interpretation, and Application.”

**Connie Dever** is author of *The Praise Factory* children’s ministry curriculum and wife of Mark, senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church and President of 9Marks.

“It is hard to imagine a better inductive Bible study tool than this one. So many study tools wander from the biblical text, but Keri Folmar’s study concentrates on what [the biblical author] says... unfolding its message with accuracy and clarity.”

**Diane Schreiner**, the wife of SBTS professor, author, and pastor Tom Schreiner and mother of four grown children, has led women’s Bible studies for more than 20 years.

“No clever stories, ancillary anecdotes, or emotional manipulation here. Keri takes us deeper into the text, deeper into the heart of [the biblical author], deeper into the mind of Christ, and deeper into our own hearts... a great study to do on your own or with others.”

**Kristie Anyabwile** is a North Carolina native and graduate of NC State University with a degree in history. Her husband, Thabiti, serves as a pastor in Washington, DC, and as a Council Member for The Gospel Coalition.

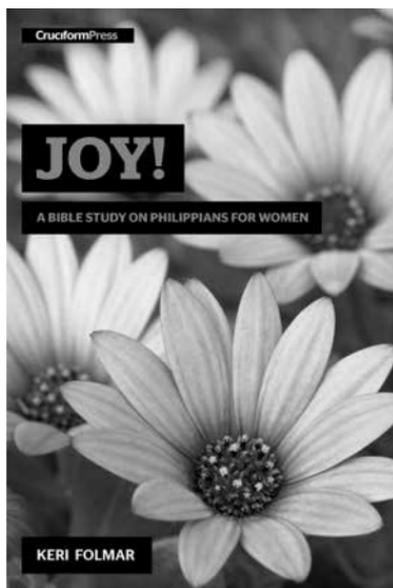
“Keri is convinced that God is God-centered and that for the sake of our joy, we should be, too...She skillfully created these rich resources—and not only that, she has put the tools in your hands so you can study God’s word for yourself...I highly recommend that you embark on these studies with some other ladies. Then you can all watch in amazement at how God gives you contentment in him.”

**Gloria Furman** is a pastor’s wife in the Middle East, and author of *Glimpses of Grace*, *Treasuring Christ When Your Hands Are Full*, and *The Pastor’s Wife*.

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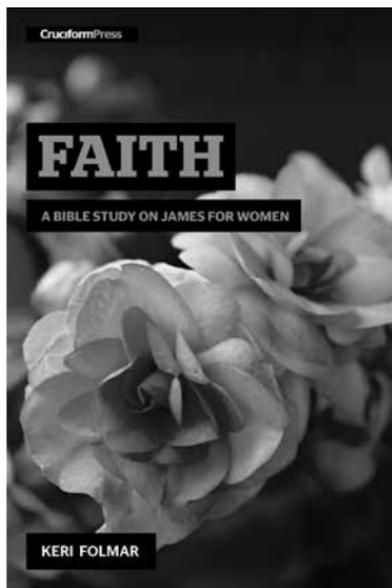
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*Zeal - A Bible Study on Titus for Women*

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## Introduction: Why Study the Bible?

**A**s we begin this study of Paul's letter to Titus, we should think through why we are studying the Bible. Why not read some other book? Or why not just get together with some other women and chat?

Well, have you heard the story about the kindergarten teacher who had her class paint pictures of anything they chose? After observing a little girl who was working very intently on her painting, the teacher asked, "What are you painting?" The girl answered, "It's a picture of God." Amused, the teacher informed her, "No one knows what God looks like." Without looking up from her painting, the little girl responded, "They will in a minute!"

This might be a cute example of a precocious child, but many people paint pictures of God in their own minds. They "know" that God is a certain way, because they want him to be that way.

However, the one true God is transcendent. He is beyond our capacity to know. First Timothy 6:16 describes God, "[W]ho alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see." God existed before time. He is the Creator, and we are his creatures. Sinful man cannot approach the holy God.

How can we know this God if we cannot approach him? He has to approach us. The only way to truly know God is for him to reveal himself to us. He reveals his existence and power in creation. (See Psalm 19 and Romans 1:18–21.) However, if we want to truly know God in a personal way, it must be through his Word.

And God *wants* us, his creatures, to know him. Jeremiah 10:23–24 says:

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth."

Do you boast in understanding and knowing the Lord? Do you want to know this God who practices love, justice, and righteousness in the earth? He wants you to understand and know him. He is ready to speak to you every morning when you wake up... throughout the day... and before you go to bed. You have only to open his Word.

A well-known catechism says, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.” That is what we were created for—to truly know and enjoy the God of the universe. Jeremiah the prophet cried out: “Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart.”

The great preacher, CH Spurgeon, said:

Believer! There is enough in the Bible for you to live upon forever. If you should outnumber the years of Methuselah, there would be no need for a fresh revelation; if you should live until Christ should return to the earth, there would be no necessity for the addition of a single word; if you should go down as deep as Jonah, or even descend as David said he did, into the depths of hell, still there would be enough in the Bible to comfort you without a supplementary sentence.  
(<http://spurgeon.org/sermons/0005.htm>)

This is why we study the Bible: it is God’s revelation of himself to us. We need to know who God truly is and guard against painting our own picture of him. God has revealed himself to us not in paintings but through his Son by the words of the Scripture. God, the Creator, has spoken, and we, his creation, should listen to his words as life-sustaining truth and joyfully obey them.

This Bible study workbook is to assist you in studying Titus in an inductive way. Inductive study is **reading the passage in context and asking questions of the text with the purpose of deriving the meaning and significance from the text itself**. We do this automatically every day when we read the newspaper, blogs, or even recipes. When we study the Bible inductively we are after the author’s original intent; i.e., what the author meant when he wrote the passage to his original audience. In this workbook, you will figure out the

meaning by answering a series of questions about the text, paying close attention to the words and context of the passage. After figuring out the meaning of the text, there will be questions to help you apply it to your life.

As you read through Titus, may the Holy Spirit open your eyes to more deeply understand and rejoice in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the church.

## How to Do Inductive Bible Study

**Step 1 – Begin with prayer.** “Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law” (Psalm 119:18).

**Step 2 – Read the text.**

**Step 3 – Observation.** *The goal of this step is to figure out what the text is saying.* These questions should be answered from the very words of the text.

**Step 4 – Interpretation.** *The goal of this step is to figure out what the text meant to the original hearers.* This most important step is often skipped, but a lack of correct interpretation leads to incorrect application. We cannot understand what God is saying to us if we don’t first understand what he was saying to his original audience, and why he was saying it.

Your job in interpretation is to figure out the main point of the passage and understand the arguments that support the main point. Your interpretation should flow out of your observations, so keep asking yourself, *Can I support this interpretation based on my observations?*

**Step 5 – Application.** **Prayerfully apply the passage to your own life.** The application should flow from the main point of the text.

## Keep God’s Redemptive Plan in Mind

Luke 24:44-47 says,

Then [Jesus] said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must

be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

We study the Bible so that we can know Christ, repent, be forgiven, and proclaim him to the nations. We must keep Jesus in mind when we study Scripture. Adrienne Lawrence writes, “God has one overarching redemptive plan—to glorify himself by creating and redeeming a people for himself through Christ. Christ is at the center of God’s plan. All of Scripture in some way speaks to that plan. Keep this in mind as you are doing your study of Scripture.”

*[Note: this “How to” has been adapted from Adrienne Lawrence’s pamphlet on Inductive Bible Study.]*

## Notes on This Study Guide

The first week of this inductive study will be an overview of Titus. On the following days you will study smaller segments of the letter and answer observation, interpretation, and application questions. The questions were written based on language from the English Standard Version of the Bible. However, you are welcome to use any reliable translation to do the study.

To assist you in recognizing the different types of questions asked, the questions are set out in three different fonts.

- 👁 **Observation:** Look closely at the text to figure out what it is saying. Get answers directly from the text, using the words of Scripture to answer the observation questions.
- ✦ **Interpretation:** Determine the author’s intended meaning by figuring out what the text meant to its original hearers.
- ♥ **Application:** Based on the author’s meaning of the text, apply the passage to your own heart and life today.

Because Scripture interprets Scripture, many of the questions cite passages in addition to the one you are studying in Titus. If the question says, “Read...” you will need to read the additional verses cited to answer the question. If the question says, “See...” the verses help you answer the question but are not necessary. “See also...” signals you to read the verses if you would like to study the answer to the question further.

You only need your Bible to do this study of Titus, and, in fact, I highly recommend first answering the questions directly from your Bible before looking at any other materials. That said, it might be helpful for you to confirm your answers, especially if you are leading others in a group study. To check your answers or for further study, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus* by John Stott is a good commentary to use. For more detail, use *The Pastoral Epistles* by George W. Knight III.

For more general help in knowing how to study the Bible, I highly recommend *Bible Study: Following the Ways of the Word*, by Kathleen Buswell Nielson and *Dig Deeper! Tools to Unearth the Bible’s Treasure*, by Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach. Bible study teachers and students who want a closer look at New Testament theology that will also encourage your heart can read Thomas Schreiner’s, *Magnifying God in Christ: A Summary of New Testament Theology*. For information that explains why Christians base their life and doctrine on the Bible, see my book, *The Good Portion: The Doctrine of Scripture for Every Woman*.

## Notes for Leaders

This Bible study can be done by individuals alone, but the best context for Bible study is in the local church. Studying the Bible together promotes unity and ignites spiritual growth within the church.

The study was designed for participants to complete five days of “homework,” and then come together to discuss their answers in a small group. The goal of gathering in small groups is to promote discussion among women to sharpen one another by making sure all understand the meaning of the text and can apply it to their lives. As women discuss, their eyes may be opened to applications of the

text they didn't see while doing the study on their own. Believers will encourage one another in their knowledge of the gospel, and unbelievers will hear the gospel clearly explained. As a result, women will learn from one another and come away from group Bible study with a deeper understanding of the text and a better knowledge of how to read the Bible on their own in their private times of study and prayer.

If you are leading a small group, you will have some extra homework to do. **First, know what Bible study is and is not.** Bible study is not primarily a place to meet felt needs, eat good food and chat, receive counseling, or have a free-for-all discussion. Some of these things do happen in a women's Bible study, but they should not take over the focus. Bible study is digging into the Scriptures to get the true meaning of the text and applying it to lives that change as a result.

**Second, make sure you know the main points of the text before leading discussion by carefully studying the passage and checking yourself using a good commentary,** like one of those listed above. You may also find a Bible dictionary and concordance helpful. Second Timothy 3:16–17 says, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man [or woman] of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” Scripture is powerful. That power comes through truth. Scripture is not like a magical incantation: We say the words and see the effect. We must know what the text of Scripture means before we apply it and see its work of transformation in our lives. Your job as a discussion leader is not to directly teach, nor to simply facilitate discussion, but rather to lead women in finding the meaning of the text and help them see how it is “profitable” and can make them “competent, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

**Third, pray.** Pray for the women in your group during the week while you prepare. Pray as you start your small group study, asking the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Scripture to your minds and apply it to your hearts. And encourage women to pray at the end of your small group based on what they studied. Ask the Holy Spirit to use his sword, the word of God, in the lives of the women you are leading.

**Fourth, draw women into discussion and keep your discussion organized.** Choose what you determine are the most important questions from the study guide, focusing the bulk of your discussion on the interpretation and application questions. Ask a question, but don't answer it! Be comfortable with long pauses or rephrase questions you think the group didn't understand. Not answering the questions yourself may be a bit awkward at first, but it will promote discussion in the end because the women will know they have to do the answering. Feel free to affirm good answers or sum up after women have had time to discuss particular questions. This gives clarity to the discussion. However, don't feel the need to fill in every detail and nuance you gleaned from your personal study. Your goal is to get your group talking.

**Fifth, keep your focus on the Bible.** The Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures to change women's hearts. Don't be afraid of wrong answers. Gently use them to clarify and teach by directing attention back to the text of Scripture for the right answer. If someone in your group goes off on unhelpful tangents, direct her back to the question and address the tangent later, one on one, or with reading material. However, if the tangent is on a vital question that goes to the gospel, take time to talk about it. These are God-given opportunities.

**Sixth, be sure to discuss the gospel.** In your prep time, ask yourself what the text has to do with the gospel and look for opportunities to ask questions to bring out the gospel. Hopefully, your church members will invite unbelievers to your study who will hear the glorious good news. But, even if your group is made up of all believers, we never get beyond our need to be reminded of Christ crucified and what that means for our lives.

**Lastly, enjoy studying the Scriptures with your group.** Your love and passion for the word of God will be contagious, and you will have the great joy of watching your women catch it and rejoice in God's word with you.

## **Paul's Letter to Titus**

The apostle Paul was personally commissioned by Jesus Christ to be an ambassador of the gospel. He traveled with companions all over the Greco-Roman world, planting churches in Asia Minor and along the Mediterranean Sea. Titus was one of Paul's emissaries, his "partner and fellow worker" (2 Corinthians 8:23).

The people of the Mediterranean island of Crete were known for immorality and deceitfulness, but the gospel had taken root there. Paul planted churches in towns on the island and left Titus to oversee the organization of these fledgling gatherings. Paul's letter to Titus is not only a prescription for church governance, but is also a manifesto for the Christian life. It instructs Titus to appoint elders, rebuke false teachers and teach godliness that "accords with sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). Along the way, Paul unfolds the good news of Jesus Christ and its implications for the believer.

Titus is a vital book for us today. The church is "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). Biblical church governance guards sound doctrine and godly living, protecting and advancing the precious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

## Week 1

Day 1

**Titus Overview**

---

Pray this week for the Lord to make you fit for every good work through the study of his word.

Pray, then read through Titus and answer the following questions.

- ✦ 1. How would you describe the tone of the letter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 👁 2. What words, phrases, or ideas are repeated throughout the letter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 3. What is the purpose of this letter, and how do you know it is the purpose?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ♥ 4. What questions arose in your mind as you read through Titus?

Day 2

---

Pray, then read Titus 1.

- 👁 1. Who wrote this letter?
- 👁 2. To whom was the letter written?
- 👁 3. Where is Titus?
- ✦ 4. How would you describe Paul's relationship with Titus?
- 👁 5. What is Paul's first and main instruction to Titus in chapter 1?
- 👁 6. What words, phrases, or themes are repeated in this chapter?
- ✦ 7. What problem has presented itself in the churches at Crete?
- ✦ 8. How would you summarize this first chapter of Titus?

- ♥ 9. What questions arose in your mind as you read through Titus 1?

### Day 3

---

#### Pray, then read Titus 2.

- 👁 1. What is Paul's first and main instruction to Titus in this chapter?
- ✦ 2. How does this chapter relate to chapter 1?
- 👁 3. What words, phrases, or themes are repeated in this chapter?
- ✦ 4. What stands out to you the most in this chapter?

✦ 5. How would you summarize the theme of this chapter?

♥ 6. What questions arose in your mind as you read through Titus 2?

#### Day 4

---

**Pray, then read Titus 3.**

👁 1. What are Paul's main instructions to Titus in this chapter?

✦ 2. How would you summarize them?

✦ 3. How does this chapter relate to the previous chapters?

👁 4. What words, phrases, or themes are repeated in this chapter?

👁 5. What contrasts do you see?

✦ 6. What stands out to you the most in this chapter?

✦ 7. How would you summarize the theme of this chapter?

♥ 8. What questions arose in your mind as you read through Titus 3?

Day 5

---

**Pray, then read Titus.**

✦ 1. Why did Paul write this letter? How do you know his purpose?

- ✦ 2. How would you sum up the letter in one sentence?
- ✦ 3. Paul wrote this letter to Titus, a pastor. How can you learn from the letter even though you aren't a pastor?
- ♥ 4. How do you hope to grow spiritually through studying this letter?

# *Notes*

## Week 2

Day 1

**Titus 1:1-4**

---

Pray this week for deeper knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness.

Pray, then read Titus 1:1-5.

Titus 1:1a

- 👁 1. Who wrote this letter, and how does he describe himself?
  
- ✦ 2. What does Paul mean when he calls himself a “servant of God”? See 2 Samuel 7:4; Psalm 105:26; and Jeremiah 7:25. Is it a humble title, an exalted title, or both?
  
- ✦ 3. Who was Paul, and what does it mean that he is an “apostle of Jesus Christ”? See Acts 9:1-22; Galatians 1:1 and 15-16; and Ephesians 3:7-9.
  
- ✦ 4. What is Paul conveying about himself with these titles?

♥ 5. How should this affect the way we read this letter?

♥ 6. Paul was specially called by God as his servant to take the message of the gospel to the Gentiles. Even though you're not an apostle, do you consider yourself a servant of God? In what ways do you use your time, resources, and talents to serve God?

♥ 7. Would someone observing your life notice that you are a servant of God? What would he or she see?

## Day 2

---

**Pray, then read Titus 1:1–5.**

### **Titus 1:1b**

👁 1. For what purpose is Paul “a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ”?

✦ 2. Who are God's elect? See Deuteronomy 7:6–8; Romans 9:6–23;

Ephesians 1:3–5; and 1 Peter 2:9. See also John 6:37–44, 15:16, 19; 1 Thessalonians 1:4–5; and James 2:5.

- ✦ 3. What is “the faith” of God’s elect? What does it mean to have faith? See also John 6:29, 69 and Romans 10:17.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 4. What is the link between “the faith” of God’s elect and their “knowledge of the truth”? What is the faith of God’s elect based on? See 1 Corinthians 15:1–6, 11.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 5. What does it mean for “knowledge of the truth” to “[accord] with godliness”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 6. How does knowledge of the truth—knowledge of and belief in the gospel—lead to godly living?

✦ 7. Sum up in your own words Paul's apostolic purpose:

✦ 8. How does Paul's letter to Titus fit with his purpose?

♥ 9. Do you have faith and knowledge of the truth? Do you believe the gospel as Paul lays it out in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6?

♥ If not or if you are unsure, what questions do you have about the gospel message?

♥ If so, in what ways do your faith and knowledge accord with godliness in your life?

Day 3

---

**Pray, then read Titus 1: 1-5.**



- 👁️ 8. “Manifested” means revealed or showed. Through what does God reveal the hope of eternal life?
- ✦ 9. How do God’s “word” and “the preaching” of Paul come together in verse 3 to reveal the hope of eternal life?
- 👁️ 10. Who “entrusted” the preaching of the word to Paul?
- ✦ 11. What types of things are “entrusted” to others? What does this word tell us about the value of the message Paul is preaching?
- ✦ 12. Titus is well acquainted with Paul. He knows Paul is an apostle entrusted with the gospel. Why would Paul remind Titus of this here at the beginning of his letter? (Who else would read this letter? See Titus 3:15.)
- ✦ 13. How does one receive the “hope of eternal life”? See Titus 3:4–8.

✦ 14. What is this hope? Is it just living forever? See Titus 2:11-14.

✦ 15. Notice who promised and manifested the hope. Notice also who entrusted Paul with the message of this hope and commanded him to preach it. How does this give you confidence in Paul's message?

♥ 16. The hope of eternal life with Christ propels Paul in his ministry. In what way should that same hope propel us? How does the hope of eternal life motivate you?

♥ 17. How should this hope affect our faith and our knowledge of the truth?

Day 4

---

Pray, then read Titus 1:1-4.

Titus 1:4a



- ♥ 7. Today most of us don't face a Jewish-Gentile divide. What are some of the divides you do see in your culture?
  
- ♥ 8. Based on Paul's relationship with Titus, how should these divides be handled in local churches?
  
- ♥ 9. What kinds of relationships do you have in your church? Do you have a child in the faith? A mother or father? True sisters and brothers? What can you do to cultivate deeper relationships?
  
- ♥ 10. Do you have relationships in your church with people who are different from you? Think about different national backgrounds but also different socioeconomic situations and different ages or stages of life. How can you cultivate relationships with people who are different from you?

Pray, then read Titus 1:1–4.

**Titus 1:4b**

- 👁 1. How does Paul greet Titus?
  
- ✦ 2. “Grace” means an undeserved gift. Jesus enabled “peace” with God through the sacrifice of his blood on the cross. Why does Paul greet the recipients of his letters with grace and peace from God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 3. Grace and peace come from God the Father and Christ Jesus. Why do you think Paul mentions both grace and peace together in his greeting? What point is he making with his readers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✦ 4. Thirteen of Paul’s letters are included in the Bible. In all of his other letters, Paul calls Jesus Lord. Why do you think he calls Jesus “our Savior” in this letter? (Paul also repeats “Savior,” “salvation,” and “saved” seven times in the letter.)

✦ 5. How does this letter itself impart grace and peace to its readers?

♥ 6. Take some time today to review what you've learned this week and pray for the Lord to build you up in the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness as you study through Titus. Pray also for those who are studying with you.

## *Notes*

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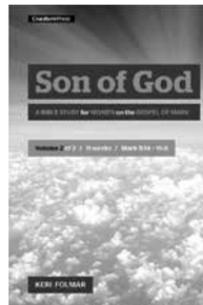


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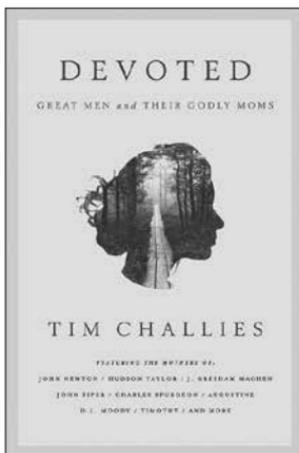


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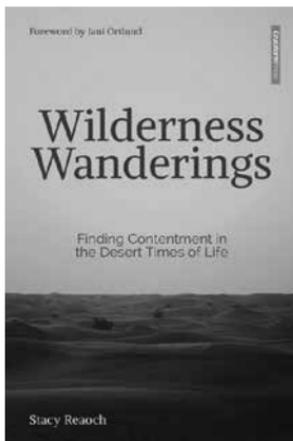
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***Gloria Furman, author, Missional Motherhood***



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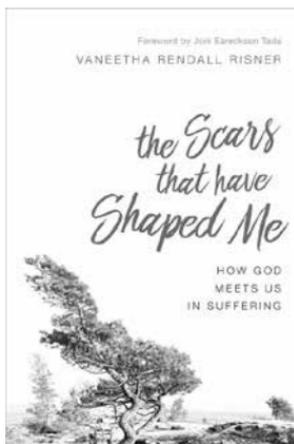
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“I could not put this book down, except to wipe my tears. Vaneetha’s testimony of God’s kindness to her in pain was exactly what I needed; no doubt, many others will feel the same. It has helped me process my own grief and loss, and given me renewed hope to care for those in my life who suffer in various ways.”

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