

the best *you can be*

Lesson

3



A SPIRITUAL *woman*

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: 'For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?'"

1 Corinthians 2:14-16



TO BE A SPIRITUAL WOMAN requires us to listen. To be quiet is the way to hear God's voice speaking to our hearts and minds. God made us in His image, the Bible tells us, and that means we can be spiritual and can come close to Him. He has invited us to do this. God has invited us to come close by reading His Word, then listening to His small voice and talking to Him through the avenue of prayer. Many women in the past have experienced His closeness because they have done just that—read and prayed. When we do this, we will know the direction to take in our lives, and we will have compassion for those around us. To be spiritual is really the way that God designed us to be. Spiritual things are “spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). The guidelines in this lesson will help us understand this concept more fully.

NINE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY WOMAN
Remember them by using the letters of the word SPIRITUAL as an acrostic.

S - SENSE OF THE ETERNAL.

A spiritual woman will have her priorities in order, understanding that only what she has done for Christ has lasting value. After an experience where God spoke to her soul very clearly, Amy Carmichael discouraged her mother's attempts to buy her an evening dress. She says, “What are parties and fine clothes in light of eternity?” We may ask ourselves, “In the light of eternity, how important are some of the things on which I spend my time and money?”
Lord, give me a sense of the eternal. Help me get my priorities straight.

P - PRAYER IS IMPORTANT.

Prayer is vital to the life of a spiritual woman. To her, God is real, someone interested in all

the circumstances of her life. Becky Tirabassi says she had very little time for God before she attended a prayer seminar. During one session, the speaker said, “Prayerlessness is a sin.” Becky was shocked and thought about how little time she had for God, yet she said she loved Him. Before the seminar was over, she developed a plan that easily takes her through an hour of prayer, Bible study, and meditation every morning. We could ask, “What in my life can be condensed or discarded so that I can spend an hour with my Lord each day?”
Lord, forgive me for the sin of prayerlessness. Help me find time to spend with You.

I - IMMERSED IN THE WORD.

To the spiritual woman, Bible study is not a tiresome chore, but one that she looks forward to with anticipation. She thinks, “What message will God have for me today?” Becky Tirabassi reads at least one chapter from the Old and New Testaments and one from Proverbs. Paraphrasing a verse of scripture helps her make it her own. Ruth Bell Graham leaves her open Bible on her table. She reads and memorizes verses, repeating them as she works and drives.
Thank you, Lord, for your Word. Help me plan a time every day when I can immerse myself in it.

R - RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE.

Godly women obey the command “Be still and know that I am God.” They take time not only to study and pray but also to listen to God's voice. Amy Carmichael had the habit of spending long periods of quietness after Bible study and prayer. In times of solitude and quietness she and others have found inspiration, leading them to do mighty acts for God and humanity.



Lord, I want to be a woman who takes time to listen to Your voice. Help me learn how to enjoy solitude in the midst of my busy schedule.

I - INVITES JESUS TO WALK WITH HER IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE.

The Lord walks with her through the tough as well as the easy times. Ruth Bell Graham talks about her life as a married yet lonely woman and mother of five. She admits to crying over her Bible as she sought to ease her loneliness and find answers to deal with the disappointment of having sons turn from the Lord. The promise "Have no anxiety...." became precious to her (Philippians 4:6).

Lord, forgive me for worrying. Take from my heart the worry and concern, and may my prayers be thanksgiving.

T - TALKS EASILY ABOUT THE LORD AND HIS GOODNESS.

The spiritual woman is not embarrassed to give a testimony in church or to ask God's blessing on her food in a restaurant. It is as natural for her to talk about Jesus as it is to talk about her children or a close friend.

Lord, help me to be like those women who fearlessly spoke up about you, to be so excited about the reality of my experience with You that I must talk about it.

U - UNDERSTANDS GOD'S CALL.

Great women of faith have always understood God's call to service. They have sensed their place in the scheme of things, their part in God's plan to save the human race. Many women have sensed God calling them to bless others, be a missionary, care for the sick, speak the message of Jesus, or have some other special ministry. When this happens, they cannot hold back and must go forward. Think of some women you know in this category.

Lord, help me understand when You call me for a specific part of Your plan and make me willing to follow Your direction.

A - AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE.

The spiritual woman has a keen sense of God's presence in her life. She is aware of what He is doing in the lives of her family, her church, and the political structures of the world. Through all the interplay of human events, she can see God's hand at work. Ruth Bell Graham could have become discouraged about her sons, but she held firmly to her faith in God, recognizing that He was working in their lives. She says, "Our children can never outreach God's reach."

Lord, open my eyes that I might see Your hand at work in my life today. Help me never to forget that You are in control regardless of how things look.

L - LOVES PEOPLE.

A woman who is close to God inevitably finds herself loving all for whom He died, even the most unlovely. Amy Carmichael loved prostitutes. Mother Teresa loved castoffs of society, the destitute and dying. Mary Jo Copeland looked with compassion on the homeless. Chessie Harris loved neglected children and took in more than 800 foster children.

Lord, help me be a woman stirred with compassion for the needs of people, willing to reach out to others with Your love.



RATE YOURSELF

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate yourself in the following areas of spirituality? Five is the highest.

1. My priorities reflect my sense of eternal values.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Prayer is a vital part of my life.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I daily immerse myself in the Word of God.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I have discovered the transforming power of silence.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I invite Jesus to walk with me through all the circumstances of my life, the tough times as well as the good times.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I find it easy to talk about God's goodness to me.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I understand the particular plan God has for my life.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I am aware of God's presence at work in my world.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I love people of all situations and cultures.

1 2 3 4 5

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Give yourself the gift of solitude. Go away for several hours. Turn off your mobile phone and take no radio or iPod. Read, meditate on Scripture, contemplate God's handiwork in nature, and be totally silent.
2. Plan a program for a "thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ" (E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83). Read one chapter of *The Desire of Ages* each day along with the scriptural passages on which it is based. Keep a notebook of your discoveries. Write out quotations that appeal to you. The 87 chapters will take you through three months of personal devotions.
3. For one month keep a diary of things that show God's hand at work in your life. At the end of each day, write down all the evidences you have seen of His protecting care. Document answers to prayer. Write down news items that are a fulfillment of prophecy.

4. On Friday evenings write out a brief testimony of how God has blessed you during the week. What do you have to be especially grateful for during the past seven days? If the opportunity presents itself, share that testimony on Sabbath.

5. Choose a verse of Scripture that means a lot to you. Insert your name where appropriate. Rewrite it, showing what it means to you in your current circumstances. What message is God trying to give you?

It is truly beneficial to take time out to just focus on God and spiritual things. In all our busy-ness of life, we must take time to be quiet, to read, to pray, and to listen to the still small voice. It is from this quiet place that we can come out to share and really care for others. We will have energy and courage to do what God has directed us to do. We will truly be spiritual women.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

"But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33).

And remember, "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven's storehouse" (E. G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 99).

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord God, I lay all my anxiety and troubles at your feet. I come to you quietly and in confidence. Please come into my heart and let me just bask in your presence and love. Help me to hear your still small voice speaking, and help me to go forward in faith believing you are there beside me always.



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