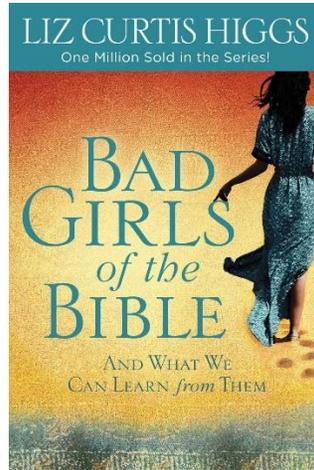


Word by Word with Liz Curtis Higgs on the Faith Radio Network

Bible Study Guide for June 9-10, 2018 | The Sinful Woman

from *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs



1. Read Luke 7:37. Based on that verse alone, what do we know about this woman? And what *don't* we know about her? Once she made her move, all her scandalous steps are gathered into one verse, Luke 7:38. Where was she standing? Why wasn't she hanging around the periphery of the room with the other uninvited guests? Think of an occasion when you were overwhelmed, unable to speak, or found yourself weeping. Did you feel weak? embarrassed? relieved? cleansed? In Joel 2:12-13, what does the Lord ask his people to do? What expressions of repentance is he looking for? What reception are they told to anticipate? How might those verses from Joel parallel what we see at work in this weeping woman's life?
2. Her humble actions were a demonstration of her adoration, reverence, and love for Jesus. What biblical examples of variety and creativity in worship do the following verses offer: 1 Chronicles 29:20; Psalm 47:5; Psalm 95:6; Psalm 149:3; Psalm 150:5? In which of these forms of worship have you been a participant? What other means of corporate worship have you experienced? How might Psalm 19:14 and Romans 12:1 help us measure whether or not our worship is pleasing to God? If you would, stand up and read aloud 1 Chronicles 16:23-36. Yes, all of it. Alone at home or together in your study group, worship the Lord simply by reading his Holy Word with all the honor and majesty it deserves. When you sit down, write the first response that comes to mind.
3. Read Luke 7:39. What attitudes do Simon's thoughts convey concerning the woman at Jesus' feet? The apostle Paul wrote that we who love God bear the fragrant aroma of Christ. According to 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, what exactly is that fragrance? Who finds that scent appealing? And who finds it offensive? What do you think most offended Simon the Pharisee about this woman: her past sins or her present actions? And why?

4. It was time for Simon the Pharisee—and for all of us as well—to learn a lesson. In Luke 7:44-46, Jesus pointed out the three things Simon *didn't* do and the three things the woman *did* do. As you write them down, what do you notice about each of these six ways of showing respect for someone? Why do you think Simon neglected to perform any of the duties expected of a proper host? What was he communicating to Jesus, intentionally or not? What has Jesus asked of you that you've been unwilling to do? And what might that unwillingness convey to him about your commitment to him?
5. Luke 7:47 is a much-quoted verse of Scripture...at least the first half! At the start of the story she is called a "sinful woman." Is there any doubt that she was completely forgiven by story's end? What makes you confident of your answer? In Luke 7:48 we see that Jesus was no longer speaking to the Pharisee. Who, then? Since he has already stated this truth to Simon, why does he repeat it? How can we know, as surely as this woman did, that our sins are forgiven? Consider what assurance you find in Psalm 103:11-12.
6. What's the most important lesson you learned from the story of this sinful-but-forgiven woman?

1. Read Genesis 3:6. Eve's next two mistakes weren't oral but visual. First, her eyes were on herself, rather than on God. And she wanted her eyes to be opened so she could see everything on her own, instead of seeing only what God allowed her to see. According to Proverbs 17:24, how do our eyes draw us into temptation? And how do Psalm 119:10 and 2 Timothy 2:22-23 suggest we can keep our eyes on God?
2. Eve couldn't stop looking at the tree *or* listening to her growling stomach *or* marveling at how pretty the fruit was *or* thinking how helpful it would be to have more knowledge. Our craving for *more* is manifested in every area of our lives. What do you want more of right now physically? financially? intellectually? relationally? emotionally? spiritually? Which of those desires dovetail with the Word and will of God...and which might not? What do the following verses teach us about keeping our lives centered on pleasing Him, rather than on pleasing ourselves: Psalm 73:25-26; Romans 8:5; Romans 13:14?
3. At the very point when Eve could have stopped herself, she didn't. How do you feel when you don't resist temptation? And how do you feel when the Holy Spirit enables you to control a strong urge to sin? Alas, Eve did eat the forbidden fruit. What might you have said to her just before the first bite? What does 2 Timothy 1:7 tell us? And what might you have said to Eve after she sinned? What does James 5:16 tell us to do? Rather than confess her sin to Adam, Eve offered him a taste and so sinned again. Proverbs 10:17 tells us what happens when we ignore God's commands. In your life, who else might be led astray by your willful actions?
4. Eve's big cover-up came next in Genesis 3:7-8, where we find her hiding behind skimpy leaves, then hiding behind trees. Denial is another form of trying to hide our sins, even from ourselves. Is denying or covering up as serious a sin as the initial act of disobedience? Why or why not? What does Isaiah 29:15-16 suggest? What does Psalm 69:5 remind us about trying to hide our sin? And what does Psalm 32:5 teach us that we should do? Eve sins yet again when she plays the blame game. What does 1 John 1:9 instruct us to do when we realize we've sinned? How does that promise comfort you?
5. What's the most important lesson you learned from the story of this mother of all Bad Girls, Eve?

Copyright © 2018 by Liz Curtis Higgs.