

## How to Enjoy the Bible Events Series

You hold in your hands one of the most remarkable Bible study materials ever written and published. This series was first published in English years ago and has been used by many thousands of people in the English-speaking world.

Now, with permission of the original publishers, the series is available in several languages as collections printed under many contemporary titles.

What makes this series so valuable is that each Bible event leads the reader or the group to discover the deepest truths of the Bible history for themselves. This is done through insightful multiple choice questions which draw the readers to enter into the story and find for themselves its meanings and implications and to apply the history to their own lives.

The series is best “taught” by persons who encourage the group to do most of the talking and thinking. The teacher best acts as a leader in which the group discovers its way through the Scriptural events. The teacher may help the group when he or she believes that valuable truths have been overlooked, but the first discoverers should be members of the group itself. This stirs tremendous interest on the part of the group. This also relieves the teacher of the responsibility, under older systems of teaching, to carefully master all the truths of the text and present them in a way that would hopefully interest and “teach” the group.

Almost all teachers report that their classes or groups show much more interest than before and that teaching this series is much easier than it was under the older systems of teaching.

In the same way, individuals who use these booklets for their own personal study find this investigative method much more interesting and meaningful. The reader is invited to sense the drama of each story in his or her own Bible, be it Catholic or Evangelical, and be led to discern the spiritual truths that are packed into each story.



## True Beauty

---

*From the “Bible Events” Series*

---

**NATIONAL BIBLE READING  
CAMPAIGN**



## CONTENTS

<b>Event 1</b>	Mary's Eternal Beauty	1
<b>Event 2</b>	The Chance to Start Over	3
<b>Event 3</b>	A Woman in Search of Beauty	5
<b>Event 4</b>	Beautified by Jesus	7
<b>Event 5</b>	Beauty in the Face of Competition and Disappointment	9
<b>Event 6</b>	A Generous Woman's Rewards	11

### National Bible Reading Campaign

#### Church Starts International

P. O. Box 177

Henrietta, Texas 76365

billdavis@churchstarts.com

www.churchstarts.com

Materials Adapted from the Serendipity Bible

© 1998, 1996 by Serendipity House. Used by permission.

© 2006 Ted Lindwall

# True Beauty

What woman does not want to be considered beautiful? What percentage of the general feminine population could win a beauty contest? If the ideal of the movies and modern culture is right, the great majority of women would lose the contest and be considered as inferior. Perhaps it is due to these false standards regarding beauty that many women look upon themselves as inferior and of little value. They might even say that God is unjust in not giving them the beauty that so many seem to demand.

The truth is that real beauty starts in the soul and extends to the body. Those who have a beautiful soul shine and attract others. They also have the will and sense of security to take care of their physical appearance. They appear younger than their age would indicate. There are also women who are physically beautiful who because of the ugliness of their souls repel others and are criticized and avoided. With the passage of time, they lose all the advantages they once had and become bitter and alone.

The Bible tells the secrets of many women who achieved true beauty. Their examples can contribute more to the lasting beauty of modern women than any beauty course available today!

## First Bible Event

## Mary's Eternal Beauty

### Luke 1:39-56



#### Great Bible Truths:

1. Women need the wise counsel and encouragement of other women.
2. The filling of God's Spirit leads us to worship God and give blessing to others.
3. Humility is required for those who will be made great by God.

Statues and paintings always show Mary to be beautiful. The Bible, however, says nothing about her physical appearance, but says much about her real beauty. In this, Mary is an inspiration to all women. When a woman has the spiritual grace of Mary, others will consider her to be a person of true and outstanding beauty.

Mary heard from the angel Gabriel that she would become the virgin mother of Jesus, the Son of God. At the same time, Gabriel told her about the miraculous pregnancy of her elderly relative, Elizabeth. Immediately, Mary left on foot to visit and stay with her from the sixth to the ninth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy with him who would be known as John the Baptist.

#### Read Luke 1:39-45

1. Why do you think Mary rushed to the distant house of Elizabeth to stay with her for so long?

- ☐ She needed the counsel and encouragement of an older woman.
- ☐ Being poor, she could only get away going to a relative's house.
- ☐ Only Elizabeth could possibly understand how she felt.
- ☐ She probably knew Elizabeth and Zachariah, her relatives, to be spiritually wise.
- ☐ She urgently needed human counsel and encouragement.

2. What did Elizabeth do when she was filled with the Holy Spirit?

- ☐ She spoke in a strange language.
- ☐ She blessed Mary and the baby she would have.
- ☐ She was overwhelmed by the fact that the future mother of the Savior had come to her.
- ☐ She experienced strong kicking from her baby.
- ☐ She was jealous of Mary's privilege.

#### Read verses 46-49

3. How did this experience seem to impress Mary in regards to God and herself?

- ☐ Her heart was filled with praise for God.
- ☐ She was amazed that God would favor a person of such a low station in society.
- ☐ She realized that God was doing great things for her.
- ☐ She was proud of what she had become.
- ☐ She marveled at the greatness and holiness of God.

#### Read verses 50-56

4. What was Mary learning about God in his relationship to others?

- ☐ God grants his great mercy to those who fear and love him.
- ☐ God scatters the proud and brings down rulers.
- ☐ God lifts up those who are truly humble before him and others.
- ☐ God honors those who praise and honor themselves.

5. What two spiritual truths found in this event most impress you?

- ☐ God's special care and use of those who remain humble before him
- ☐ The special encouragement women can give each other
- ☐ God uses humble women for great purposes.
- ☐ The greatness of mothers can be measured by the spiritual greatness of their children.

6. Which two qualities of these women do you most want for yourself?

- ☐ A true spirit of humility in the sight of God and of others
- ☐ A profound reverence for God
- ☐ A sense of call for a great task
- ☐ An ability to inspire and prepare my children for God's service
- ☐ Spiritual wisdom more than worldly understanding

## Second Bible Event

**The Chance to Start Over****John 8:1-11****Great Bible Truths:**

1. God forgives sinners. He calls on them to stop their sinful ways.
2. Sinners are in no position to judge others - only God can judge.
3. Jesus is the friend of all who know they are sinners and ask his forgiveness.



The word “gospel” means “good news.” The wonderful news from God is that anyone can get a new start in life. By our own sinful nature, we failed the first time, but, by the grace of God, we can start over again with God’s full pardon and the beauty of Jesus Christ within us. The following event dramatically illustrates this truth.

**Read John 8:1-8**

1. How do you think Jesus felt when he saw the angry faces of the accusers?
  - ☐ “They are so cruel to this woman!”
  - ☐ “Don’t they realize that they are also sinners?”
  - ☐ “They are right in condemning this sinner.”
  - ☐ “They know nothing about love and forgiveness.”
  - ☐ “They will do anything they can to trap me.”
2. What do you think is the main reason they did not bring the adulterous man to Jesus?
  - ☐ Perhaps the man was innocent.
  - ☐ Perhaps the man trapped the woman so they could use her to trap Jesus.
  - ☐ As men, they found it easier to condemn a woman.
  - ☐ People use double standards when they condemn some and excuse others.
3. What do you think was the real reason they brought this woman to Jesus?
  - ☐ They were genuinely concerned about the woman.
  - ☐ If Jesus ordered her to be killed, the people would see he was not compassionate.
  - ☐ If Jesus forbade them to kill her, the people would understand that he was against the law.
  - ☐ If Jesus could give no answer, the people would think that he was weak or ignorant.

4. Why do you think Jesus told the sinless man among them to throw the first stone?
  - ☐ He knew and they knew that there was no sinless man among them.
  - ☐ This was a way Jesus could save the woman’s life.
  - ☐ It is much harder to kill someone than it is to speak against them.
  - ☐ Jesus wanted everyone to understand how unjust it was for sinners to condemn other sinners.

**Read again John 8:9-11**

5. What do you think Jesus most wanted to teach the sinful woman?
  - ☐ That he was her true friend.
  - ☐ She was really not guilty of anything.
  - ☐ Jesus forgave her and gave her a new chance at life.
  - ☐ To enjoy a new life, she was to stop living as she did before.
6. How does this Bible event help you most?
  - ☐ To better understand that Jesus loves me
  - ☐ To think twice before accusing others of sin
  - ☐ To realize that the Lord is willing to forgive me and my worst sins
  - ☐ To understand how important it is for me to depart from sin
  - ☐ To show kindness to those who are abhorred by others

**7. Personal Questions: (You may keep the answers to yourself)**

What sin did you commit that makes you ashamed even now? What would Jesus say about that sin? Will he forgive you? What does he want from you now?

## Third Bible Event

**A Woman in Search of Beauty****1 Kings 10:1-10, 13****Great Bible Truths:**

1. The greatest wisdom is based on reverence for and obedience to God.
2. Personal growth in wisdom and true beauty depends on humility and an eagerness to learn.
3. The true worship of God leads to beauty of character and Godly prosperity.

Every woman has a measure of natural beauty, but those who are most beautiful in every respect are those who seek it for their own lives. In every person who loves and serves God we can discover special qualities of beauty that we do well to bring into our own personalities. The Queen of Sheba had the wisdom to search for beauty, even at great personal cost. It is no surprise that history remembers her as being an outstandingly beautiful person herself.

**Read 1 Kings 10:1-2**

1. What do you think most inspired the queen of Sheba to make the very long trip to see King Solomon?

- ☐ She wondered if his world-wide fame was really deserved.
- ☐ She was curious about his God
- ☐ She wondered what she could learn from him to improve her own kingdom.
- ☐ Royalty enjoys being with royalty.
- ☐ She was jealous of Solomon and wanted to discover his weaknesses.
- ☐ She wanted answers to questions no one else could answer.

2. What do you think most impressed King Solomon about this woman?

- ☐ Her physical beauty
- ☐ Her eagerness to learn from him and to improve her own kingdom
- ☐ Her sense of humility that made her a good learner
- ☐ Her generous gifts and personal sacrifices to see King Solomon

**Read 1 Kings 10:3-5**

3. Of all she observed, what do you think most overwhelmed the queen in Jerusalem?

- ☐ Solomon's answers to all her difficult questions.
- ☐ Solomon's sincere worship of God
- ☐ The great wealth that surrounded Solomon
- ☐ Solomon's willingness to give her such personal attention

**Read 1 Kings 10:6-9**

4. What surprises you most about the queen's testimony to Solomon?

- ☐ She admitted that she had not heard even the half about the glories of King Solomon and his kingdom
- ☐ She rejoiced at how Solomon's wisdom brought happiness and blessing to his officials and people.
- ☐ She discovered the God of Israel through her acquaintance with Solomon.
- ☐ She attributed the glories of Israel to the eternal love of God.

**Read 1 Kings 10:10 and 13**

5. What do you believe were the most important results of the queen's visit?

- ☐ The great amount of gold and spices the queen gave to Solomon
- ☐ The wonderful gifts the queen took home to Sheba
- ☐ The answers to the hard questions that had bothered the queen
- ☐ The spiritual influence that Solomon had on the queen and her nation
- ☐ The testimony the queen undoubtedly gave to others about the glories of Solomon and his God

6. Where do you think we can find our greatest help in getting godly wisdom?

- ☐ In personal Bible reading and study
- ☐ In church
- ☐ In a university or theological seminary
- ☐ From godly friends

7. Personal Questions: Whom do you know who might best help you to grow in beauty and wisdom? Who needs you to be their teacher and example in godly wisdom and personal beauty?

## Fourth Bible Event

**Beautified by Jesus****Luke 7:36-50****Great Bible Truths:**

1. No one is so righteous as to not need the Lord's forgiveness.
2. Jesus has compassion on and loves those who others think are "lost causes."
3. God's forgiveness brings a peace that nothing else can give.

**Read Luke 7:36-39**

1. How do you think Jesus felt when the woman came to him and acted in this way?
  - ☐ It was an embarrassing moment for him.
  - ☐ He recognized the woman's sorrow for her sinful past.
  - ☐ He saw that the woman trusted in him and hoped for forgiveness and cleansing.
  - ☐ He recognized the unforgiving spirit of his host, Simon.
  - ☐ He worried about what his enemies would say.
2. The woman did not say a word. What did her actions tell Jesus and the others?
  - ☐ Her tears told of her broken heart that her life was destroyed by her sin.
  - ☐ Her tears spoke to the unusual tenderness of Jesus.
  - ☐ Her expensive perfume said that money was nothing compared to her hope in Jesus.
  - ☐ Her expensive perfume complemented loveliness of Christ's personality.
  - ☐ Her wiping the feet of Jesus was only the action of a gracious hostess.
  - ☐ Her wiping the feet of Jesus demonstrated her subjection to Christ.

**Read Luke 7:40-47**

3. What did the Pharisee's attitude reveal about himself?
  - ☐ He had no faith in Jesus, doubting his ability to know what kind of a woman had come.
  - ☐ The Pharisee had a compassionate attitude toward the "sinner."
  - ☐ He suspected that Jesus was overly tolerant of sin.
  - ☐ He considered himself to be a righteous judge of men.

## 4. What do you consider to be most significant about the story Jesus told?

- ☐ Only by the story could the Pharisee really understand what had happened in his home.
- ☐ The sinful woman was shown to be spiritually wiser than the self-righteous Pharisee.
- ☐ Jesus clearly explained why people with moral failures are especially open to his love.
- ☐ Self-righteousness limits one's ability to love the Lord.

**Read Luke 7:48-50**

## 5. How do you think the woman felt when Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven"?

- ☐ Jesus really loves me; he doesn't just tolerate me in spite of my sin.
- ☐ If Jesus says that I am forgiven, I am really forgiven!
- ☐ Jesus is repaying me for the perfume and my serving him.
- ☐ Jesus loves me and forgives me although I do not deserve it.

## 6. Do you believe the other guests understood that Jesus has the power to forgive? Explain your answer.

## 7. What did Jesus explain to the woman?

- ☐ Her faith in him, and not her generosity, had made possible her forgiveness.
- ☐ Her good deeds had saved her.
- ☐ She was not only forgiven; she was saved!
- ☐ Peace was to be the result of her salvation.
- ☐ God's forgiveness was to be followed by her obedience.

## 8. What seems hardest for you to learn from this lesson?

- ☐ The Lord is ready to forgive me of my worst sins.
- ☐ I am in no position to condemn others for their sins.
- ☐ The Lord really expects me to live a holy life



## Beauty in the Face of Competition and Disappointment

### 1 Samuel 1:1-20

#### Great Bible Truths:

1. Even the best of God's people suffer conflicts and unfair competition.
2. God may permit hardships to prepare us for special tasks.
3. God's beautiful people do not pay back others for unfair treatment.

Internal beauty is more important and more enduring than physical beauty. The reality of such beauty is tested by opposition and by one's response to competition and personal disappointment. Many women are openly competitive with other women and this is a great challenge to the woman who always wants to be "beautiful." How can one remain beautiful under such conditions? Most importantly, how do you respond to the open challenges of others to you with your limitations?

In the centuries before Christ, the Jews permitted the practice of polygamy by which a man could have more than one wife. Although the Jewish law permitted it, human nature repudiated it and such marriages mentioned in the Old Testament were unhappy ones. Today, the competition between women may be between co-workers, close relatives and others. This kind of situation always challenges us, and may bring out the worst in us. To maintain beauty in such circumstances is a mark of the most beautiful of women. Hannah was such a woman and her story is worth repeating.

#### Read 1 Samuel 1:1-8

1. What would you judge to be the two main reasons for conflict between the two women?
  - ☐ Peninnah was openly proud of being the only wife with children.
  - ☐ Elkanah openly showed favoritism to Hannah over Peninnah and his children with her.
  - ☐ Both women were in an intolerable situation.
  - ☐ Peninnah acted badly, provoking Hannah.
  - ☐ Two women cannot live happily with one man.



#### Read 1 Samuel 1:9-18

2. How did Hannah respond to this situation?

- ☐ She attacked Peninnah, telling her that her husband did not love her.
- ☐ Hannah suffered depression and wept when provoked.
- ☐ Hannah was cruel to Peninnah's children.
- ☐ Hannah persistently prayed that God would give her a child.
- ☐ Hannah promised that her child would be given to God for His service.

3. What were the reactions of Eli, the priest, to Hannah's weeping in the place of worship?

- ☐ He thought she was drunk.
- ☐ He was embarrassed to have such a woman in the house of God.
- ☐ He drove Hannah out of the Temple.
- ☐ He was inspired by God to promise her a child within a year.

4. How did Hannah respond to Eli's promise?

- ☐ Her depression was lifted and her appetite returned.
- ☐ Her face lit up with hope.
- ☐ She declared that she was the servant of the Lord.
- ☐ In spite of her long-lasting sterility, she had full faith that God had heard her prayer.

#### Read 1 Samuel 1:19-20

5. For what two reasons do you most admire Hannah?

- ☐ She believed the promise and was blessed with her first pregnancy.
- ☐ She named her son "Samuel", meaning "Heard of God".
- ☐ She not only wanted to give her child to God's service but did so.
- ☐ She never tried to retaliate Peninnah's ugly actions.

6. What do you think you most need to learn from this event?

- ☐ To understand that God can use unfair treatment against me to prepare me for greatness
- ☐ To endure unfair treatment with a gentle spirit
- ☐ To not respond to unkind remarks with sharp answers
- ☐ To trust God to use me beautifully even when others constantly try to put me down

## Sixth Bible Event

**A Generous Woman's Rewards****2 Kings 4:8-37****Great Bible Truths:**

1. God surprisingly blesses those who serve others without a desire for reward.
2. True faith gives confidence in the face of apparent tragedy.
3. God's greatest servants still have much to learn.



Even in the male dominated society of the Old Testament, it was impossible not to see and admire women of great quality. Such was the unnamed woman of faith simply called "the Shunammite" who dealt so generously and forthrightly with the great prophet Elisha. What distinguished this woman from all the others of her day? It was the beauty of her generosity and faith. It was a beauty that even God recognized and rewarded. True beauty today is also a beauty of generosity and enduring faith.

**Read 2 Kings 4:8-10**

1. What, in your mind, was the most admirable fact about this woman?
  - ☐ She took pity on a stranger and gave him a meal.
  - ☐ She insisted on feeding him every time he came to her town.
  - ☐ She persuaded her husband to build and furnish him a room.

**Read verses 11-16**

2. Which of the following happened as a result of her generosity and faith?
  - ☐ The prophet asked her what he could do for her.
  - ☐ The woman gave him a list of things she wanted.
  - ☐ The woman told him that she was content with her situation.
  - ☐ The prophet himself had to decide what she most needed.
  - ☐ The woman was surprised by a promise that seemed impossible.
  - ☐ The woman said she deserved this favor and more.

3. Why do you think the woman answered "Don't deceive your servant."?

- ☐ She had little faith in the prophet or the God he represented.
- ☐ She had been disappointed by many years of not being able to have a child.
- ☐ She was more accustomed to giving than to receiving.

**Read verses 17-26**

4. Why do you think the woman didn't tell either her husband or the prophet's servant about the death of her son?
  - ☐ She didn't want to upset them.
  - ☐ She thought everything was all right, that her son would be given life.
  - ☐ The only man who had to know about it was the prophet of God.

**Read verses 27-37**

5. What lesson do you think made the greatest impression on the prophet from this experience?
  - ☐ Instead of giving him a vision, God sent the woman herself to tell him of the death of her son.
  - ☐ He learned that it was not enough to send his servant with his staff.
  - ☐ He had to do everything he could, even going to the boy's body and laying on it.
  - ☐ He saw God reward his faith and the faith of the woman.

6. What two things do you admire most in this woman?

- ☐ Though rich, she would invite a dusty stranger to her table.
- ☐ Though not Jewish, she wanted to serve the servant of God.
- ☐ She showed an amazingly calm faith when her son died in her arms.
- ☐ She would not settle for less than to personally find and speak to God's servant.
- ☐ She was able to move to action both her husband (in the building of a room for a stranger) and the prophet (in coming to raise her son).

7. What two qualities do you see in this woman that you most want for yourself?

- ☐ Selfless interest in serving others, even strangers
- ☐ Powerful and growing faith in God that brings blessing to others
- ☐ The ability to inspire others to do great things
- ☐ To be a generous steward of all I have

8. Personal Challenge: Remember your two choices, write them down and begin praying every day that the Lord will bring them about in your life.