



The Most Overwhelmed Women of the Bible: How their Stories Help us Find Peace

by Mary DeMuth

**Week 4 Chapter 7: Elizabeth, the Barren One; Chapter 8:
Mary, the Pierced One.**

Check in Question: *Describe one of your Christmas traditions.*

Opening Prayer

Faithful God,

In our long-standing prayers and deep heartaches, remind us that You are still at work.

Teach us, as You taught Elizabeth, to trust Your timing and to believe that nothing is impossible for You.

Hold our grief with tenderness, even as we rejoice in the blessings You give to others.

Send us companions like Mary and Elizabeth—friends who lift us, rejoice with us, and help us carry our burdens.

Strengthen our faith when answers seem slow, and open our eyes to the quiet miracles unfolding around us.

May we remain steadfast, hopeful, and grateful for Your constant, miraculous love.
Amen.

Reflection questions

Chapter 7: Elizabeth, the Barren One

Truths and Questions on page 133-4

Did you find any of the truths hard to understand or truths that support your faith?

- Sometimes God intervenes supernaturally in a long-term situation or prayer.
- We can grieve our situation and, at the same time, be grateful for God's work in another's life.
- We have a choice to be faithful to God even when he doesn't answer our cries on our timetable.
- God often sends people to help us when we're overwhelmed.
- God can do the miraculous

Questions for discussion

1. How does the story of Elizabeth teach you about the characters of God?
2. Have you ever experienced infertility or walked alongside someone who has? What have you learned?
3. How does the interaction between Mary and Elizabeth reveal the best traits of friendship?
4. What long standing prayer request has brought heartache your way? How has God been answering that prayer over the years?
5. Who in your life truly rejoices when you have a win? Who do you love to celebrate with?

Chapter 8: Mary, the Pierced One.

Truths and Questions on page 154-5

Did you find any of the truths hard to understand or truths that support your faith?

- God often chooses the overlooked to do an overwhelming task.
- Studying the word of God brings much profit to our souls.
- God promises to be with us even though the most difficult and bewildering of circumstances.
- To be a disciple is a daily, Holy Spirit- powered act.
- Pentecost is available to all of us-- because we have the Holy Spirit within us all the days of our lives.

Questions for discussion

1. How has your view of Mary changed after reading this chapter, if at all?
2. Why do you think we overlook Mary in our study of the gospels and acts? What new things did you realize about her lengthy story?
3. What kind of emotions would you have felt if you were in Mary's position during the angelic visitation? The birth of Jesus? Fleeing to Egypt? The miracle at Cana? Watching your son suffer and die on the cross?
4. How, specifically, could Mary have been overwhelmed in each part of her story? What do you hear from her about how to navigate overwhelmed?
5. What cultural changes have taken place since Mary's story? What has remained the same?

Closing Prayer

For whom and what shall we pray...

Gracious God,

You choose the humble and overlooked, just as You chose Mary, to carry out Your overwhelming work of love.

As we study Your Word, let it strengthen us and open our eyes to Your constant presence.

When we face confusing or difficult moments, remind us that You walk with us, just as You walked with her.

Make us faithful disciples, empowered each day by Your Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

Help us trust Your guidance, embrace Your call, and live with courage as Mary did.

May the fire of Pentecost shine in us always, sending us forth in hope and joy.

Amen.

Next time, Chapters 9-10 The Widow and Priscilla
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Definations

(p150)

The **Immaculate Conception** is a Catholic dogma stating that the Blessed Virgin Mary has preserved free from original sin from the very first moment of her own conception, by a unique divine grace, to prepare her to be the Mother of God. Defined by Pope Pius IX in 1854, it's celebrated on December 8th and is often confused with the virgin birth of Jesus (conceived by the Holy Spirit), but it specifically refers to Mary's conception by her parents, St. Anne and St. Joachim, being sinless.

Incarnation means embodying a deity, spirit, or idea in physical form, most famously in Christianity, where it refers to God becoming human in Jesus Christ, but also generally to any embodiment of a concept, like a new season of a show embodying a character's new life. It literally means "in flesh," stemming from the Latin *in carne*, representing a spirit entering matter or a divine being taking human form