

Week Five: The Braiding of Hair

Leader Meeting Outline

Group Begins

- (Welcome group members)
- This week we are reviewing chapter 5, which tackled the sensitive topics of beauty, perceptions, and misplaced hopes in physical appearances rather than eternal realities.
- Let's read the quote from author Carolyn Mahaney & Nicole Whitacre at the beginning of the chapter and then we'll pray.
- (Read Carolyn Mahaney & Nicole Whitacre quote on pg. 40 of *Clean Home, Messy Heart*)
- (Lead group in opening prayer)

Chapter 5 Group Review

Opening Questions

- How did you relate to the opening story of this chapter?
- Would someone please share a part in the "Messiness of Perceptions" section that really spoke to them?

Washing with the Word Reflections

- As women, it's common to hold our physical beauty in high regard, especially in a culture that thrives on self-glorification. Can all of us honestly admit that we spend far more time on our appearances than on celebrating the beauty of God's glory in creation? Why do you think this is?
- Let's take a look at what Isaiah 61:10 has to share with us.
- (Turn bibles to Isaiah 61:10 and read aloud to group)
- Let's be honest, ladies: how frequently do we wake up rejoicing like this? In your own words, why is Isaiah so overwhelmed with joy?
- Is there anything in this section that someone would like to expand upon in this section?
- The righteousness we are given in Christ is indeed a precious and beautiful adorning. Let's turn to Song of Solomon 4:7 to hear a special word of adoration from our Father.
- (Have a group member read Song of Solomon 4:7 aloud to group)
- Do you believe that *in Christ* there is no flaw *in you* as it relates to how God views you?
- The author writes, "It costs nothing for a human to whisper these sweet nothings into your ear, yet it cost the Lord *everything* to be able to do so." How does that make you feel about the good news of God's love?
- Is there anything else in this section you'd like to highlight?
- Let's turn our bibles now to Romans 9:20.
- (Have a group member read Romans 9:20 aloud)
- Does someone have thoughts about this Scripture or section that they'd like to share?
- Why do you think these biblical truths about beauty, appearance, and our identity in Christ are important to share with our children?

- There's a verse in Isaiah that speaks to a cornerstone in Zion that will be a sure foundation for us. Let's go to Isaiah 28:16 to read more.
- *(Read Isaiah 28:16 aloud to group)*
- Who is the cornerstone that Isaiah is talking about? *(answer: Christ)*
- What happens when we made other things besides Christ a cornerstone in our lives, such as our beauty?
- Let's finish this part of the group discussion by reminding ourselves of the glory we as believers have to look forward to. Turn with me to Isaiah 62:1-4.
- *(Have a group member read Isaiah 62:1-4 aloud)*

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Study Reflection

- This exercise had us insert our names into blank spaces in order to further solidify our understanding of how God sees us in Christ. I'd like each person in the group to share which line number (1-5) encouraged you most, as well as read the coordinating Scripture aloud to us. Take a moment to select the number you'd like to share and to look up the Scripture.

Scripture Memorization

- Now let's test ourselves on this week's memory verse.
- *(Note: the method how you do this should be pre-determined by the preference of your group. See Small Group Leader Kit Introduction for suggestions).*

Prayer

- This exercise had us read parables from Luke 15. How were you reminded of God's love as you read through these parables this past week?

Reflection Journal Users: You may or may not choose to review the 5 Scriptures from this week's reflection journal. If you would like to, take turns reading the verses aloud and discuss how the Spirit convicted and/or encouraged them through their reflection journaling time.

Group Ends

- *(Conclude meeting by asking for prayer requests and prayer reports. Then lead group in closing prayer.)*