

Revive Our Hearts™

ABIGAIL

LIVING WITH THE
DIFFICULT PEOPLE
IN YOUR LIFE

Leader Guide



Dear Friend,



Welcome to the Women of the Bible series!

We're excited that you've chosen to lead women through *Abigail: Living with the Difficult People in Your Life*.

There's much we can gain from studying 1 Samuel 25 and the extraordinary life of Abigail. We'll learn that while foolish people live all around us, God's grace enables us to honor Him by responding to them in wisdom and discernment.

Here's a flyover of the six main truths presented in this study:

- Week 1: A foolish heart without regard for God will act foolishly. A heart surrendered to Jesus will glorify God.
- Week 2: Self-control isn't about sheer willpower or human effort. It's about being under the control of the Holy Spirit in every area of your life.
- Week 3: If you are a child of God, then you are bundled up in His eternal protection. No matter what temporary trouble you face, you can rest, knowing He will protect you forever.
- Week 4: Your life has influence and power if you are filled with the Spirit and Word of God.
- Week 5: Christ-followers can be content in every circumstance because we know there's a true happy ending promised for us.
- Week 6: God has a purpose in our suffering. Embracing the cross, instead of running from it, will shape us to be more like Jesus.

Consider using these prayer prompts to ask God to deeply embed truth in the hearts of the women who will join you in this study:

- **Pray** for God to make them gracious, kind, and sweet-spirited in their homes and relationships, no matter what people they have to deal with on a daily basis.
- **Pray** that their behavior wouldn't be controlled by the choices of others but by the Holy Spirit.

- **Pray** for the Holy Spirit to remove blindness to their own foolishness.
- **Pray** that they would allow difficult circumstances to shape them into wise and discerning women who reflect Jesus.
- **Pray** that they would maintain an eternal perspective on their circumstances and know that God is redeeming this fallen world.

As you step out to lead, it won't be your personality, your razor-sharp leadership skills (or killer brownies!) that will produce fruit from this study. You can rely on the Word of God to accomplish the work of God (*Isa. 55:11*) and that the Holy Spirit will empower you (*2 Peter 1:3–4*) as you depend upon Him. Your teachability, humility, authenticity, prayerfulness, and genuine love will be a channel of blessing to your group members.

If you're new to leading a group and aren't sure where to start, we've got you covered! We created a handbook, **Small Group Leadership Made Simple**, with answers to the questions you may be asking—including answers to the ones you haven't yet thought to ask.

Included in this guide to *Abigail: Living with the Difficult People in Your Life*, you'll find:

- Prompts to prepare your heart to lead
- Optional prep for further study
- General tips for leading a women's Bible study
- A suggested schedule for your group time
- Ideas for setting expectations and growing together as a community
- Optional icebreaker activity for the first session

In addition to these resources, you'll find group discussion questions on pages 103–105 of the study.

Your commitment to shepherd women as they dig into God's Word matters. We're behind you and trust that the Lord will work in the hearts of the women in your group and in your own heart in the weeks ahead.

Blessings,

Leslie Bennett
Manager of Women's Ministry Initiatives



As you seek to equip women through *Abigail: Living with the Difficult People in Your Life*, here are some suggestions.

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO LEAD

Ask God to do a fresh work in your own heart as you lead and for wisdom and anointing to serve your group.

If possible, pray daily for your group members by name.

Consider identifying a Scripture passage to pray over the group throughout the study. Here are some suggestions:

- 1 Peter 4:12–13
- 2 Tim. 1:7
- Rom. 12:17–18
- 2 Cor. 4:17–18

Pray for God to give you love and sensitivity toward each woman you will shepherd.

Be genuine. Leaders aren't expected to know everything, so learn to say, "I don't know the answer to your question, but I'll find out." Then report back to the group the following week.

Study thoroughly and know the material.

OPTIONAL PREP

Listen to the *Women of the Bible* podcast, hosted by Erin Davis, and gain insights for leading your group. In a style that feels like grabbing coffee with your favorite wise women, Erin and friends will walk through the study with you and share their own journeys toward honoring God in difficult relationships. Episodes are also available on video. Listen or watch the Abigail season of the podcast at ReviveOurHearts.com/WomenoftheBible.

Check out Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth's audio series "*Abigail: How to Live with the Fools in Your Life*" which offers further teaching on how a godly woman can influence difficult people without becoming difficult herself.

TIPS FOR LEADING WELL

- Don't try to carry the full load alone. Find ways to involve others by delegating things like communications with the group, attendance tracking, and snack preparation.
- Build unity without demanding uniformity.
- Create an environment that invites asking questions and wrestling with difficult parts of Scripture.
- In a spirit of love, guide conversations toward seeing the Word as our plumb line for all of life.
- Allow for short periods of silence while women formulate their thinking.
- Draw out discussion by rephrasing questions or inviting members to share incomplete thoughts.
- Between sessions, connect with each member or the group as a whole.
- Be transparent so that others will feel invited to be real about their fears, insecurities, and inadequacies.
- Have fun, laugh, cry, and find time to enjoy life together outside the group.

CREATE A PLAN FOR A POSITIVE GROUP EXPERIENCE.

Sample Schedule

15–30 minutes | Connect

- Encourage community.
- Offer refreshments (optional).

45–60 minutes | Discuss

- Start consistently on time.
- Welcome everyone warmly and open in prayer.
- Lead the discussion using the group questions at the end of the study book as a guide.

5–10 minutes | Wrap-up

- Introduce next week's topic.
- Clarify the homework assignment.
- Relay your enthusiasm for the truths you'll glean from the next week's study and discussion.





15–30 minutes | Pray

- Pray for each other.
- End consistently on time.
- Invite members to linger for informal fellowship (optional).

SET EXPECTATIONS FOR GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

Consider asking your group to affirm these prompts at each meeting.

We will:

- Study lessons weekly.
- Engage with God's Truth openly and honestly.
- Root ourselves in the authority of Scripture more than opinions or experiences.

SET GUIDELINES FOR GROWING IN COMMUNITY

Consider asking your group to affirm these prompts at the first meeting or at each meeting.

We will:

- Listen intently to one another.
- Respect different perspectives.
- Create a safe place where each woman can be known and loved.
- Join the discussion without dominating.
- Keep confidential what is shared.
- Refrain from using our time to criticize people or complain about circumstances.
- Be cautious about using the names of difficult people if you don't have their permission.

OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITY

Set a lighthearted and fun tone at the first meeting. Have each woman share about a comical situation when she or someone else she knows acted foolishly. Be ready to begin the sharing with your own silly story. Afterwards, invite participants to share how they hope to grow spiritually from studying Abigail's story in 1 Samuel 25.



