

JEREMIAH 17:5-10

The  
Blessed  
Woman

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# *The Blessed Woman*

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# *The Blessed Woman*

## Introduction: Day one

When we moved to Saint Catharines, Ontario, we bought a fixer-upper home. We inherited a front garden from the previous owners that was more woody-shrubs than flowering perennials, so I spent weeks pulling out, cutting back, and tidying up. It finally began to take shape. I transplanted in perennial cuttings from friends and waited for the garden to thrive. Spring came and went. Then summer. Fall and winter turned into another unfruitful spring. The garden slowly grew, but it never flourished in my care. I waited for five years, plenty of time for those plants to take root, but the greenery was hardly any thicker on the day we left than it was that very first spring.

Approximately one year after moving to a different city, I was back in Saint Catharines. I decided to drive by the old place and see what the new owners had done to it. I was so shocked by the transformation that I had to park the car so I could take it all in. The garden took my breath away. It was stunning—I mean award-winning, blue-ribbon, acknowledged-by-the-city stunning. The new owner had coaxed beauty and life from the same plants that were merely surviving under my care. At that moment, I finally saw all the potential I had missed. I had been too easily satisfied and pleased by the stunted growth I had cultivated.

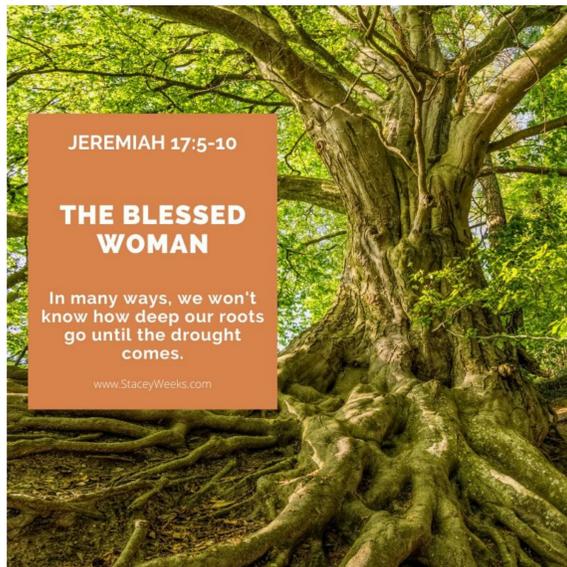
The new owner had tapped into something that I lacked.

Many years, many houses, and many gardens later (we've moved ten times in our married life), I've unsuccessfully tried to plant thriving gardens. But the truth is, I don't devote enough time to this endeavour to be successful. On a good gardening day, I might find time to dig a hole, add water, drop in a plant or two and give the ground a stomp before moving on. I don't even think of it again until the plant is nearly dead from neglect.

Then, I overcorrect, probably from guilt, and send the kiddos out front with the hose to water. They happily spray the plants, the grass, the windows, the porch, and each other. This sudden over-attention causes those lucky plants to perk, but they also develop shallow roots. These plants learn to expect frequent soaking during this stretch of attention, and then they die because I eventually forget about them, and their shallow roots cannot sustain them.

In some ways, our faith is like that garden. When life is easy, when we are watered regularly, and our needs are met, we perk. We might even appear to flourish. It's easy to stay satisfied and content when life is good, but what happens when life is not good? What happens when a drought comes, or the heat hits, and someone or something threatens life as you know it, and it causes you to question God's goodness, His sovereignty, or His love?

# The Blessed Woman



Over my years as a ministry wife, I have seen people respond to perceived threats in a variety of ways. Some walk away from the Lord, others react in anger, and others develop a victim mentality that they struggle to shake. But every so often, I am blessed as I witness a believer determined to resist the temptation to define God's goodness by how He responds to their requests. Their trust and hope are deeply rooted in the fertile Word of God. They have put in the

time needed to nurture their confidence in God. This rich faith makes them sure of God's character and love, and their life produces fruit in the middle of a drought. They do not fear. They are not anxious.

In many ways, you won't know how deep your roots go until the drought comes. You won't know until you are tested whether or not you have done the work of preparing the soil of your heart by providing it with the nutrients it needs to sustain life. You won't know if you have sent down roots far enough to not just survive the trials but produce fruit during the drought. This mini bible study will help.

This eight-part study of Jeremiah 17:5-10 is about examining the soil of your heart. It's about preparing yourself for a certain drought. It's about rooting yourself in the Word and allowing the Lord to lead you to the only water that matters so that when the heat hits, your roots will be the conduit that God uses to connect your soul to the nourishment it needs to survive. little bit of body text

We will learn what type of woman God blesses and how the blessed woman trusts in God. This trust enables her to produce an abundance of fruit, even when circumstances dictate that she should shrivel up and die. We will see that the blessed woman has a God-centered trust and a God-focused hope because she is rooted in the fertile soil of God's Word. The blessed woman plants herself near to God, knowing He is the living water that leads to abundance. We will learn about the heart of the blessed woman and how she moves toward God, weeding out the sins that choke off life. The blessed woman chases holiness.

Spend today reading and pondering Jeremiah 17:5-10. You might find it helpful to write down your observations. Tomorrow, we will dig into God's Word together and begin the process of weeding out the lies that stunt our growth and replacing them with life-changing truth.

# The Blessed Woman

## The Blessed Woman Trusts in God: Day two

What does it look like to be a woman spiritually alive, trusting in the Lord, and passionate about her faith? During the next few days, we will dig into Jeremiah 17 and uncover the characteristics of a blessed woman who understands what matters in life. Each day will alternate between study questions designed to guide you through the verses and seek what the Lord has for you to learn with a short reflection, sharing what the Lord has revealed to me as I sought Him for those very same verses. I am excited to dig into Jeremiah 17 together and learn more about becoming a blessed woman!

Open your Bible to Jeremiah 17 and read verses 1-8. This section of Jeremiah is known as an Oral Sermon. It's the Old Testament version of a Sunday morning sermon. Jeremiah preached this message of repentance to the people. He opens chapter 17 with these words, "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of their altars."

This phrase is a metaphor, a non-literal figure-of-speech, depicting the condition of the human heart. Jeremiah is communicating to the people that the human heart is so hard and disobedient that rebellion is engraved upon it with a diamond, one of the hardest known materials in the world. Jeremiah preaches this Word from God to these rebellious people, opening verse 5 with Thus says the Lord. Pay attention to the contrast given.

Jeremiah 17:5-8: Thus says the Lord:

"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

*Pray: Lord, as I ponder your Word, please speak to me through the power of your Spirit. Reveal to me what you desire to teach me. I invite you to soften my rebellious heart, open blind eyes, and convict me as necessary. Teach me to love you more. Begin by making some observations on the text. If you studied the passage yesterday, pull out your notes and answer the following questions.*

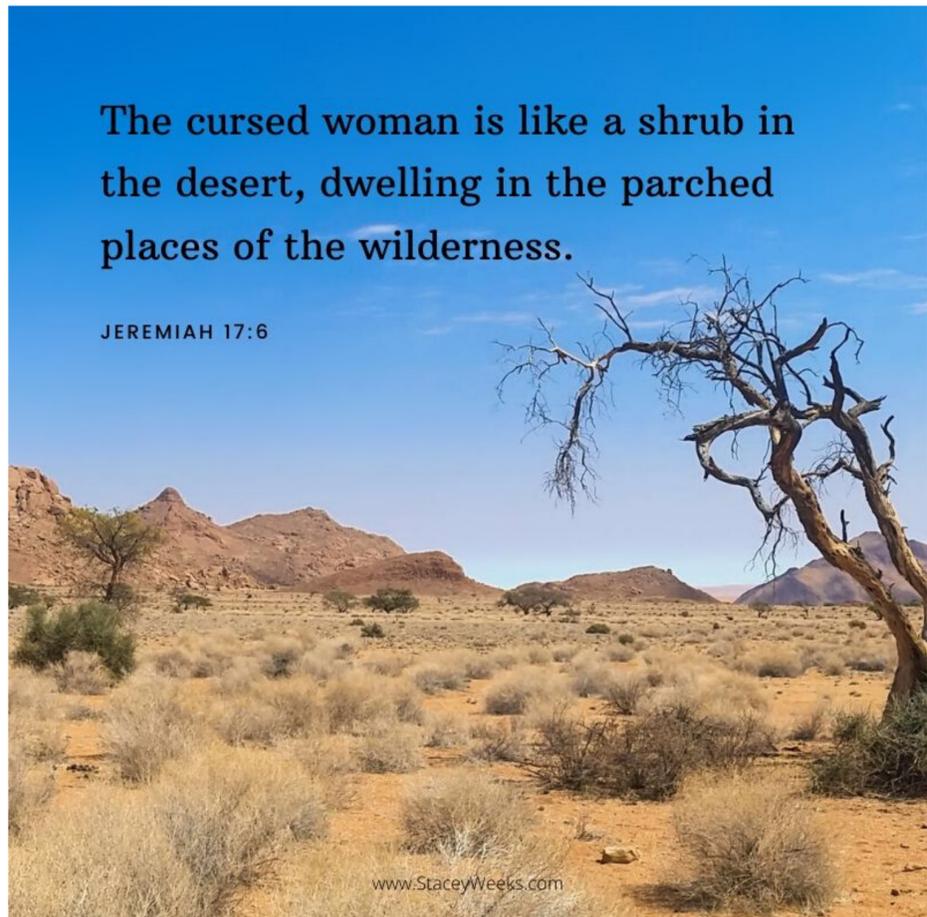
# The Blessed Woman

1. Who is speaking the words in verses 5-8, and what is being contrasted?

2. Why is the first man cursed? What are the results of his actions (v5)?

3. What are the dangers of trusting in your strength? Consider Hosea 10:13, "But you have planted wickedness, you have reaped evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have depended on your own strength and on your many warriors ..." (NIV)

4. In what ways are you depending on your own strength or on your own wisdom right now?



5. Why is the second man blessed and what are the results of his actions?

6. Describe the blessed man according to Psalm 2:12, 34:8, 71:5, 125:1. Then, define the word "refuge" and explain what it would look like for you to "take refuge" in the Lord.

7. In what ways and in what situations does our culture misplace trust and depend on manmade solutions?

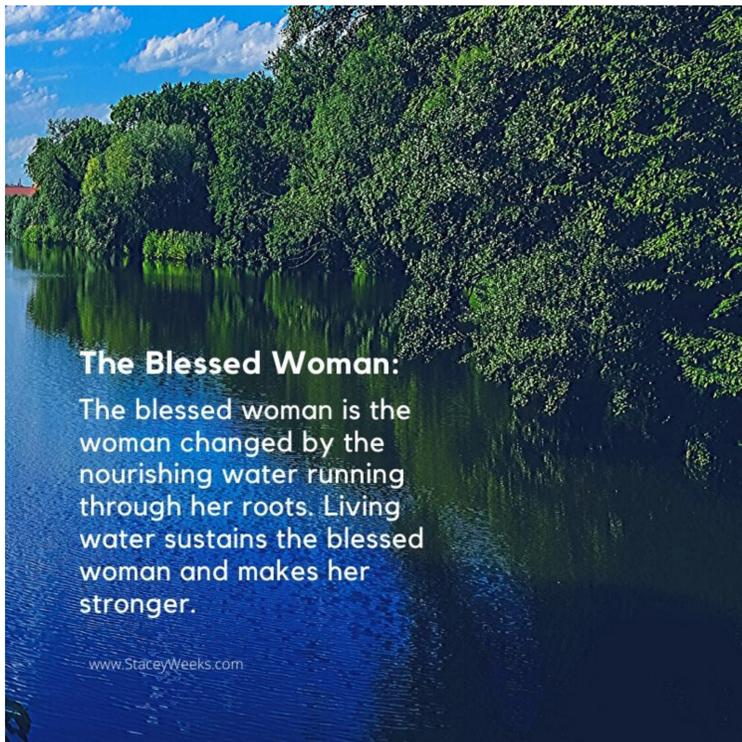
8. What manmade solutions tempt you to misplace your trust? What might it look like for you to trust in the Lord in those circumstances?

9. The cursed man is described using a simile (a comparison using like or as) and then with a hyperbole (an exaggerated statement). Explain how both illustrations fill in the image of a cursed man with a man-centered trust?

Now that you have done your own study on these verses, I'm excited to share what I learned about the cursed and blessed man.

# The Blessed Woman

## The Blessed Woman has a God-Centered Trust: Day three



Yesterday, you answered some questions that compared a cursed man and a blessed man. I hope you saw that Jeremiah didn't just preach against sin and rebellion, but he also showed the people where they could find hope. The blessed man whose trust is in the Lord (verse 7) contrasts the cursed man who trusts in himself (verse 5).

In Hosea 10:13, we see the danger of trusting in self. G. H. Livingston writes in the Evangelical Commentary on the Bible, "Israel has sown the seeds of wickedness instead of righteousness. The reapers will gather evil and the food prepared from it will be deception. All this is being done in Israel's

own strength, with their hope based on their many warriors. The strength available in the Lord is completely ignored." [1]

Oh, how I need to remember to trust in the Lord! Too often, I lean on my own strength and wisdom. I look at the external circumstances and feel discouraged. I seek ways to "fix" things instead of seeking the Lord. I miss the fundamental component of true faith. Both the cursed and blessed man had faith; the difference between them was the object of their faith.

The blessed man has a God-centered trust, a God-focused hope. He trusts the Lord and trusts in the Lord. The blessed man has placed his confidence in the Lord. He is sure of the Lord. A cross-reference to this sends us to Psalm 2:12 and 34:8, which say how blessed is the man who takes refuge in God. Refuge means shelter or protection from danger or trouble. It is a place of safety that provides aid, relief, or escape. The blessed man knows the Lord is his hope. Another cross-reference sends us to Psalm 71:5, where we read that God is our hope and our confidence.

In Psalm 125:1, we learn that those who trust in God are like Mount Zion; they cannot be moved. They abide forever. That is the picture here. The blessed man is the tree. The blessed man is planted near the water. The blessed man is sending its roots deep into God because God is the water that sustains the tree even through the fiercest drought.

# The Blessed Woman

All this is contrasted by the cursed man who trusts in his strength to sustain him. The shrub in the desert represents him, and he sees nothing good. The imagery of the shrub, the man with misplaced trust, is vivid: He is parched, alone in the wilderness, in salt land. If enough salt is added to land, it will prevent the plants from gaining water through osmosis. It will kill the existing plants and prevent new ones from growing. If our trust is misplaced, we are in a salt land with stifled growth that eventually kills us.

As a homeschool family, we sometimes complete science experiments. An experiment idea that I found online illustrates this point well. One day, the kids and I placed two sticks of celery into two separate glasses of water. In the first glass, we added food colouring. In the second glass, we added salt until it would no longer dissolve.

One day later, the celery in the glass with the food colour had changed colour through osmosis. It illustrates how the celery draws water to sustain it. This is called osmosis. But the celery in the salty water wilted. Instead of the celery drawing water from the glass, the salt drew moisture from the celery. This is called reverse osmosis. The salt sucked the life out of the celery.

The blessed man is the man changed by the nourishing water running through its roots. The water sustains the tree and makes it stronger. The cursed man dies; his trust is mistakenly placed in the salt land that sucked the life from him.

*Prayer: Lord, I confess the times in which I trusted in my strength and wisdom and I repent from self-sufficiency. I need you, Lord. I need you to deliver me from my patterns of sin, from \_\_\_\_\_ . I need you to remind me of your law. Great is your mercy. Great is your strength. You are good and do good. Your hands have made and fashioned me, and I will not forget your statutes. Lord, it is my heart's desire that I would become less like a cursed woman and more like a blessed woman as I work through this study. Please guide me toward that end.*

Tomorrow we will look at what difference a God-focused hope makes in the life of a believer.

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[1] Livingston, G. H. (1995). Hosea. In *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Vol. 3, p. 613). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

# The Blessed Woman

## The Blessed Woman has a God-Focused Hope: Day four

We've seen how the cursed man and his man-centered trust resulted in him turning from God in contrast to the blessed man and his God-centered trust. Today, we will focus on Jeremiah 17:7-8 and observe the differences that a God-focused hope makes in the life of a believer.

The word trust is repeated twice in verse seven. The first occurrence tells us where the trust of the blessed man is placed, and the second occurrence renames the subject of our trust: The Lord. This emphasis is the introduction to the benefits of trusting the Lord that follow.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 – “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

Pray: Lord, as I open your Word to seek your face, please guide my interpretation and application of all I read. I desire to be obedient to your Word. Teach my heart today.

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1. Psalm 1:1-6 is another passage that compares the godly and ungodly. How does Psalm 1:1-6 add to your understanding of Jeremiah 17:7-8? How does a blessed man act? What are his habits? What type of people fills his social group? Where does he find his delight and joy?

2. What simile describes the blessed man in Jeremiah 17:8? (A simile is a comparison using like or as.) Explain how this illustration helps you better understand what it means to be a woman with a God-centered trust?



# The Blessed Woman

3. The four actions that are the responsibility of the tree are listed in the left column. In the right column, describe how these metaphorical actions appear in the literal life of a believer. (The first one has been done for you.)

Metaphorical actions	Literal implications
The tree sends out roots by the stream.	Just as the tree seeks water to remain healthy, I must seek the living water mentioned in John 4:10, the spring of living water mentioned in Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13. This means that I find my strength and sustenance in the Word of God.
The tree does not fear the heat.	
The tree is not anxious during the drought.	
The tree continues to bear fruit in the heat and drought.	

# The Blessed Woman

4. What two circumstances outside of the control of the tree threaten the health of the tree? List some current examples of those types of threats in your life?

5. The tree can resist the temptation toward fear and anxiety because its leaves remain green, and it continues to bear fruit (v8). How should this image of a fruit-producing tree amidst a drought encourage us?

6. What is the significance of the location of the tree in connection to its ability to produce fruit (v8a)?

7. What indications of spiritual life are evident in you? Consider the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 and contrast it with the list of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21.

8. Does examining the fruit of your life replace fear and anxiety with peace or has it illuminated hidden patterns of sin of which you need to repent? Take a moment with the Lord and deal with what you have learned.

In tomorrow's segment, I will share the ways the Lord has encouraged me to hold fast and draw near to Him.

# The Blessed Woman

## The Blessed Woman Draws Near to God: Day five

When I read Jeremiah 17:8, the fact that the tree is planted near the water jumps out at me. "He (the blessed man) is like a tree planted near the water ..."

Don't miss that.

The believer is strong only when he is near the Lord. James 4:8 says if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. That is great news! That means we don't have to do this alone. We simply have to position ourselves closer to God.

Psalm 1:1-2 reminds my heart that I am blessed when I walk with the wise, stand with those that pursue holiness, refuse to sit with the scoffer. I am blessed when I delight in the law of the Lord – which is Scripture – and meditate on it day and night. It makes me like a tree planted by streams of water. Again, we have a word picture of a tree near the water that is productive, healthy, and prosperous. We are productive, healthy, and prosperous when we position ourselves close to the Lord

This makes me think of Hebrews 4:14-16, "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

We are commanded to hold fast and draw near. Hold fast to what? We hold fast to our confession, the gospel, the teachings of Christ. We are to hold on and not let go; we are to persevere in the faith. Jesus, our perfect high priest, knows the heat and drought are coming. Our Savior knows our struggles and temptations because he faced them all and secured our victory by his

The Blessed Woman



**DRAW NEAR TO  
GOD AND HE  
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# The Blessed Woman

blood. Hold fast to Jesus. And then we draw near. We are to draw near to the throne of grace. Not just get close to it but draw near with confidence. I am a blessed woman only when I stay close to the Lord.<sup>ext</sup>

Further along in Jeremiah 17:8, we see that the tree sends out roots to seek water because water grows things. When a plant has roots with access to water, it can survive long stretches without rain. If I dedicate my life to studying God and His Word, if my confidence and trust are in Him and His character, then when the drought comes, my root system will funnel God's Word to my heart. Just like in the experiment I mentioned a few days ago about celery turning color after soaking in water mixed with red dye, God's living water will impact me and change me as I trust in Him.

The tree doesn't fear the heat. The tree refuses to fear the heat because its leaves remain green. When the drought hits hard – the green leaves of my faith will encourage my heart. The green leaves are evidence that although the circumstances around me are in chaos, although the sun beats down and there is no relief in sight, the green leaves are proof that God is with me and that God will sustain me.

The tree is not anxious during the drought because it still produces fruit. No one wants the drought. No one longs for trials and hardship, but Scripture is clear that hard times are a reality for the believer. If you're not coming out of a drought or in the midst of a drought, get ready, because the drought is coming. We must stay near the Lord and send roots to the water. Heat and drought will come, but when the heart is settled, when the roots are drinking from living water, the fruit still grows. It makes little sense to a watching world how a believer can praise the Lord in hardship and worship the Lord when life appears to be falling apart. It makes little sense to a watching world how a believer can produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control when circumstances dictate that they should hate, sorrow, be anxious, unkind, unfaithful, hard and short-tempered. When the world expects your faith to shrivel up and die, but the fruit of the Spirit grows anyway, it allows you to share the object of your faith. Remember, the object of the blessed woman's faith is God. Her trust is God and is in God.

*Prayer: Lord, you are my God, and I earnestly seek you. My soul thirsts for you and my flesh faints for you. Your steadfast love is better than life. Help me to remain close to you. Help me to apply all that I have learned. Reveal to me any circumstance or situation where anxious thoughts or fears have been controlling me. Help me to be deeply rooted in my faith and trust in you. Give me a desire to love you and serve you well.*

In tomorrow's segment, we will dig into questions that address matters of the heart!

# The Blessed Woman

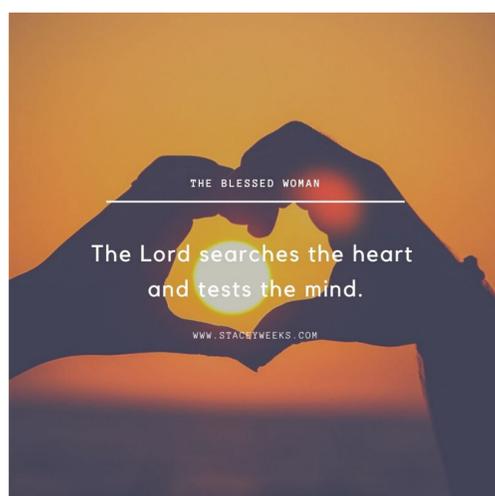
## The Heart of a Blessed Woman: Day six

Some things are so similar they are hard to tell apart. For example, consider jaguars and leopards. These big cats are incredibly similar in appearance. However, the trained eye can see differences in their patterns of spots. They appear similar, but by taking a closer look, you will be able to tell them apart and discover their true identity.

Words can fall into this category of commonly confused things. Think of accept and except. Accept means to receive and except mean to take or leave out.

It should be easy to tell the difference between a struggling shrub and a flourishing tree, but that is not always true. Above ground, both the shrub and the tree produce some results but only one has depth. Only one has an established root system below the surface that will withstand the drought and continue to bear fruit because that one is blessed by the Lord. It can be hard to discern if you are shrub struggling to survive or a tree planted by the water because of what comes next in our passage. Look at verses Jeremiah 17: 9-10:

9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else  
And is desperately sick;  
Who can understand it?  
10 "I, the Lord, search the heart,  
I test the mind,  
Even to give to each man according to his ways,  
According to the results of his deeds.



Pray:

*Lord, you are the only One who can truly discern the motives of the heart. Create in me a clean heart. Without you, I am hard and destined to an eternity of punishment. Without you, I am lost. I need you, Lord, to do what only you can do in me.*

# The Blessed Woman

There is a progression in Jeremiah 17:1-9 worth noting. Back in verse one, we saw how the human heart is like a hard stone, engraved with rebellion. In verse five we saw how a hostile heart leads man to depart from God. Now, in verse nine we read new descriptions of the heart. "The Hebrew term for the heart metaphorically refers to a person's inner life—the will, thoughts, motivations, and emotions."<sup>[1]</sup>

1. How does Jeremiah describe the heart (v9)

2. Luke 6:45 offers additional insight to the heart. According to Luke, what clues exist to illuminate the true condition of your heart? If you apply this your life, what do you learn?

3. False teachers often tell us to follow our heart or to follow what feels good. What warning does verse 9 have for that advice?

4. The Lord also tests the mind (v10). What do you find yourself thinking about? Do you ruminate events that have caused you stress? Do you endlessly worry? Do your thoughts focus on God's character and all His promises? Our thought patterns often reveal what we truly believe. What do your thoughts reveal about your faith?

5. God gives to the cursed and blessed man according to their deeds (v10). Psalm 62:12 repeats this idea, "... to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work." What do your deeds reveal about you and in where you have placed your trust?

6. Romans 3:23 tells us that all have sinned and fallen short. Isaiah 46 says that our righteous deeds are like filthy rags. In Romans 3:10 we read that no one is righteous. If even our best and most righteous deeds are filthy, we'd have no hope if it were not for Jesus. What hope does 2 Corinthians 5:21 give us?

7. If we cannot trust our heart or understand our heart, we should cultivate relationships with other believers and invite them to speak into our lives. Who have you or who could you invite into your life to speak corrective words of truth? Who can you invite into your life to help you discern the true condition of your heart?

8. What might mutual accountability in that relationship look like? What steps can you take this week to begin the process of mutual accountability?

[1] Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). Faithlife Study Bible (Je 17:9). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.text

# The Blessed Woman

## The Blessed Woman Moves Toward God and Away from Sin: Day seven

Jeremiah writes that God will search our hearts. He will test the mind. He will give to each man according to his ways and according to his deeds.

I can't speak for you, but I tremble at the idea of God knowing the depths of the wickedness in my heart. He knows those thoughts that I'd never speak aloud but run through my mind. He knows those desires that well-up and reveal the wretchedness of my soul. He knows how I ruminate and that it proves that I am not focused on what is good, pure and right but instead have fixated on fear and anxiety. Apart from Christ, I land in verse nine with no hope. Apart from Christ, I am the cursed woman with a heart of stone, rebellious with misplaced trust, utterly deceived by my wicked heart. But with Christ, everything changes. The faith that saves is faith rooted in Christ. The object of your faith matters.

We cannot place our trust in rule-following or legalism. We must place our trust in the gospel. We might know the gospel for salvation. We might know how the gospel makes us right with God, justifying us before the Father. But we also need to know the gospel for our sanctification. Sanctification is the process of God making us more like Him; it is the process of God making us holy. God doesn't just give us a list of expectations and say good luck. He calls us to holiness, and then, through the power of his Spirit, gives us everything we need to obey the command.

Sanctification takes the entire remainder of our earthly lives. It is never complete. It is ongoing, and it requires our participation. We work out our salvation in co-operation with the Spirit that lives inside of us. We actively pursue obedience and press on toward the goal of Christlikeness (Phil 3:13-14). We chase holiness. These roots in Christ should produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit in trials. These roots are what holds us when everything around us is shaken, illustrating whether or not we walk by the power of the Spirit in the truth of the gospel or by the power of our sinful flesh.



# *The Blessed Woman*

Our flesh is at war with the Spirit, and it is a battle of sanctification that we will fight until the Lord returns or He takes us home. That means our struggle with sin doesn't necessarily mean we are not saved in Jesus Christ. It might, and we must ask the Lord to reveal to us the condition of our souls and if we have truly repented, but a struggle with sin continues even after we are saved in Jesus Christ. Believers will struggle, but we are to be progressively set apart from sin. We are to be continually moving toward God and away from sin as we apply the gospel to every part of our lives.

Prayer: Lord, reveal to me the true condition of my heart. If I am trusting in anything but You, I want You to expose the folly of ways and lead me to repentance. Lord, my heart is deceptive and desperately wicked, but You have the ability to give me a clean heart and a desire to serve you and love you more. I invite your Spirit to work in me. Search my heart and test my mind and reveal any wickedness in me.

Don't miss the final installment of *The Blessed Woman*, which tells about the day trees crashed around me and ... you'll have to read on to hear the rest.

# *The Blessed Woman*

## The Blessed Woman Chases Holiness: Day eight

There was a morning quite a few years ago when my children were small that the wind picked up. Three of my neighbours' trees went down and every boom and crack sent the neighborhood running into their backyards to investigate. I watched out my window as our tree swayed like a hula dancer at the mercy of the wind.

I felt a bit like the third little pig waiting to see if the huffing and puffing would blow our tree down onto our house of bricks. I wasn't 100% sure what was going to happen to my tree, but I was fairly confident it would withstand the storm. I knew our tree had roots that ran deep.

Our children were at school, so after a few more booms and the power failing, I walked out front and looked down the street. The school was only 1KM down the road, and in the distance, I could see the flashing lights of emergency vehicles. I couldn't tell if they were at the school or just close to the school, so I decided to drive down the street and pick the kids up. It wasn't like they would accomplish much at school with the power out.

When I arrived at the school, it was in chaos. Large pieces of the school roof had blown off the building. I ran inside to find students sitting on the floor with their backs against the walls in darkened hallways. The principle and teachers were in emergency mode, moving the children away from the windows and calling cell phones to try and locate parents. In some places in that building, it was intense, chaotic, and scary.

Then, I entered the primary ward, where my children were located. This hallway was for Jr and Sr Kindergarten classes, and grades one and two. The children lined the darkened hallway much like the older children did in the other wings of the school, but in this corridor, the children were aware of the storm but calmly playing quiet games. They were not anxious because their eyes were not on the storm. Their eyes were on their protectors who were not projecting fear. The children took their cues from their teachers, who remained calm and in control.

When my children saw me, they immediately searched my face to read my expression. Was I alarmed? Was I afraid? In that moment, despite understanding that the rest of the roof could blow off any second, that we still had to drive home in the storm, that God did not owe us any kind of special physical protection, I was not anxious. I was not anxious because my eyes were not on the storm. My eyes were on God – who is sovereign over the storm.

God is my refuge and strength. He is my very-present help in trouble. We need not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea (Psalm 46:1-3). Even if our tree fell down or that roof blew off or God allowed an unimaginable hardship, God would be there and He wasn't leaving. He would not fail us because our roots run straight to Jesus. My trust is in the Lord and is the Lord (Jeremiah 17:7).

# The Blessed Woman

Choose the blessing and root yourself deeply in God's Word. Root yourself in God's character, depending on Him for every need, believing He is good so that you, like the Proverbs 31 woman in verse 25, can laugh at the days to come because you fear nothing but the Lord.

The heat will come. The year of drought visits every soul. Those blessed by the Lord, trusting in Him and drawing life from His Word, continue to flourish. They are not anxious. I don't know about you, but a life free from anxiety sounds good to me. When circumstances hold the potential to shake your trees and rip the roof off your house, remember the object of your faith and the subject of your trust: The Lord. He is the One who searches the heart and tests the mind. He is the one who gives to each person according to his ways and according to the results of his deeds.

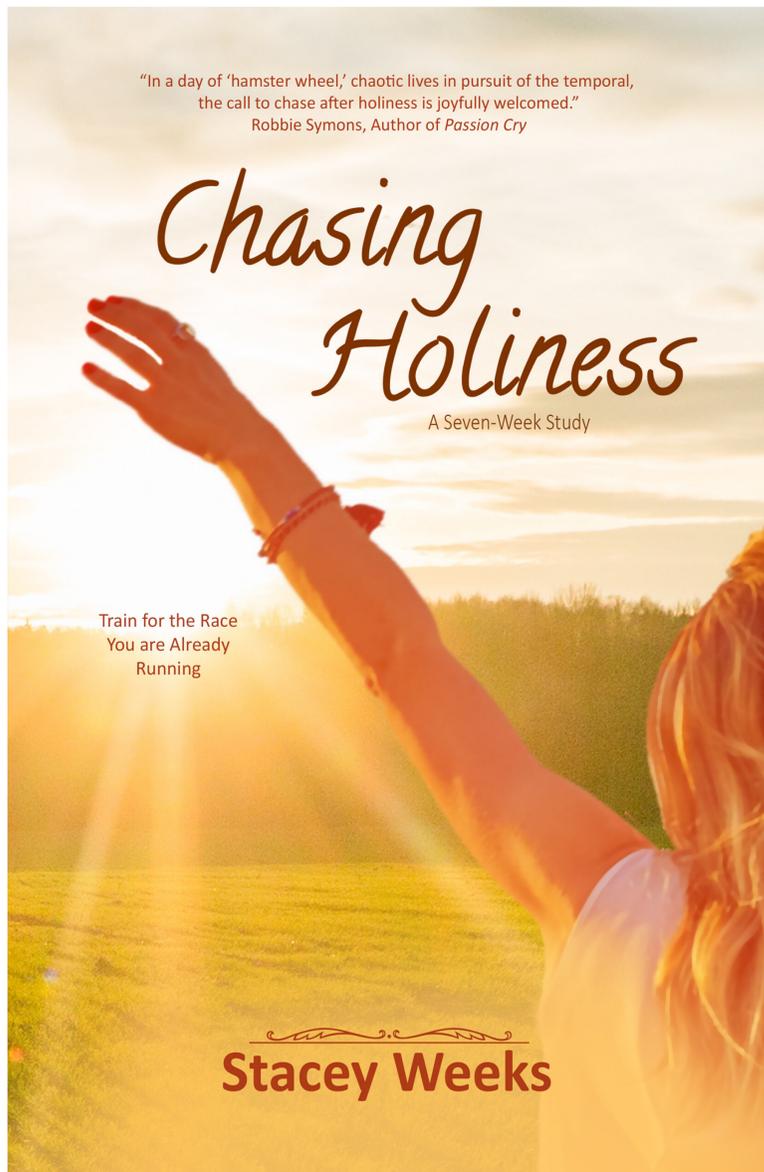
It has been my prayer that the Lord would use this short time reflecting on Jeremiah 17 to search your heart and test your mind and reveal to you the true condition of your soul. Perhaps it is time to turn from your sin and place your faith in Jesus for payment of your sin, and for the very first-time send roots to water that satisfies thirst for all eternity. Perhaps it is time for you to force your roots deeper; it is time to quit depending entirely on the frequent watering of other teachers. It's time to mature in your faith, connecting your roots to your God. You can and should continue on this journey of maturing in your faith.

Pray: Precious Lord, may your grace prevail in my life so You can produce a harvest of good works. May I not rest in just reading and hearing the Word, or rest in it having a small impact on me, but I pray your Word changes my life. Make me a 4th soil listener, yielding a harvest not stolen by the sun, birds, or weeds. May I trust in You with confidence, be unafraid, and a fruit-producing daughter empowered by your Spirit. Lord, help me to mature.

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My most recent book, *Chasing Holiness*, can help you learn a bit more about what it means to sink those roots into the living water of Christ. It can help you learn what it means to trust God and become the blessed woman who does not fear, is not anxious, and continues to produce fruit by the power of the Lord.

# Chasing Holiness



We all chase something.

It might be a degree or career, a husband and family, the approval of man, or a perception of social success.

We long to pursue the things that matter, we long to chase the Lord, but we are weary.

What would happen if we redirected our energy toward developing the character traits and disciplines that Christ calls us to pursue? What if we sought ways to increase our endurance and strengthen our faith? What if we stopped aimlessly running and instead chased the disciplines that would earn the prize that mattered?

Chasing Holiness challenges the status quo level of Christian living accepted for far too long by many women today.

It's about teaching stubborn hearts through the discipline of seeking God to remain focused on Him.

It examines what it means to live by the power of God and believe Him when He calls us a daughter, chosen, holy, and redeemed.

It encourages women to cultivate a lifestyle in keeping with who we really are in Christ.

It's an acknowledgment that many of us long to fix our eyes on Jesus and push toward the finish line, but we don't know where to start.

Chasing Holiness is about finding out together.

## What people are saying about Chasing Holiness

**Laura Colwell, Director of Women's Ministry, Hope Bible Church, Oakville Ontario:**

Stacey's style of writing guides the not-yet-believer gently, informs the recent believer, and challenges the mature believer towards the desire for all Christians – holiness. Themes of doctrine, Scripture, and day-to-day life with its struggles are presented as understandable and relatable for the reader. One isn't left feeling inadequate but rather inspired to chase after holiness as a result of reading this work.

**Todd Dugard, Lead Pastor at Harvest Bible Chapel, Barrie Ontario:**

I want every woman in our church to read and study Chasing Holiness. There is nothing easy about Stacey's words. This is a clear and necessary call to holy living. A call that is sadly absent from many pulpits and "Christian" books today. With honesty and transparency, Stacey shares from her own life but not in that "I've-got-it-all-figured-out" kind of way. The reader will feel the connection and be moved to enter the chase with her. The book is saturated with Scripture, moving from powerful explanations of the biblical texts to application that is simple and accessible. The study questions at the end of each chapter, Bible Study group plan, and list of additional resources make this a must-have book for women who are serious about their walk with Christ.

# *The Blessed Woman*

**Andrea Thom, Bible Teacher & Author of Bible study series that includes AMOS –  
Come Awake!**

Foundational to Christian living is a proper knowledge of God and responding submissively and completely. This study blends biblical insight with practical reflection to help move us forward in our intimacy with Jesus.

**Norm Millar, Senior pastor at Redemption Bible Chapel, London Ontario:**

Stacey Weeks accurately identifies a massively concerning issue in today's church culture. "We long for Jesus ... but we risk missing Him altogether." This is why this timely book is a must-read for Christian women who are hungry to grow and faithfully follow Christ. Far too many are missing not just the truth, but literally missing Him! Take Stacey's charge to heart; read, study, pray about, and share this book for "He is worthy of pursuing, so chase holiness!"

**Laura Zimmerman, Director of Projects and Events, Great Commission Collective**

Paul talks about running the race with endurance, but that can often feel quite ambiguous. Stacey takes you on a journey through the Word of God, helping you ask the right questions; that you might not just "know" the importance of holiness, but understand how to practice, pursue, and even chase holiness intentionally. I can't wait to go through this study with some of the women in my life, as we walk this path in His Spirit, and to His Glory together!

**Robbie Symons, Author of Passion Cry. Pastor of Hope Bible Church, Oakville  
Ontario:**

I love this book! I value its conviction. I agree with its goal and I wholeheartedly support its theology. In a day of "hamster wheel", chaotic lives in pursuit of the temporal, the call to chase after holiness is joyfully welcomed. Actually, desperately needed. Weeks writes with such clarity, sincerity and honesty that is easy to digest and then powerfully apply. Read this book, but don't rush through this book. When you truly comprehend its message, your life will see God's path, know His power and experience His purity. It's that important.

**Order your copy of Chasing Holiness on Amazon.**