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Preface

Millennia ago God set out ancient paths for us to walk, which would lead to abundant life, and into perfect fellowship with Himself. The Lord promised us that when we see and walk in that “good way,” we will find rest for our souls.

**“Thus says the LORD,
‘Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths,
Where the good way is, and walk in it;
And you will find rest for your souls.’”
Jeremiah 6:16**

Contemporary women have veered sharply from the “good way” that God has intended for us to live. While longing for elusive rest for their souls, women have rejected God’s pathways as being too simplistic and archaic. Sensing that something is wrong, we are unable to grasp how grossly off track we are.

Many Christian women have “stumbled from the ancient paths,” by believing various ideas and secular concepts which are not biblical (Jeremiah 18:15). Lives are being diminished by disobedience, and it truly breaks our Father’s heart.

Many women are walking in darkness. In order to dispel the darkness, we need to turn on the light. God has told us that His Word will light our path (Psalm 119:105). The goal of this study is to discern God’s will for women as we learn what Scripture reveals about women of the Word.

As a young mother in the 1970’s, I encountered scores of good Bible studies dealing with being a woman of God. Today there are only a few to be found, yet there is an increasingly dire need for teaching biblical mandates for women.

Through the strong and helpful encouragement of my husband, Dave, and the enthusiastic support of our five children, the Lord led me in preparing this material. Special thanks to the many women who have continually encouraged me, and to Dave who has spent countless hours formatting these materials.

While preparing this study I learned much, and the Lord has used His Word to exhort and challenge me to personal spiritual growth. My prayer is that as you dig into the Word, you will become conformed to the image of Christ.

**“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart...”
Philippians 1:6,7a**

Judy

How to Use this Study

During this study we will focus on God's specific directives for women. Taking biblical commands and precepts one by one, our goal will be to determine what God is telling us to do, and to explore how they are practical for the "nitty-gritty" of daily living.

How do women of the Word go about living in this world today? **Ancient Paths for Modern Women** is a four-part discipleship program designed to be most effective when studied in sequence.

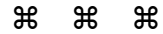
- **Ancient Paths I- Walking With the Lord** (seven weeks), addresses how to develop an intimate, personal walk with the Lord.
- **Ancient Paths II- Walking as Wives** (seven weeks), leads us to learn and apply what God says about women walking as wives in the marriage relationship.
- **Ancient Paths III- Walking as Mothers and Homemakers** (seven weeks), examines the Lord's desire for women as they disciple their children and build God-honoring homes
- **Ancient Paths IV- Walking in the Church and in the World** (eight weeks), grapples with issues related to God's will for women in the church, a woman's walk in the secular world, and how to keep walking faithfully.

It is preferable to have each chapter's work completed prior to the Bible study time. Many chapters have questions marked "***Optional***". If you choose to answer those questions you will need additional Bible study resource books. A description of these is located at the back of this study.

You will notice that each page has a "Prayer Points" area provided in the margin. This is designed for use in jotting down ideas, items for discussion, questions, group prayer requests, or personal prayer needs that the Holy Spirit may bring to mind during the study.

The last page of each chapter is best handled in a small group format. It is recommended that you complete and record your "Summary," "Discussion" and "Application" responses prior to the lesson so that you can share your answers and ideas.

It is suggested that you use the chapter heading as a type of filing system. It may be a notebook with pockets or a portable file. As time goes by, insert current events, magazine articles, and even cartoons, into the appropriate chapter topic. Be alert for other applicable Scripture to insert in various chapters. The long-term goal is that you will be able to teach and encourage other women as you mature in the Lord using the enclosed materials.



Ancient Paths Bible Study Series is especially effective when used by “older women” as they mentor “younger women.” The long-term goal of this study is that you will be able to teach and encourage other women as you both mature in the Lord.



Prayer
Points:

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

Matthew 7:13, 14

I. Two Diverging Roads

“The Road Not Taken”

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

(Robert Frost)

Poets have written about it, songs have been sung about it, books have been written about it, and mothers have lectured their children about it since time began. Men innately sense in their spirit that the path which they choose in life bears great eternal significance.

Every person makes a choice. Today, whether you are conscious of it or not, you are on a road which you have selected. Unlike the view of the above poet, who felt that both paths had merit, God’s Word states that all paths are not created equal. As the above poet could not see

Get On the Right Track

where the two paths led, our Creator describes two paths and the destination of those roads. Jesus speaks of the two path choices in life that are vastly different.

1. Look up the following verses and complete the chart to see how Scripture contrasts these two paths.

Scripture	Path #1 - Good	Path #2 - Evil
Matthew 7:13,14	Narrow gate Narrow way Few find it	Wide gate Broad way leads to destruction Many enter by it
Psalm 1:1-6		
Proverbs 2:11-15		
Jeremiah 6:16		
Psalm 84:5		
Isaiah 59:7,8		
Psalm 77:13		
Proverbs 16:17		
Proverbs 4:18		Proverbs 4:19
Proverbs 14:12, 16:25		
Proverbs 12:28		

**Prayer
Points:**





**Prayer
Points:**

2. Based upon your answers and insights from studying the previous verses, draw a picture of your interpretation of the “two roads” described in the Bible. (OK, this won’t be graded! Stick figures are fine!) Be creative!

(If possible, draw yourself into this picture indicating where you are located on these two roads. If you are unsure which road you are currently traveling, feel free to leave it blank, or perhaps draw yourself at the crossroads of these paths.)

II. Determine Your Destination

Millennia ago God set out ancient paths for us to walk which would lead us into perfect fellowship with Himself, and perfect fulfillment in our lives. It was “the good way” (Jeremiah 6:16a).

**Thus says the LORD,
“Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths,
Where the good way is, and walk in it;
And you will find rest for your souls.”**

Does the path on which you are walking meet God’s criterion as the “good one,” the one for which you were uniquely created? Are you truly contented and is your soul at rest?

Or do you find yourself, like most women in our culture, frustrated with what you are doing, having no idea of where you are headed? Having rejected God’s pathway as being too simplistic and archaic, have you been detoured from pathway to pathway in pursuit of elusive satisfaction from something new and different, only to wind up going around in circles in the rocky cul-de-sac of life?

Perhaps you find yourself in a third group of women, those who are uncertain of what road they are traveling.

Generations of mankind have come and gone, each attempting to design their own pathways to fulfillment. Today we find ourselves, both as a society and as individuals, having veered intensely from those ancient paths. Having stubbornly rebuffed God’s good way, we know that something is wrong but seem unable to grasp how grossly off track we are. We are groping in darkness, unaware of what questions to ask which would lead us back on course.

In order to get back on the right track we need to ask, “Where am I going in life? What is my purpose or destination?” When your life comes to an end, what is it that you hope to have seen accomplished?

3. Take a moment right now and prayerfully note any personal life goal(s) that come to mind.
 - a)



**Prayer
Points:**