



Say to wisdom, “you are my sister,” And make understanding your closest friend. For they will keep you from the immoral woman.
Proverbs 7:4-5a

Women’s Discipleship Group – 2006
HELPMATES, HANDMAIDENS & HARLOTS ON-LINE BIBLE STUDY
SPIRITUAL LIFE SERIES
LESSON #1: MAKING JESUS FIRST IN YOUR LIFE
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Definitions: *Helpmate – Handmaiden – Harlot*

Helpmate: *A married woman that is committed to well being of her husband.*

Handmaiden: *An unmarried or married woman that is committed to serving the Lord.*

Harlot: *An unmarried or married woman who sells her soul or body for personal gain.*

Scripture Focus:

Helpmate: **Luke 8:3** Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod’s household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support Jesus and his disciples out of their own means.

Handmaiden: **Acts 16:14** One of the listeners was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira whose job was selling purple cloth. She worshiped God, and he opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying.

Harlot: **Acts: 16:16** Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

OPENING STATEMENT:

My Story: One Sunday morning (long ago) I was sitting in church listening to the choir sing and waiting for the pastor to break the bread of God’s word. Suddenly, I felt someone looking at me. When our eyes met, he was the finest Michael-Jordan-looking-brother that I had ever seen. He smiled at me with those perfect white teeth and caramel lips and from that moment on, God was on the back burner. Soon we starting dating and the late night phone calls took the place of late night prayer. I had just started teaching a bible study at my church and I sensed that the Lord was calling me to the ministry, but the more involved I became with Mr. Right, the more my spiritual life was washing down the drain. In time, the Lord showed me that I was really with Mr. Wrong and it took the heavenly host to free me and get me back on track with the Lord.

Your Story: So what’s your story? Have you ever been in a situation where your education, job, business, romance or husband came between you and your relationship with the Lord?

What did it take for you to get back on track?

Are you still out there wondering how you managed to get so far away from the Lord?

Perhaps you trying to get to closer to the Lord, but things keep getting in the way?

I believe that sharing our stories, comments and questions with one another will strengthen our existing relationship with the Lord, and/or help us to find a way to make the Lord “first” in our lives.

The Message In The Story: I’m telling you my story because there are times when the enemy will send in “special forces” to keep you from making the Lord first in your life. His plan is to get you to worship anything but the true and living God. If he can’t use big things like false religions, sex, money, fame, big trouble, etc. then he uses the little things. One of his favorites is a little demon called Distractions. You meant to pray, go to church or bible study, but you got distracted – something came up – you got busy – too tired and, well... you know how the story goes. I want to confess that when I was dating Mr. Wrong, I wouldn’t allow anything to get in my way of spending time with him. He was “first” in my life. When you really fall in love with Jesus, if you stay away from church, prayer and the Word too long, you will miss Him so much that you will find a way to make room and keep the Lord “first” in your life.

The Solution To The Story: Let me tell you a story I once heard. A man was busy cutting a tree log with a big saw. He sawed back and forth until his arm was tired, aching and numb. A friend came by and looked at him and laughed. “Why are you working so hard to cut the wood? Don’t you know it’s a power saw? All you have to do is turn on the motor and you’ll be done cutting wood in no time!” Prayer is a like a power saw. Life can become more difficult than God meant it to be because you won’t turn on the “power.” We find that power with a consistent prayer life and by making time for God’s Word.

OBSERVATION / PERSONALIZATION:

Read Acts 16: 13-19 Both Lydia and a slave girl followed Paul and Silas. What are the differences between these two women?

Lydia:

Slave girl:

What changes can you make in your life that would make you more like Lydia?