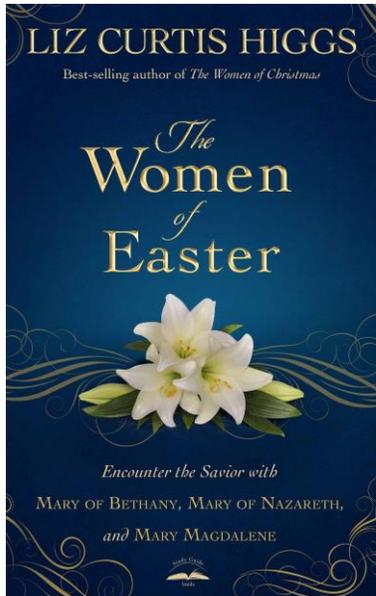


How to Use *The Women of Easter* as a Bible Study

A Leader's Guide from Liz Curtis Higgs

I'm thrilled you are considering one of my books for your Bible study group! Like *The Women of Christmas* before it, *The Women of Easter* is designed as a meaningful Lenten read for you, a lovely gift book for friends, and a powerful Bible study for a gathering of women who want a fresh encounter with the Savior.



“In *The Women of Easter*, Liz takes us right into the days surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, where we find our contemporary concerns reflected in the faces of the women who witnessed His ministry firsthand. And we see for ourselves the love of a Savior who laid down His life so that we might live free. This book is the perfect companion for Easter and beyond!”

—JENNIE ALLEN, founder of IF:Gathering and author of *Nothing to Prove*

“This book will stir a resurrection in your own heart and open your eyes to the wonder and beauty of the cross.”

—MARGARET FEINBERG, author of *Fight Back with Joy*

What you'll find inside

My heart's desire was to take my Bible study sisters *there*. First we see the Lord raise Lazarus from the dead, and then watch as Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus in anticipation of His own burial. We stand with Mary of Nazareth and other women at the cross, and then run with Mary Magdalene as she hurries back to Jerusalem to tell the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!”

Drawing from nearly forty English translations, as well as twenty commentaries and other trustworthy resources, I did my best to create a biblically sound and emotionally moving journey with *The Women of Easter*, as we follow the Lord from the cross to the grave to the sky. He is risen indeed!

How the chapters unfold (the titles were chosen from Easter hymns)

One: Lost in His Love

Two: Mary Went to Meet the Lord

Three: I Still Would Choose the Better Part

Four: With Palms Before Thee

Five: O Most Afflicted!

Six: Thorns Thine Only Crown

Seven: At the Cross Her Station Keeping

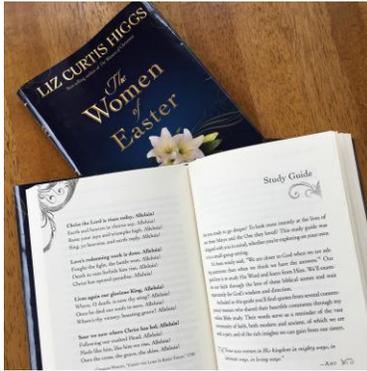
Eight: I Know That My Redeemer Lives

Study Guide

Notes

Everything you need is in the book

Rather than creating a separate workbook, I included the **Study Guide** at the end of the book, featuring **three in-depth questions** per chapter. Women may want to use a notebook, iPad, or other device for taking notes. For Bible study leaders who like to know where various details and quotes in the text are drawn from, it's all there for you in the **Notes** section immediately after the Study Guide.



Weekly preparation time

For your members, it should take about **twenty minutes** to read each chapter and perhaps **twenty minutes** to answer the questions. (If my estimate doesn't match your experience, please let me know, so I can adjust those numbers here.)

Four-week study / Eight-week study

If your group meets for **an hour or less** each week, and your time together includes prayer, refreshments, and socializing, an **eight-week study** may be the best plan for you, covering **one chapter and three Study Guide questions** each time you meet.

Possible format for one chapter a week for eight weeks

- 10 minutes – Gathering time
- 10 minutes – Devotional *or* thoughts based on week's reading *or* video clip
- 30 minutes – Discussion of three Study Guide questions
- 10 minutes – Closing thoughts and prayer

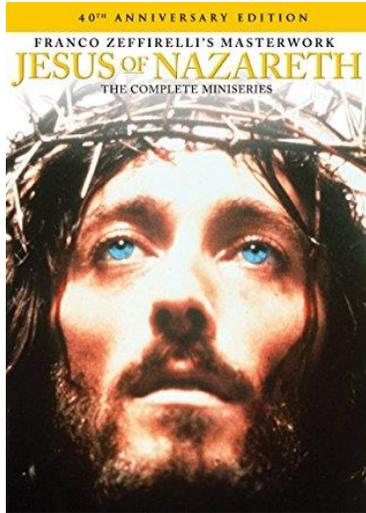
If you gather for **ninety minutes or more** weekly, *The Women of Easter* can work as a **four-week study**, with **two chapters** to read and **six Study Guide questions** to answer and discuss each session.

Possible format for two chapters a week for four weeks

- 5 minutes – Gathering time
- 5 minutes – Devotional *or* thoughts based on week's reading *or* video clip
- 30 minutes – Discussion of three Study Guide questions for first chapter
- 10 minutes – Break
- 5 minutes – Devotional *or* thoughts based on week's reading *or* video clip
- 30 minutes – Discussion of three Study Guide questions for second chapter
- 5 minutes – Closing thoughts and prayer

A video option

Since we didn't record video teaching sessions for *The Women of Easter*, I found a different way you might include a video portion at the start of each session.



After reviewing several movies and miniseries based on the life of Jesus, I decided Franco Zeffirelli's ***Jesus of Nazareth*** was the best choice for this study. Also, the acting and production qualities are strong, with Anne Bancroft, Sir Laurence Olivier, James Mason, Olivia Hussey, Anthony Quinn, Rod Steiger, and Robert Powell as Jesus.

Sadly, as is the case with every movie I researched, *Jesus of Nazareth* veers from the biblical account in several key scenes. The sympathetic film treatment of Judas in no way parallels the man we meet in Scripture, who stole from the disciple's money purse (John 12:6) and in whose heart Satan entered (Luke 22:3), prompting Judas to betray Jesus (Luke 22:5). And the prostitute (Luke 7:36-50) who anoints the Lord's feet is mistakenly identified as Mary Magdalene. A common error, but still unfortunate.

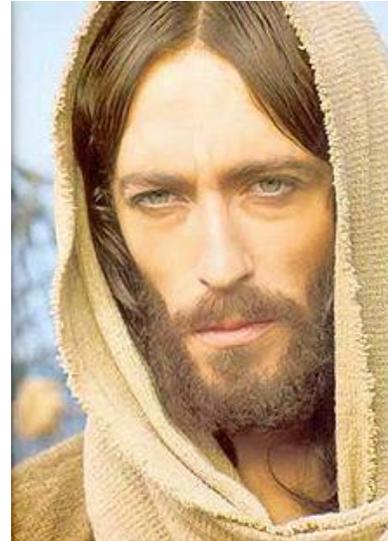
Given the above, I have chosen ten scenes with care. Though the action will not always align perfectly with the chapters you'll be reading that week, I do believe adding a dramatic, visual element could greatly enhance your learning experience. I'd encourage you to watch the DVD sections at home first to be sure you are comfortable finding the various time and dialogue cues.

Details on using *Jesus of Nazareth*

The entire miniseries is more than 6 hours long. We'll only use a total of 70 minutes from Disc Two. If you plan to incorporate the video, you'll need to adjust your weekly schedule accordingly, perhaps letting the video serve as your opening thoughts.

Including the movie with your study is only a suggestion, which may not work for your group. I just wanted you to know a viable video resource was available.

Here are the scenes I'd suggest for an **eight-week Bible study**. If you're leading a **four-week study**, simply view **two chapter sections each week**.



CHAPTER ONE: LOST IN HIS LOVE

Disc Two, Select Part III

Start at 2:18 Crowds following Jesus, Mary Magdalene among them

Stop at 7:57 Mary Magdalene eats the miraculous bread and weeps

Total: 5:39 minutes

CHAPTER TWO: MARY WENT TO MEET THE LORD

Disc Two, Select Part III

Start at 38:23 Jewish pilgrims dancing en route to Jerusalem

Stop at 46:11 Jesus says "...but he were dead, yet shall he live"

Total: 7:48 minutes

CHAPTER THREE: I STILL WOULD CHOOSE THE BETTER PART

Disc Two, Select Part III

Start at 18:43 Jesus walking, says "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers..."

Stop at 21:43 Mary of Nazareth says "...his brothers, his sisters, his mother"

Total 3:00 minutes

(Since the video does not include the scene from John 12 of Mary of Bethany anointing Jesus, perhaps discuss why that might be so)

CHAPTER FOUR: WITH PALMS BEFORE THEE

Disc Two, Select Part III

Start at 50:55 Palm Sunday crowd, shouting "Welcome to our city..."

Stop at 56:56 Scribe says "Rabbi, I understand better than you think"

Total: 6:01 minutes

and

Start at 58:16 Mary riding into Jerusalem on a donkey

Stop at 1:01:55 Jesus teaching, says "...least of My brethren, he does it to Me"

Total: 3:39 minutes

CHAPTER 5: O MOST AFFLICTED!

Disc Two, Select Part IV

Start at 1:48:27 The Lord's Supper in the Upper Room

Stop at 1:57:43 Jesus says to Judas, "You betray your Master with a kiss?"

Total: 9:16 minutes

CHAPTER 6: THORNS THINE ONLY CROWN

Disc Two, Select Part IV

Start at 2:15:28 Pontius Pilate meets with the Sanhedrin

Stop at 2:25:40 Jesus says, "...if it had not been given you from above."

Total: 10:12 minutes

and

Start at 2:33:36 The road to Calvary begins

Stop at 2:40:41 Jesus says to the thief, "Today you will be with me in Paradise."

Total: 7:05 minutes

CHAPTER SEVEN: AT THE CROSS HER STATION KEEPING

Disc Two, Select Part IV

Start at 2:40:42 Jesus on the cross, Mary of Nazareth appears

Stop at 2:51:30 Jesus says, "It is accomplished."

Total 10:48 minutes

CHAPTER EIGHT: I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES

Disc Two, Select Part IV

Begin at 2:53:49 Women coming to the tomb in the morning

Stop at 3:00:14 Mary M says again, smiling, "Go to my brothers and tell them."

Total: 6:25 minutes

Bless you for considering ***The Women of Easter*** for your Bible study group!

If I can help in any other way, feel free to reach out to me: liz@lizcurtishiggs.com

Your sister, Liz



"Liz Curtis Higgs has crafted a book that is unique and profound in its intimate look into the lives of the women who served Jesus throughout His ministry. *The Women of Easter* reminds us that Jesus has always used women to propel His kingdom in mighty ways."

—CHRISTINE CAINE, founder of A21 and Propel Women, and author of *Unashamed*

"Liz knows the women of the Bible, and she loves the women of our day. Most important, she knows what it means to have a dramatic encounter with Jesus. You will be inspired by the insightful prose of Liz and the life-changing power of the Savior."

—KYLE IDLEMAN, author of *Not a Fan* and *Grace Is Greater*