



Branch Out Study

Leader Guide

Joy & Opportunity in the Glass House

1. Before you became a Pastor's wife, what was your view of the glass house? What did you think that particular aspect of the ministry would be like?

☞ On what were your ideas based?

☞ What led you to those views?

Encourage ladies to be specific...not just memories of their upbringing and ministry background, but what they thought would be expected of them...even if they came from a ministry family.

2. What is the Glass House? Where do we find it in scripture? Who had to "live in it" & why?

† *Deuteronomy 7:6-8:*⁶ For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. ⁷ The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Who & Why? The nation of Israel – A living witness to the other nations of God's power.

Why were they chosen? Not because of their power or numbers – only because the Lord loved and kept his oath.

† *Joshua 24:2-15:* *Nation of Israel...by God's hand they defeated and conquered people / nations much greater than themselves.*

† *2 Samuel 5:9-12:* *David – because of the Lord's power & God exalted his kingdom for the people's sake...so the people could see God's great power and love.*

3. Do you remember what it was like to be a lay person? Were you ever a lay person?

☞ How did you think about the Pastor and his family? What did you think their roles in the church should be?

☞ What standards did you hold his wife to? If any?

4. What does God expect of all Christians?

† *Colossians 3:12-17* *compassion, humility, patience, forgive each other...love!*
Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart & the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish each other with wisdom

† *Numbers 14:5-9* *Trust fully in the Lord and do not rebel against Him*

† *Daniel 3:13-18* *Stand up for the Lord and worship Him alone*

† *Job 2:10* ¹⁰He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

Accept all things from God...the bad as well as the good.

Remember, we are not promised a life without suffering...in fact the Bible promises that we will have suffering. And yet “with such sacrifices God is please.”

† *Matthew 22:36-40* ³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” *Love God and each other.*

† *Matthew 28:18-20* *The Great Commission*

† *Ephesians 5:1-2* Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

† *Hebrews 13:15-16* ¹⁵Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

5. Why is the Pastor’s family set apart? Should they be? Are they any different?

Yes – a Christian example to the world...but we’re human too

† *1 Peter 2:9* ⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

- God set the nation of Israel apart as an example of His glory and power...and in the New Testament the “new” children of Abraham are set apart in the same way.
- The Levites were set apart to another “level” from the rest of Israel...they were the Public ministers of the Lord.
- *Royalty is always on display...and that’s what Christians are...we are different from the pagans.*

- 🕯 *1 Timothy 3:2-5, 8, & 11* Have everyone look this section up in their Bible
 - *This section of scripture is speaking specifically to Called/Public ministers.*
 - *Wouldn't this passage apply to all Christian women? And yet, Paul specifically addresses wives of Deacons in this way...why?*
- 🕯 *1 Timothy 4:11-16* Paul charges Timothy...
 - *Set an example for the believers in speech, life, love, faith, & purity.*
 - *Be diligent so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely.*
 - *Because if you do...*
- 🕯 *Titus 2:4-5* ⁴ Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.
- 🕯 Re-Ask the initial question...Should the Pastor and his family be set apart? WHY?
 - *Doing what is right will lead the way to the word and God's will. And not put obstacles up between people and the Gospel.*

6. What makes the GH so hard?

Discuss this for a few moments before going on to the passages and how Jesus handles situations he's faced with. *Unrealistic expectations...the previous PW...*

🏠 *Luke 10:41-42* ⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." *Sometimes, we need to make tough choices of how to serve.*

- *A possible question to think about: What example am I setting? (Are you in BC or preparing the meal?)*

🏠 *Ephesians 4:1-3* As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

- *It's a tough list to live up to...good thing we have the Lord's help and forgiveness.*

7. What can we learn from how Jesus handled the Pharisees?

✝ *Matthew 22:15-22* *Pharisees were watching Jesus closely, looking for a way to trap him....*

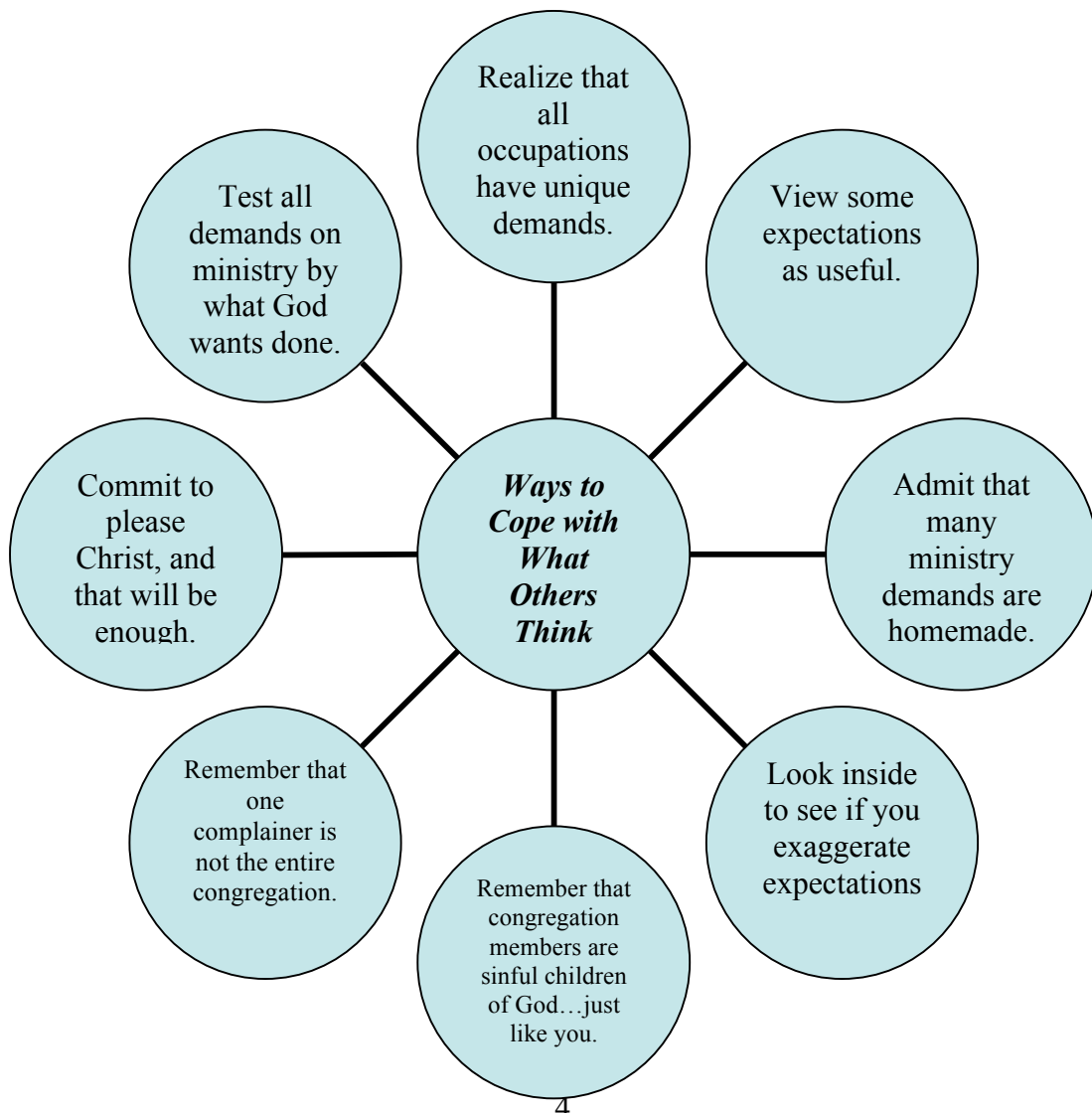
✝ *Luke 14:1-6*

👉 How did Jesus respond each time?


- 🌀 *Called them on what their true intent was...to trap Jesus, not to find an answer.*
- 🌀 *Confronted them with the principles "beneath" the laws that they so loved.*
- 🌀 *Did not back down on truth...but did what was right.*


8. What do we need to remember about our congregations? And the members?


- *Human beings sometimes disappoint...they won't always be loving...they won't always exhibit Christ-like behavior.*
- *Every person is at different levels of Biblical understanding... And every member is a blood-bought sinner – loved children of God.*
- *The congregation is seldom united in their ideas/expectations. One grumbler doesn't speak for everyone.*
- *The initial critique might not be the "true" problem. Some expectations are "phantom notions" ...group memories of former PWs; false assumptions; etc.*
- *Some critiques might be "true." Listen for those.*
- ***Satisfaction in ministry starts with Relationships.*** *If you do nothing else...work at building relationships with congregation members...it will show you care.*
 - *And if you care, people can be extremely forgiving of most anything.*
 - *And if you care, you will get to know all the reasons people think and expect certain things and can address those expectations more easily.*
 - *And if you care, it's very difficult to get as upset with people.*



9. How can the GH be a positive?

 *John 15:8* ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

 *Matthew 5:14-16* ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

 *Philippians 2:14-15* ¹⁴ Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe

* *Sincere & Authentic Christians need to be on "display" to the world. A city on a hill... its light cannot be hidden.*

* *Our lives, good deeds, and love might lead some to praise our Father in heaven.*

☺ What examples can we set?

☺ What joys are there?

☺ What opportunities?

3 SELF EVALUATION QUESTIONS

👉 *Who do we listen to?*

👉 *Who can we talk to?*

👉 *Where does God fit into the 100 other voices telling us what to do?*

♥ *Titus 3:3-8* *Loving all!!! Even when it seems they don't deserve it.*

* *Because we were once foolish, disobedient, etc. and He saved us.*

* *And it wasn't because of anything good we had done...and now we're his heirs.*

If you are struggling in the Glass House...

SELF EVALUATION

1. *What do I expect of the ministry? What do I expect of myself?*
2. *Is my attitude and behavior Christ centered?*
3. *What tasks do I do well, and enjoy doing?*
4. *Do people know I genuinely want to serve God? Do I give myself to authentic acts of servanthood, or just merely talk about doing it?*
5. *Do I use my gifts and graces for the Kingdom? Do I complain about duties I actually enjoy?*
6. *Do I expect more of others than of myself?*
7. *Do I realize that conduct creates consequences?*
8. *Are certain expectations “self-inflicted” or imagined?*

7 KEYS TO MAKING THE MOST OF THE GLASS HOUSE

1. Become Proactive
 - ☞ Establish Priorities
 - ☞ See Possibilities and Seek Solutions
 - ☞ Change Yourself from the Inside
 - ☞ Take Initiative
2. Emphasize your benefits and advantages
 - ☞ List your Advantages and give thanks for Affirmation & Support you do receive
 - ☞ Express your Gratitude
 - ☞ Enjoy Service Options
3. Check Your Perspective...Reality Check Time...*Go through the Self-Evaluation Questions*
4. Let God Empower you for Change
5. No more stoic self-pity or martyrdom
6. Become a Person of Quality and Depth / Commit to a Holy Character
 - ☞ Live a Christ-Saturated Life
 - ☞ Avoid the lime-light
7. Prayer and more Prayer