

GOD'S  
PORTRAIT  
OF A  
BEAUTIFUL  
WOMAN

DOROTHY DAVIS



*God's Portrait of a Beautiful Woman*

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# In Dedication

To my husband, Dale, and our children—Paul, Kristen, Kevin, and Seth—who have supported me by their love, patience, encouragement, and prayers as the Lord has worked on my portrait.

# Preface

Have you gone to a museum and looked at the painted portrait of some prestigious person of long ago? Did you marvel at the ability of the painter's hand to capture the character and particular beauty of that human being?

Since the first moment of creation, God has been the Master Painter. We often acknowledge this when we see a sunset, the ocean or the brilliance of an autumn hillside. But as the Master Painter, God also desires to paint portraits. Each person, whom He has created, has the potential to be a portrait of godly beauty and the fulfillment of His perfect design for that human being.

Psalm 139:13 refers to the fact that God created our "inmost being" ("reins") and put us together in our mothers' wombs. Not only that; verse 16 says that God knows all the days that are ordained for us. From these verses we learn that God is not some distant spectator of our lives but the very One Who designed us, made us and planned all our days. At this very moment He is at work in His children's lives, making each of us what He intended us to be. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

A painter starts with a canvas and a palette of colors that are applied with a brush or other tool for the desired result. Think of your life as a canvas upon which the Lord is painting a portrait that will conform to the perfect design of His will for you. The purpose of this study is to help you cooperate with His work in your life as He seeks to make you into His masterpiece. He desires to make you into a beautiful portrait of His grace—more beautiful and more captivating than any portrait that has been painted by man!

# How to Use This Study

Each lesson in this study is divided into five sections. Follow these suggestions as you prepare each lesson.



## **I: VERSE(S) FOR MEMORIZATION AND MEDITATION**

Memorize the verse or verses. Or, at least read them several times in preparation for the lesson. Answer the questions that pertain to the verse(s).



## **II: EVALUATION FOR PREPARATION**

The questions in this section are designed to prepare your heart to receive God's Word. These questions will not be discussed in your Bible study group.



## **III: SCRIPTURES FOR STUDY**

The questions in this section are aimed at concentrating on the actual text of God's Word and understanding what it says. Answer the questions as completely as you can. Use a standard dictionary to look up any words you do not know.



## **IV: APPLICATION FOR GROWTH**

As you answer the questions in this section, you will see how the truths of God's Word apply to your life.



## **V: CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE**

The suggestions in this section will help you put into practice the things you have learned. As with section II, these questions will not be discussed in the group.



# Preparing the Canvas: The Proper Support

**O**F PRIMARY IMPORTANCE in any great and enduring painting is the preparation of the canvas. As anxious as the artist may be to apply his mastery in color and texture, he knows that if the canvas lacks proper support and surface preparation, the result will be a waste of his best efforts. The condition of the canvas itself is as essential to a great work of art as what goes on it.

We may make a parallel to this in our own lives. Each of us is like a piece of canvas with the potential to become God’s “work of art.” But in order to be receptive to God’s masterful working in our lives, we must have the proper “support” and “preparation.” The first two lessons of this study deal with the necessary conditions in order for us to be receptive to God’s work upon our hearts.



## I: VERSES FOR MEMORIZATION AND MEDITATION

*“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:27, 28).*

Earlier in John 10, Jesus said some people were not His sheep (v. 26). There are only two groups of people: His sheep and not His sheep.

1. In John 10:27 and 28 what did Jesus say about His relationship with His sheep?

2. How do His sheep respond to Him?



## II: EVALUATION FOR PREPARATION

Think about the following questions; then jot down your answers in a few sentences.

1. Have you ever personally received God's gift of eternal life? How do you know?

2. Do you think you could ever lose your place in Heaven? Why?



## III: SCRIPTURES FOR STUDY

Just as the first step in preparing to paint a portrait is to put proper support under the canvas, so, too, God can begin to paint His masterpiece in us only if our lives have been properly placed upon the "support" of His Son, Jesus Christ. Apart from Him we are unable to please God or be conformed by Him to His divine design.

How does a person obtain this support? It is called "salvation." Think of it in terms of a four-sided framework.

*Side 1:* The Bible states that every person is a sinner, separated from a holy God. No one can enter Heaven because of his/her sins. A person must acknowledge her sinful condition.



1. Romans 3:9 says that everyone—Jew or Gentile—is

\_\_\_\_\_.

2. Romans 3:23 states, “For

\_\_\_\_\_ . . . .”

3. Ephesians 2:1 describes us as “ \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .”

4. Why is it so important to acknowledge our sinfulness?

*Side 2:* The Bible states that the end result of sin is eternal death (separation from God in Hell). We are unable to do anything to rectify our sinful condition. But because God loves us and does not want us to spend eternity in Hell, He punished His sinless Son, Jesus, upon the cross for our sins. Salvation is not a result of anything we can do, but it is a free gift from God, based on what Christ has already done for us on the cross.

5. According to Romans 5:6, for what kind of people did Jesus die?

6. Romans 5:8 restates that idea. God showed His love in that Jesus died for us \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

7. First Corinthians 15:3 says that Christ died for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

8. Titus 3:4 and 5 teach us that God saved us according to His \_\_\_\_\_ . That means He withholds the punishment we rightly deserve because the Lord Jesus took it for us.

*Side 3:* The Bible teaches that we may obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life in Heaven by coming to God in faith and by believing that Christ died for our sins, putting our trust totally in Him to save us.

9. Read John 6:37 and 40. What two things did Jesus say we must do?

10. What has He promised to do in return?

11. Can you think of some other verses that explain how we can receive God's gift of salvation? If you need help, look up the words "believe" and "receive" in a Bible concordance.

*Side 4:* Salvation is not a feeling, but a decision. Romans 10:9 and 10 say we are to confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts that these things are so (i.e., we are sinners, we cannot save ourselves, Jesus died for us).

12. Once we have made this decision, what is God's promise in Romans 10:13?

This is the framework of salvation. If you have placed your life upon this support, it will not fail or fall apart. You don't have to worry that it will become loose or wobbly or that it will break apart. As believers in Christ and recipients of God's salvation, we have "eternal security." We can never lose our place in Heaven because we do not get or keep ourselves saved—Christ is the One Who has done the work by shedding His blood.

13. How do the following verses give us this assurance?

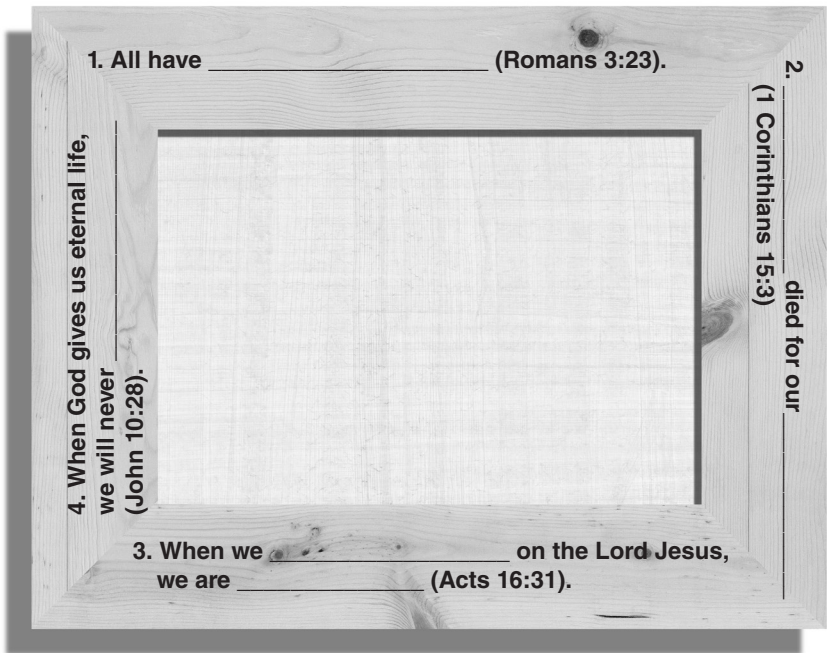
John 3:16

John 10:27-29

1 John 5:11-13

Jude 24

14. Review the four basic truths of salvation by completing each side of the frame.





**IV: APPLICATION FOR GROWTH**

1. You may have been saved for a long time or just a short time, but the wonder of God's gracious provision should always be with you. Think about each of the following topics; write a sentence about how each one affects your life.

Forgiveness

God's love

Jesus Christ

Salvation

Eternal security

2. Select one of those topics and describe further how it will help make a portrait of beauty out of your life.



### **V: CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE**

Select at least one challenge to put into practice this week.

1. Look back at the statements you wrote in section II. Answer the questions again. If you know for certain that you have received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior from sin, thank God for saving you. Ask Him to change your life according to His will as you study these lessons.

2. If you have not made this all-important decision in your life, won't you reconsider the verses presented in this lesson and call upon God to save you? Remember: Only with this "support" can God begin to paint His portrait of beauty in you.



### **FINISHING TOUCHES**

IN PREPARATION for the studies to follow, you need to evaluate the condition of your portrait. Are you living securely in the forgiveness, love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ? Or does it seem to you that your life has fallen apart as the result of events, relationships and choices? If you are dissatisfied with your life, let Christ Jesus give you the stability that only He can give. Place your trust in Him today—for life right now and for eternity. Having done this, you can watch with excitement as He works on the portrait of your life in His own special way.