BECAUSE THEY’RE WORTH IT

Amanda Jackson
‘I have a desire to see women and girls in Africa discovering purpose, unlocking potential and taking up their leadership role. I believe if women and girls discover who they are and take up their position in society it will help us to deal with some of the issues affecting women, such as poverty, violence, lack of education and low self-esteem. These studies give biblical examples and contemporary parallels of how women can relevantly contribute to the fulfilment of God’s plan. I pray women will be inspired to arise and bring change to their world.’

Pastor Maureen Shana, Zimbabwe, Founder, Woman Unlimited

‘Throughout time, women have shaped their world for good. This resource highlights some of these biblical, historical and contemporary daughters of God whose courage, tenacity, and compassion have made a world of difference. Delving into this inspirational material will challenge you to be the women whose ardent advocacy offers hope and restores community life, so that women and girls worldwide may fulfil their destiny.’

Marijke Hoek, co-editor Micah’s Challenge: The Church’s Responsibility to the Global Poor

‘It’s sadly true that women and girls in many parts of our world live in poverty – without dignity or opportunity. Who better than women to reach out to other women – to advocate for hope, restoration and justice. These studies help us to see the challenges and inspire us to see how we can be part of the solution.’

Darlene Zschech, Pastor, Hope Unlimited Church, worship leader and co-founder of Hope Global
My appreciation goes to Shunu Chowdhury
and Marijke Hoek for their insights and wise advice
on the content of these studies.
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May we be dangerous women.
May we be women who acknowledge our power to change, and grow, and be radically alive for God.
May we be healers of wounds and righters of wrongs.

Lynne Hybels

Introduction

The studies in this booklet are designed to give you a picture of what women, inspired by faith, can do to tackle life’s big issues; how we can overcome the injustice that many millions of women and girls face.

Women have always faithfully served others. But we have not often seen ourselves as influential. Or perhaps we are happy to accept new challenges, we just don’t know where to start.

So what could we do if we captured God’s vision of women relating to women around the world on big social, economic and spiritual issues?

There are 900 million women and girls around the world denied opportunity and hope by poverty. Women own only 1% of the world’s wealth. Half a billion cannot read or write.

What if we could be women for ‘such a time as this’ – like Esther who was called to use her influence to rescue her people (see Esth. 4:14) – a time to speak out about the suffering of women and girls around the world?

We have a unique opportunity right now. In 2000, 189 nations of the world promised through the Millennium Development Goals to halve extreme poverty in a generation – and we could help to deliver that promise. We could be women for just such a time – to address the physical, social and spiritual roots of poverty.
And what if it was something fun and relevant to all the other stuff we do in our busy lives?

There are four studies in this booklet, each with a ‘Bible Foundation’ section, ‘Vital to Know’ statistics and ‘Lives to Inspire’ containing stories about women. There are also suggestions on books and contemporary movies to spark discussion – as well as plenty of ideas for action.

And let me be honest – I do want to see action. I want to see a movement of women which will bring change for women and girls in this generation so that one half of God’s humanity can be all that our Creator God intended.

These studies are not about us affirming each other as beautiful and worthy (although we are): more than that, we’re going to explore being ordinary women doing extraordinary things – to bring God’s hope for women down our road and across the world.

Amanda Jackson, 2012

NOTES
2 UNIFEM quotes that 70% of the world’s poorest people are women. 1.4 billion live on less than $1.25 a day, the accepted definition of extreme poverty. (70% of 1.4 billion = 980,000,000.) See http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_poverty_economics/
4 The CIA World Factbook 2012 estimates that there are 785 million illiterate adults and two-thirds are women, ie 590 million. See http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/xx.html