

Discussion Questions for *Nice Girls Don't Change the World* By Lynne Hybels

The following questions are provided for personal reflection or group discussion. For a group setting of limited time, it may be helpful to focus on the questions in **boldface**, saving additional questions for personal reflection.

PAGES 11-20: A Nice Girl

What is your response to Lynne's description of a "nice girl"?

Describe yourself as a child. What five words come to mind?

Have you ever felt like you had to live up to someone else's expectations? For example, family members, a husband/boyfriend, friends, co-workers, people at church?

What were your childhood experiences of God or church? How did that shape your view of God? How has that view changed over the years?

Is there anything about your "childhood God" you need to let go of? Describe.

PAGES 21-24: A Good Woman

"A good woman knows she cannot be all things to all people, and she may, in fact, displease those who think she should just be nice" (page 23). Are there changes you would like to make in your life but feel hesitant about for fear of displeasing someone?

"I've been working so hard to keep everybody else happy, but I'm so miserable I want to die" (page 24). Have you, or has someone you know, ever felt this kind frustration or despair? Describe.

PAGES 25-44: A Good Woman's Life Is Grounded in the Love of God

Has God ever felt like a burden to you? Describe the experience.

Have you ever felt like you had to work hard to earn God's love? What did you do to earn God's love?

Discussion Questions Continued

Lynne experienced such deep exhaustion, that the only thing she wanted to do was sit and look out the window. Have you ever experienced a level of exhaustion that made it nearly impossible to go on with life as usual? How did you feel? What did you do?

When you are empty, what fills you up? When you are drained, what recharges you?

If you whispered, “It’s me,” into the silence (page 37), what do you hope you would hear from God in response?

“I can honestly say that the center from which my spiritual life flows today is the time I set aside daily to be silent in the presence of God, emptying my mind as best I can of words and thoughts, and simply inviting God to fill that open space. Every time I do this I feel as if I fall into a well of love” (page 42). Have you had similar experiences during which you have felt God’s love in a powerful way? Have you discovered practices—for example, silence, walking in nature, listening to certain kinds of music—that tend to open your heart to God’s love?

PAGES 45-64:

A Good Woman Knows Her Unique Life Matters to God

Lynne describes looking at the world through the eyes of her husband (page 46). Is there someone in your life whose perceptions, values, or opinions you know better than you know your own? Why do you think you ended up more focused on their life than on your own?

Have you explored and discovered your unique personality, gifts and passion? If so, what are three words that describe you? If not, what aspects of yourself do you need explore more deeply?

How often do you live according to the value of not wanting to inconvenience others, thus neglecting your own needs, desires, or dreams?

Do you have a sense about God’s calling on your life? What did God put you on earth to do? Does this type of exploration excite you? Burden you? Explain.

“I would never have said that my life didn’t matter, but I ended up living as if it didn’t” (page 49). Have you ever felt that way?

Can you identify tasks, responsibilities or roles you pursue that you don’t feel good at or don’t enjoy? Are there activities, hobbies, or jobs that you think you would be good at or would enjoy more, if you had the time or opportunity to pursue them?

Discussion Questions Continued

If you asked your husband, your kids, or your friends what you feel passionate about in life, would they know? Do you know?

For a moment, view your life as if it were a model for other women or for your children and grandchildren. Do you like the model you are offering? Or would you like to tweak it a bit?

If you were going to become a “woman fully alive in God,” what areas of growth would you want to pursue?

PAGES 65-88:

A Good Woman Doesn't Let Fear Stop Her

When Lynne asked God for guidance regarding the future, she sensed God calling her to “an adventure” (page 66). Does that sound appealing or frightening to you? What would an adventurous life look like to you?

In one minute, jot down all the things you fear. (Big or little, it doesn't matter.) If you feel comfortable doing so, would you share what's top on your list?

Do you, like Lynne, fear disappointing other people (page 70)? Who?

Do you have a fearful self (page 70) that tries to keep you from doing things you'd like to do, or from responding to God's calling? What does it say to you?

If you were going to post notes around your house to help you “talk down” fear, what would you write on the notes?

Lynne writes about being “willing to fail” (page 80). Is there anything you have hesitated to try because you're afraid you might fail?

Lynne saw a marathon-runner with a t-shirt that said, “Done Watching . . . Doing.” Is there an area of your life in which you'd like to move from “watching” to “doing”?

Do you ever fear getting close to other women? Are there aspects of your life you would prefer to hide from other women? Do you fear other women's opinions about you?

Have other women ever encouraged you to become more fully yourself? How?

What would a supportive circle of women look like to you? What would you like other women to say to you?

Discussion Questions Continued

PAGES 89-93:

A Dangerous Woman

What first went through your mind when you read the words, “dangerous woman?” Was that term alarming or attractive?

What is holding you back from living a “dangerous” life?

Read through Lynne’s prayer for dangerous women (pages 91-93). Is there a specific line you relate to?

On Your Own:

Determine one concrete step you can take tomorrow to move closer toward the unique, fully alive, dangerous woman God created you to be.