

Scripture and Background Information for May 12-18

The Secret to Soaring

To prepare for discussion each week, group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures at the bottom of this page. You will notice that we are continuing the pattern of your discussing scripture *after* the Sunday message on that passage.

Background for Luke 8:1-3

When an eagle flies, a powerful, unseen force makes the soaring possible. We see the same thing in our stories, and in the Scriptures: behind people of greatness are often powerful influences who provide life to their life. In this series we'll look at practical ways to unleash the best in yourself by discovering, developing, and deploying the best in others. This first week we see how people behind the scenes provided life to Jesus and his disciples.

Nowhere in scripture do we see a definitive list of all the people who are following Jesus. However, we are fortunate to have a few snapshots where we can see a sample of those who are following Jesus. In this snapshot, Jesus is traveling and preaching with a few people that Luke mentions.

Along with the twelve disciples, Jesus is accompanied by Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others. Mary Magdalene's name derives from the Galilean town of Magdala where she is from. Some bizarre claims are made about Mary Magdalene; however, all that is really known is what is included here—that she was a follower of Jesus from whom 7 demons were called out. Susanna is also only known because they are mentioned here. Mary Magdalene and Joanna are again mentioned in Luke 24:10 during the resurrection of Jesus.

This snapshot provides a few more names than just the disciples. It includes several women who were crucial to the mission and work of Jesus *and* the disciples. As they followed Jesus with the disciples, they were helping to support them out of their own means. These women were some of the true, behind-the-scenes heroes to the mission of Jesus and the spread of His message. It is a good reminder that even today, some of the best work is done by those are behind-the-scenes.

“the kingdom of God,” is a common way to shorten all of Jesus' teaching and preaching into one phrase.

Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:

May 19

2 Timothy 2:1-7

May 26

Hebrews 11:32-40

June 2

Acts 9:26-28