

Eve in Exile
Group Discussion
Study Guide

Published by Canon Press
P.O. Box 8729, Moscow, Idaho 83843
800.488.2034 | www.canonpress.com

Canon Press, *Eve in Exile Group Discussion Study Guide*
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Cover design by James Engerbretson
Interior design by Valerie Anne Bost

Printed in the United States of America.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Eve in exile : group discussion study guide.
Moscow, Idaho : Canon Press, [2022]
LCCN 2022005074 | ISBN 9781954887466 (paperback)
LCSH: Merkle, Rebekah. Eve in exile. | Women—Religious aspects—Christianity—Textbooks. | Femininity—Religious aspects—Christianity—Textbooks.
Classification: LCC BT704.M5453 E94 2022 | DDC 248.8/43—dc23/
eng/20220412
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022005074>

INTRODUCTION:
THE FREEDOM OF
LIMITS

Summary:

Our culture has torn down the old version of femininity, but has nothing to offer in its place. It's time to rebuild.

Highlights:

“We have a fantastic opportunity in front of us, but we also have a hostile audience. We are in the position of Nehemiah—returning from exile and trying to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem while the culture outside jeers. But

if I could stand in any moment, this is the one I would pick. We have a huge opportunity in front of us, and I hope we can make the most of it. The way of return is open to us—but it will require strong women who are willing to show actual courage if we truly want to bring Eve back from exile.” (12-13)

Questions for Discussion and Application:

1. Why does Bekah Merkle describe “limits” as “freeing”?
2. What is the great opportunity Christians face in this cultural moment?
3. What did your parents teach you growing up about what it means to be a woman? What has the church taught you about gender roles? Has your experience been prairie-muffins or pant-suits—or something in between these two extremes?

Study the Word:

Read Nehemiah 4 and 6. How does Nehemiah respond to the threats of his enemies? How does he deal with them when they try to lure him into a trap? What are some typical ways the

media attacks Christians today? How do unbelievers shame or manipulate Christians to try to make them compromise?

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PRETENDYVILLE

Summary:

We cannot retreat into the past.

Highlights:

“A little bit of research into Regency England would show us that, despite the fact that the dresses may have been cute, the society was actually horrifically corrupt. Yes, the BBC ‘Pride and Prejudice’ series just seems so wholesome and proper and upstanding that it may be hard

to believe, but if you just take a moment to research the life of Lord Byron, a flagrantly immoral, bisexual, incestuous, and nonetheless greatly admired celebrity during Jane Austen's life, or the goings-ons of the Prince Regent and his compadres during the time that she was writing her books, you would very soon discover that the Kardashians have nothing on these people." (23)

"God hasn't called us to run away from the world.... Paul expects the Christians to live in such a way that there is a marked difference between their lifestyle and that of the surrounding unbelievers, but he certainly assumes that they would be in living distinctively in the midst of surrounding ungodliness. He doesn't want us to run away from the world; he actually expects us to charge at the world. To change the world." (24)

Questions for Discussion and Application:

1. What is the problem with conservative-Christian nostalgia for previous eras' gender roles? Why does Bekah call this nostalgia escapist?

2. What is the dominion mandate? What is the great commission? Why is understanding these concepts necessary for understanding femininity?

Study the Word:

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, 2:12-16, and 7:10. Why are people often tempted to say that older times were better? Is there anything really new under the sun?