

THE LAST WORD

ASSIGNMENT

- Personalize the Praying Scripture verse for you or someone else and record in your journal.
- Write out your faith story and pray for an opportunity to share it.
- Share your encouragement story with Sharon at www.treasuresofencouragement.org.
- **Bonus:** Listen to the suggested Chapter 12 Help & Hope podcasts at www.treasuresofencouragement.org:



- *Flourishing in a Season of Loss—A Conversation with Dianne Balch*
- *Pornography and Women: Breaking Free—A Conversation with Jessica Harris*

ENCOURAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #12

God transforms the encouragement of ordinary people into extraordinary ministry.

PRAISING SCRIPTURE

*You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.
Trust in the Lord forever,
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.*

ISAIAH 26:3-4

PREPARING A TESTIMONY

*Ten minutes***Briefly share with your group:**

1. The area God has changed,
2. What you were before Christ,
3. What you are now because of Christ,
4. What hope you have in Christ for the future.

For instance:

Before I met Christ, I always thought the worst about people and shared those thoughts with anyone who would listen. I loved to gossip. Christ's unconditional love for me made me realize how sinful I was not to offer that same love to others. I asked Him to forgive me for my destructive words and thoughts and asked Him to teach me how to encourage others rather than tear them down. Although I still struggle at times, my attitude toward others is completely different because of His love for me. I know that in the future He will continue to teach me how to control my tongue and express His love rather than my negative insecurities.

When I met Christ, my marriage was cold. I did not love my husband and I didn't want to. Christ changed all that. He taught me to choose to love my husband. I began to do one loving act a day for my husband, in spite of my feelings. In time, Jesus led me to purposefully perform numerous acts of love for him. He worked through those acts to change my feelings. We still have rough days, but I have hope for the future because I really do love my husband now.

Write out your testimony on the note card. Share with your small group what you wrote. If time permits, your leader will give you an opportunity to share it with the larger group.

Carry this card with you and go over your testimony until you can say it naturally. Ask God to open a door to share this testimony with someone this week.

During your own devotions review the Spiritual Birthline discussion on pages 204–205. Write out a two-minute testimony about your whole-life relationship with Christ. Memorize it and be ready to share it whenever God gives you the opportunity. Expect God to transform your “ordinary” obedience into extraordinary ministry.