

*This book is dedicated to the women who long for God's comfort and direction
amid life's unexpected detours.*

Table of Contents

Section I: A New Beginning

- 1 Let Go of Blame
- 2 Find Relief from Shame

- 3 Be Honest about Anger

Section II: A New Purpose

- 4 Connect with God in Worship
- 5 Aim for God's Glory
- 6 Trust God's Leading

Section III: A New You

- 7 Affirm Your Worth 8 Reestablish Your Identity

- 9 Live for Transformation

Section IV: A New Perspective

- 10 A New Perspective on Your Past

- 11 A New Perspective on Your Present

- 12 A New Perspective on Your Future

Foreword

Divorce jarred my whole world out of alignment. Despite my best attempts to live a godly life, I lost my husband, family life, in-laws, social status, financial security, and church ministry. My deepest question, the one thing my survival depended on, was “Where is God in this?”

I cried out to him in desperation during the 3 1/2 years it took for my divorce to become final. And I daily recorded my anger, grief, and fear in prayer journals. They resemble a toxic dump much more than a prose collection. Still, I treasure the testimony they give to what God and I have been through together. At the time of that writing, I often felt lost, afraid, and overwhelmed. But as I looked back, I saw patterns and lessons, and even a logical progression, that God had brought me through. In my deepest confusion, he always stayed the course.

I’ve done my best to mirror his steps in this study. The tremendous advantage is that what took me 3 1/2 years to figure out can be summarized in twelve chapters once you understand where you’re headed. In *Detoured by Divorce*, we will move past the months of feeling stuck and not knowing why. We will avoid the many rabbit trails that seem to offer a better life but never deliver. Instead, we will begin immediately with the steps and actions that really do work. The guidance, exercises, self-assessments, and Biblical truths in this book have been proven in my life and in the lives of hundreds of other women just like you. What remains after years of putting this advice to the test can lead you from death to life.

That doesn’t mean any of this will be easy. It’s not, but I can promise you that God is in it, and that finding him changes everything. I want you to experience his leading and emerge knowing the presence and power of the One who is your way, your truth, and your life.

How to use this study

This study is designed for both individual and small-group use. If you work through it on your own, you’ll have the advantage of progressing at your own pace. The more you can contemplate each chapter’s truth, letting it sink into your awareness, the more powerful the results will be. However, schedule a few times to meet with a close friend while you’re working through the steps. Share the exciting things God is doing in your life, ask for her prayers, and let your growing faith encourage your friend.

If you choose to do this study with a group, you’ll find discussion questions sprinkled throughout each lesson. The questions are designed to foster vulnerability and support. My hope is that they will increase your confidence and trust in others who care about you.

As the saying goes, we go faster alone but farther with friends. Listen to your needs and believe God is in them, inviting you to wholeness.

Before You Begin Disclaimer

This book is designed to provide women with the insights they will need to discover and create their new lives after divorce. It is not meant to replace solid legal, medical, psychological or financial counsel. If such expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Divorce recovery is not a one-size-fits-all program. The purpose of *Detoured by Divorce* is to complement, amplify, and supplement the healing process initiated by God through various means. The author shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information in this book. If you do not wish to be bound by the above, you may return this book to the publisher for a full refund.

Introduction

Divorce can feel like an unplanned detour on the road of life. Legal battles, custody decisions, financial upheaval, and identity crises all make for a bumpy ride. Who wouldn't want to get through it as quickly as possible, to just get back to a place of peace and stability? I sure wanted that, but I couldn't make it happen. God had a higher purpose for my long, winding road. He took my heartbreak and disillusionment, my doubt and anger and confusion, and he made it holy ground, the way of transformation.

I entered divorce terrified, insecure, and plenty angry at God. I shook my fists and told him that if there was any other God, I was ready to switch. I demanded answers and wanted to know the plan until, in defeat and exhaustion, I collapsed into his everlasting arms. Slowly, sometimes imperceptibly, and often in fits and starts, he showed me the way through. This book is a result of that journey. It's not a perfect path, but it is the road that, miraculously, rendered my pain powerless and then powerful.

That's the transformation God offers to you. If your life got detoured by divorce and you're wondering if you're a failure, why your prayers weren't answered, whether you will ever trust again, or if God can heal you and make you stronger, this book is for you! We have some exciting ground to cover. After we work through the insights together, you will emerge changed. You will become a woman who finds the road much broader, yourself more confident, and God more faithful than you ever dared to hope.

My Background

I grew up as a Christian in a committed Christian family. I knew the love of God in my life from a very early age. In fact, I never had reason to doubt that God watched over me, helped me, heard my prayers, and guided me. I married my Wheaton college sweetheart. We agreed on a course in life, which included children, serving God and others, loving each other for life, and making our lives count.

Fast forward 20 years. Being served divorce papers felt surreal. A thousand subtle steps got us there. Medical school and residency certainly contributed their share. Our love grew cold, broken beyond repair. What would happen to our two children? How would I go on in a Christian world that held divorce to be a sin? What was I to do with my faith in God's goodness? How would I relate to friends, to family members, to the world, and to God feeling like such a failure?

I went down too many dead-end roads to count, and honestly I don't want to recall them. I imagine you have tried some of the same ones. But I also found God staying very close, comforting and directing me through the steps I needed to take. I had to rethink everything: my life priorities, my self-worth, my expectations for the future, my idea of God. Everything needed to change.

Honestly, and this is no exaggeration, working through the discoveries in this book saved me. In a day-to-day, moment-to-moment sense. I was rescued from a way of thinking that was sure to destroy me. I

wanted help but didn't know how to go about it. I only knew to stay in God's presence, counting on him to show me.

Years later I earned a master's degree in social work and then my license in clinical counseling. I am now a counselor and I love my work! I love helping people. And to my surprise, the lessons that I stumbled onto in my own recovery turned out to be therapeutically sound. God really is a Wonderful Counselor! His way of healing works.

So I invite you to journey on, my friend. This detour may be the shortest path to becoming all you're meant to be.

Section 1 – A New Beginning

Chapter 1 – Let Go of Blame

“Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.” Romans 12:19

If you’re at all like me, you wish you could change your life at microwave speed. I love that you’re eager to dive right in. I get it. You want help—NOW. But I’m going to ask you to take a breath and trust the process. As much as you might want to, you can’t hurry healing.

What you *can* do is allow every part of this book to sink into your heart. Let it restore those deeper parts of you that are desperate for redemption. Sure, you’re free to skip ahead to the “good” parts or avoid an exercise that seems time-consuming, but you may miss the transformative power offered in these pages. So give yourself the freedom to heal in God’s timing.

You are on your way to something new, and for now that is very good.

So let’s start at the beginning. When I began this journey, I started here: (All prayers are excerpted from my prayer journal, written during the worst of times.)

Lord, my life is gloomy and gray and I need you to be my hope.

Draw me to your side. Fill me with your life.

Unless you guide me, I’ll stay lost.

Unless you fill me, I’ll stay empty.

Unless you shine on me, I’ll stay in gloom.

Jesus, I need you. I have no other qualification.

Be merciful to me, Lord.

Speak the word and let there be light in my soul.

I wrote that prayer on a dismal day during the three years plus of my divorce process. But I journaled a hope-filled prayer just two days later. Divorce will swing you from one extreme to its opposite. Before reading any further, put an X on each of the following continuums to reflect how you’re feeling right now:

AngryPeaceful

Lonely Connected

AfraidHopeful

WorthlessValuable

Ashamed Esteemed

How honest were you? Look at the Xs. Can you give yourself permission to be where you're at? No matter where your Xs fall, know that God would rather have you embrace your reality than bury it or run from it. Progress always starts from where you are, not from where you feel you ought to be or where you wish you were. So take a look again. Are there any Xs you want to move?

Throughout this book you will deal with the real issues you face as you try to make sense of and move beyond your divorce. To get the most out of these exercises, prepare to be as honest about your hurt as possible. God can only help you to the degree that you're willing to be honest with him.

God wants to lead you forward, and he will use whatever is in you and whatever is going on around you to do that. It will not always feel good, but let God use whatever you feel, right or wrong, to propel you toward his purposes. This is a safe place. We have all lived a similar story.

Small Group Connection

Take turns describing one emotion that dominated your past week, and discuss why. Try to limit your answers to a few minutes each.

The Truth You Need

Sometimes the truth we need most isn't at all what we're aiming for. I was certain that I would never get beyond my divorce until after I had figured everything out. This list reflects my expectations at the time:

- Uncovering what went wrong
- Determining who was to blame
- Figuring out what could have been done differently to change the outcome
- Discovering and eliminating some "fatal flaw" in my character

Do any of these sound familiar? Check any that have preoccupied your thinking. When life comes crashing down around you, it's normal to scramble for answers:

Why didn't I see this coming?

Did I choose badly when I got married?

Was I so needy or unloving that I drove my husband away?

Was I a fool for believing in the permanency of marriage?

In the space below list some things you have been trying to figure out.

The truth is that the more we try to pursue answers to such questions, the more we exhaust ourselves. Like investigative reporters, our minds go over and over the who, what, why, and how of our marital demise, confident that if we can just identify where to place blame, we'll breathe a big sigh of relief, and be able to move on. I found out that this is faulty thinking. As hard as it might be to believe, we can only move on by *letting go* of the desire to figure everything out.

Your desire to figure it all out didn't originate with you. Way back at the beginning, Genesis 3:5 says, "*For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*" Think about what tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. What was she hoping to gain?

Imagine knowing what is good and what is evil playing out in real life. What kind of power would that have given Eve?

Imagine knowing whom to blame, exactly what the problem was, and what should have been done differently. What woman wouldn't want that? With all that knowledge, Eve would be able to play God. (A tempting promotion, indeed!)

Of course, Satan had only told Eve half the truth. He didn't mention that she'd also suffer alienation from God and Adam, bring on loneliness, emptiness, sickness, and death. (Sin is never enticing when you know the whole truth.) Instead of gaining freedom from her newfound knowledge, Eve's choice made her a captive to sin. Satan tempts us the same way. Every time we try to gain our liberation by pointing our finger and placing blame, we become captives, too.

Judgment doesn't relieve our suffering; Nor does it deliver solutions or bring us any closer to living an abundant life.

Blame is a defense mechanism we use in an attempt to shift our pain onto someone else. When we feel great pain, it's normal to think, "If I hurt this much, someone must be to blame." Naturally, we seek out the quickest route to relief—something or someone outside of us. But blaming and shaming trap us into a negative mindset. They focus our attention and energy on finding fault in things that aren't ours to change, or are too late to change. It's a dead end that gets us stuck in the past.

I used to think if I could prove it wasn't my fault my marriage ended, I'd feel better. But the fallout, the consequences, and the misery of divorce, these things won't go away simply by determining the culprit. I found freedom when I took responsibility for my plight.

Whether I had caused it or not, I had to own the pain.

My brokenness is my problem. I am the only one responsible for my happiness. The same is true for you. Regardless of who caused your divorce, you're still responsible for dealing with how it affects the way you think, feel and act now.

Proverbs 11:6 says: *“The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires.”* This verse describes two types of people and the consequences of their actions. Righteous people do the right thing for the right reason at the right time. The result of their behavior is deliverance, freedom. But the unfaithful, those who don't believe in God's ability to redeem and restore, become trapped by evil desires.

I know what at least one of those evil desires is! Our desire to pay back evil for evil when we're in pain. I had times when I wanted my ex to hurt as much as I did. I wanted him to suffer the way I felt like I was suffering. Revenge can look pretty sweet. But God in his grace showed me that following those desires would only add more damage to my already broken heart. I could stop the pain or I could add to it. The choice was mine.

I decided to stop digging.

I don't know your story. You might have every reason to feel betrayed, depressed and overwhelmed. These are natural feelings to have when you have been wronged. But you will only get unstuck by taking responsibility for what you do with the mess, even if someone else created it.

You are not powerless.

You can own the attitudes, feelings and behaviors you want to change and steer towards a fulfilling life. That's the purpose of this book—to end your suffering and begin your restoration. I've done it and I know you can, too. The best way to start is to acknowledge the mess and brokenness inside you and begin believing that God still has a good plan for your life. He waits for your cooperation to unfold it.

So let's begin. Look back at that first list of emotions where you marked the X's. Which one would you most like to see changed? Can you commit, here and now, to only following God's way of changing that? If so, put it in God's hands to use for his glory. Every time you surrender to God's plan from here on out, will be one step closer to a better life.

As a counselor it's difficult to watch people who choose to wallow and moan week after week when I know they are capable of creating a life worth living. Don't get me wrong. There's a time and place for self-pity. Even for anger. If you've been abused, knowing you didn't cause it, placing blame where it's due, is part of the healing process.

The good news, is that you only have to own your own mess, everyone else's is their responsibility.

No one is broken beyond God's ability to repair. Our Divine Healer can make you whole. That requires you to move beyond blame. Negativity doesn't make problems go away. In fact, it's more likely to make everything you see look like a problem.

If you find yourself stuck in a “blame trap” be honest with yourself as you answer these two questions:

Is my response helping me live my best life? _____ What negative effects is it having on me and those closest to me?

God is offering you his way through this. He is the only one powerful enough to transform your pain into your gain.

Remember, that part of you that said “yes” to doing this book? That part of you is ready for change. That part of you is longing for a better life. I’m asking you to let that part of you lead the way to your future.

Nothing is worth missing the future God has planned for you.

Small Group Connection

Get your determination on and tell someone in your group: *No one is robbing me of my future. Not now. Not ever.*

The Thoughts You Think

In his book *The Search for Significance*, Robert McGee wrote: “We tend to make two major errors when we punish others for their failures. The first is that we condemn people not only for genuine sin but also for their mistakes. When people who have tried their best fail, they do not need our biting blame. They need our love and encouragement.”

A second major error we often make by condemning others is believing that we are godly agents of condemnation. Unable to tolerate injustice, we seem to possess a great need to balance the scales of right and wrong. We are correct in recognizing that sin is reprehensible and deserves condemnation, yet we have not been licensed by God to punish others for their sins.

Judgment is God’s responsibility, not man’s.”¹

When we’re preoccupied with assuming and assigning blame for failure, we lose sight of the goal: learning to accept and love ourselves, as well as others, despite our imperfections. You and I and

¹ Robert S. McGee, *The Search for Significance* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, a division of Thomas Nelson Inc., 2003), 78-79.

everyone else in this world all need this kind of acceptance in order to grow. That might not have been taught in your home when you were growing up.

Think about the family in which you were raised: were you led to believe that every time anyone failed that person deserved to be punished? Did you feel rejected when you fell short?

How has this affected your response to people's inevitable failures?

The patterns that we grew up with can still influence our responses today. My natural reaction when something goes wrong is to want to know who is to blame. But I have come to realize that the need to prove I'm right and the inclination to analyze things beyond all measure have never satisfied my spiritual hunger. That's what my soul requires in order to move on.

One day when I was feeling like a victim, as I was journaling, God convicted me. "Your ego enjoys blaming others". Oh boy. He was right! By pinning the blame on someone else, I evoke others' sympathy, justify my complaining spirit, and feel morally superior. In short, I avoid having to change. What attitudes or behavior patterns feed your desire to place blame?

How has placing blame helped or hurt you spiritually? (Does it make you feel closer to God or more distant?)

Whether you blame yourself or your ex-spouse more, God knows the truth of the situation. He has a wonderful way of revealing the truth we need when we're ready for it. Let him teach you what you need to know as you lean into him.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how ready are you to only focus on what you need to do or know in order to move forward?

Small Group Connection

Take the time to share the number you chose with at least one other group member. Talk about why you chose that number. What could you do to move that number up by one?

During this week, journal about some specific ways you could start trusting God to handle any punishment that is needed. Use the space below or write in your regular journal.

When we suspend our own judgment to allow God to judge injustice, we free ourselves to move forward. We stop trying to play God, and allow ourselves to focus on the only thing we can

change: ourselves. That's a change that requires us to rely on God's perfect judgment of our situation.

God knows everything you've been through. He alone sees things without bias.

You may not be able to see clearly right now.

When we feel hurt or betrayed, our natural reaction is to go into crisis-management mode. We search for the shortest route to relief. Defense mechanisms such as denial or projection kick in to deflect pain in order to protect our fragile state from any further damage. In short, we create fictions that absolve us of responsibility in order to survive.

Just like our bodies go into shock in a crisis, we also have a sort of emotional shock to numb us from being overwhelmed by tragedy. However, once the trauma has passed and we have enough distance to not feel threatened, we often see things more clearly.

No one can say exactly when that will be, but at that point you might discover that you had been blind to some of your faults or immature in ways you hadn't realized. In contrast, you may also discover you had taken on guilt for things that weren't your responsibility. But this kind of truth isn't available during emotional turmoil.

It is a waste of your time to demand to know *now* things you simply can't know until later.

Years ago my ex-husband and I were traveling in Paris and wanted to return our rental car. Not knowing a word of French, we did our best to ask how to get to the airport to return our vehicle. But every time we asked for help, we ended up circling the airport again, on our way out of the city. We drove around like this for hours until we realized we were asking how to get *away* from the airport, not *to* it.

I'm guessing you don't have the energy to waste time driving in circles. You won't get where you want to go by asking the wrong questions. So save yourself hours and hours of fruitless counseling sessions by giving up demanding answers to questions like: Why did this happen to me? Why didn't I see this coming? How did this get so bad? Right now, such questions won't get you where you want to go: *forward*.

Make the most of where you're at by shifting the focus to your own improvement.

That's an investment you can make immediately, and it will pay off by helping to build your future. Here's a short assessment to help you get started with that today. Give yourself a score for each on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = "Never" and 5 = "Always"):

- How often do I stop to ask God to give me the response He wants me to have?
- How often do I find myself justifying reactions that I can feel aren't right?
- How often do I seek solutions for my problems instead of choosing to stay miserable?

To have answered those questions honestly defines true confession. It takes courage to look at your own heart, but this is how you begin to rebuild: on the solid foundation of truth. Building on anything less is bound to crumble.

Consider the opposite of such honesty: *If we claim we have not sinned, we make him [God] out to be a liar and his word is not in us* (1 John 1:10). That old-fashioned word, sin, refers to trying to play God. (Remember, Eve?) Demanding my answers, in my time, so my plans will succeed is the sin that leads to a life of bondage. So do a quick heart check right now.

Are you ready to recover in God's way and God's timing?

Here's how that begins: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). That can be as simple as saying: "God, I've made a mess of things and don't know the way out. I'm done trying to make things work out. I need your help. Show me your way through this."

You don't need answers in order to move on. You just need to keep your own heart free from whatever may block its connection to divine love. That's your source of power to press forward. Ask for God's guidance as you answer the following questions.

- Look back at those questions you scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Which of them would be the most helpful for you to address? Circle your answer above.
- One of the most powerful prayers you can pray is: "I can't but You can." What can you say that about in your life today? Can you spend some quiet time acknowledging your need for God's help and opening yourself to receive it?

God's power and love and faithfulness are available to you right now. It's your choice. Your response to pain and injustice will either keep your mind running in circles or free you to step into the future God has for you. As counter-intuitive as it feels, the best path to your new life is to let go of your demand for answers.

Whether you or your ex or some combination of that was at fault, neither certainty nor getting even will grant you freedom. Besides, God's got that judgment thing already covered. "*Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord*". (Romans 12:19).

The Hope You Have

Once we let go of playing God, we can rest in three truths about him: he knows the truth; he exposes the truth; and he deals mercifully with those who love the truth.

1. God knows the truth.

Hebrews 4:13 assures us that God is never fooled by evil: "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." No matter how good the argument or how wise the advice, God can always divide truth from error. Isn't that a relief? By allowing him to sort out good and evil, we're free to use our strength to pursue righteousness. The only thing necessary for our progress is to fix our eyes on following God.

Instead of the constant churning inside, we can discover peace and rest.

Isaiah 32:17-18 says, “The fruit of that righteousness will be peace; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.” Doesn’t that sound appealing? Which of those rewards of righteousness appeals most to you?

You can move forward in the confidence that God knows the whole truth. You can rest in his ability to sort things out. By releasing your past into his hands, you’re free for what lies ahead. Take a few moments to consider: How could you start to notice when you’re caught in “shoulding” others and let it go?

2. God exposes the truth.

Everything will be exposed eventually. Here are Jesus’ words from Matthew and Luke: “*So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.*” (Matthew 10:26). “*For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open*” (Luke 8:17). Nothing stays hidden forever. Not words. Not actions. Not intentions. That’s a pretty scary truth.

In both verses, Jesus was talking about exposing the truth of what is in a person’s heart: either a proud, pharisaical heart, or a noble, good heart. What do you think are some ways God exposes what people think and value?

We reap what we sow.

At some point, the truth of what’s in my heart (and in my ex-spouse’s) will be brought into the open. In one way or another. That’s enough to keep me busy focusing on my heart! It also removes the pressure I feel to attach blame when I tell my story.

Yes, it’s tempting to spin it so I appear better than I am, but that’s when I remind myself to let go of seeking people’s approval and aim for God’s. God knows the truth, and one day it will be disclosed and judged fairly.

“For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

3. God deals mercifully with those who love the truth.

In Psalm 51, we read David’s words of confession following his sin of adultery with Bathsheba (see the full story at 2 Samuel 11). Read Psalm 51:1-12 through once, then go back and underline the things David asked God to do for him.

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.*

*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.
Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

That sure is a lot of requests, isn't it? Apparently, David relied on God's ability to change his heart. If God didn't do the work in us and for us, no one would change.

This psalm writer had committed adultery and murder. He had discovered the hard way that living to please himself didn't bring joy. In fact, it brought him bone-crushing heaviness. Now he longed to be right with God again and so he asks God to grant him a "willing spirit." I hope that is a prayer you can pray as we move forward. If so, write it out here. (You might need to pray it often.)

Later in that same Psalm David says how he will respond to God's mercy (Psalm 51:13-15):

*Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.
Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.*

Notice how David's emotions and focus have changed!

What kind of effect could this have on how he treats those around him?

Psalm 51:6 says, "Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place."
(*The Life Application Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1991), 959.)

We don't have to be afraid of the truth God reveals.

He knows what's in our hearts already and waits for us to trust his mercy enough to see ourselves as broken and in need of him.

God has always known everything you've ever done and everything that's ever been done to you. Your history is an open book to him. Yet, he has never thought less of you or loved you less.

Ask for his guidance as you finish one or more of these sentences:

— God, I let go of . . .

— God, help me receive your . . .

— God, forgive me and restore me from . . .

The Life You Build

You don't have to see everything clearly for God to lead you through it. You just need to follow him. Isaiah 42:16 says, "I will lead *the blind* by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them."

Take a minute right now to embrace a specific promise from the passage above. Do you need to be led along an unfamiliar path? Do you need to see darkness turned into light or to have a rough place made smooth? Write your prayer here or in your journal.

Small Group Connection

Share what you wrote with another group member. Then take a few moments to pray together to close your study time.

I hope this chapter has helped you let go of blame so you can:

- Enjoy the freedom that comes from allowing God to settle the score.
- Be relieved of the need to figure everything out.
- Focus on allowing God to repair what's broken in your own heart.