

Small Group Study Guide for
Faith Deployed:
Daily Encouragement for Military Wives

A resource of <http://www.faithdeployed.com/>

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Introduction

Small groups change lives. I've seen women who were extremely depressed and lonely, get plugged into a small group and have their entire demeanor change. I've seen women who have dealt with some of life's most difficult circumstances call first on those within their small group before their family can ever come to their side. When you come together to study God's word, there is a huge amount of power and connection that comes from that and from joining with other believers in prayer.

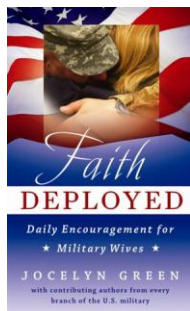
This Faith Deployed Group Study Guide was developed for military wives as a tool to help you grow deeper in your relationships with Christ and with each other. Use it, and be prepared to watch as God's work takes place in you and through you!

It is an amazing thing when believers come together in faith and discuss what God's Word means to their lives! Congratulations on answering such an important call in bringing women together for this purpose. Be prepared for amazing blessings. You are going to see lives change in incredible ways and find yourself as a leader even more blessed than anyone. Our prayer is that this study guide will bless your group and bring those in your group into a deeper understanding of what God's Word has to say to us as military wives.

God bless!

Catherine Fitzgerald, Marine wife

About Faith Deployed



Faith Deployed: Daily Encouragement for Military Wives (Moody Publishers, 2008) was written by Jocelyn Green, former Coast Guard wife, and 14 contributing writers from every branch of service. Through this book, the Christian military wife will better understand how to biblically respond to the specific challenges she faces. *Faith Deployed* uses passages of Scripture, real-life illustrations, and insights from noted Christian scholars. Every devotional seeks to answer: How does the Bible relate to what I am experiencing in the military community?

Here's what others have to say about it:

"The messages of the Faith Deployed devotionals resonated with me greatly, on so many levels. It doesn't dismiss our hard times but gives us hope and instruction on how to break through. I'm excited for all those who needed such a book as this; who knows what new heights it can bring our relationships to, with God, our husbands, and our communities."

~Starlett Henderson, co-founder, Army Wife Network

"Ground in solid, practical, been-there advice and rooted in biblical truth, *Faith Deployed* should be essential reading for everyone whose husband serves in uniform."

~Tom Neven, editorial director, Focus on the Family, Marine veteran, author of *On the Frontline*

"Jocelyn Green and the other writers in this book have connected to the hearts of military wives with compassion, grace and hearts full of mercy. These writers have been there and have brought to us as readers compelling devotions to connect us to the Lord, our spouse and the hope of a strong marriage during times of deployment. In all the work we have done in reaching out to military marriages, this resource, *Faith Deployed* is the best tool we have found for ministering to the spiritual needs of these heroic couples serving our great nation."

~Dr. Gary and Barb Rosberg, America's Family Coaches and authors of *6 Secrets to a Lasting Love*, national radio show co-hosts

Purchase *Faith Deployed* at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [ChristianBook.com](https://www.ChristianBook.com) or [FaithDeployed.com](https://www.FaithDeployed.com).

Now, for the first time, military wives can use this book in a group study to further enhance personal spiritual growth as well as relationships in their own communities. Let's get started!

How to Use this Guide

This study was designed for military wife small groups. The six-week topical study provides group discussions that can be used with the book *Faith Deployed: Daily Encouragement for Military Wives* by Jocelyn Green (and contributing writers). Each session takes approximately 45-60 minutes.

As a group leader, it is your job to guide the discussion and keep the focus on the topic being discussed. Women love to talk. Women love to share experiences. And these are valuable ways to get your group connected to one another and thinking about these topics through God's Word. Your group might need to establish some ground rules such as keeping what is shared confidential, not gossiping and being encouraging to one another before beginning this study.

Structuring your time:

Each group must make determinations as to their own purpose and desires through the group. Here is a sample of how your group might choose to structure an hour and a half meeting:

10 minutes: Fellowship/snack and drink time- Have a time as ladies are coming in to get food and/or drinks and to just get to know one another better.

10 minutes: Welcome/Announcements/Memory Verse/Introductions- Welcome any new ladies and discuss the purpose and ground rules of the group (things like no gossip, keeping prayer requests confidential, etc.), make any announcements about any activities the group has coming up, take volunteers to recite the memory verse and give out inexpensive prizes for those who do, allow time for quick introductions when there are new ladies present.

5 minutes: Intro prayer- ask one of the group members to open the group in prayer.

10 minutes: *Introduction activity* (suggestions are in each of the lesson guides in Section Two)

45 minutes: *Discussion* (as outlined in the lesson guides)

10 minutes: Prayer requests/closing prayer-take any prayer requests, have a member record them and email to the group so they can pray throughout the week. Close the session in prayer.

Introduction:

The introductions in the group guide are fun, engaging activities to get the ladies in your small group thinking about the topic at hand. These ideas can easily be modified for your group or can be taken out all together, depending on your group's dynamics, time and structure.

Discussion:

The discussion section is the part of the study that really dives into God's word. A series of questions as well as verses are in this section that will point your group to God's take on the various topics in this study. Also included in the discussion section are *Faith Deployed* entries that are directly related to the topic. Since there are so many verses and readings in this section, a good way to keep the discussion moving is to have each lady find a certain verse or devotion and have it ready as you begin the study.

It is important to gauge your group's discussion. Sometimes a question or discussion point will really bring about a lot of discussion. It may be a point your group needs to stay on and discuss in detail based on what is going on in your group member's lives. That's okay. You don't always have to finish a discussion in one meeting. Sometimes God will focus your group on a particular issue for a reason. Be sensitive to that as a group leader. Other times, group members will start to veer off the topic and use it as a time to complain. This should not be your group's purpose. Sometimes you will need to refocus the discussion through God's word, even though it may mean stopping discussion.

Web Bonus items will give you additional resources and articles that will allow for participants to go further in the topic. These can be integrated into the study as well as time permits. Be sure to click these links as you prepare for the lesson so you can determine which you'd like to incorporate.

Life Work:

Women's lives are so busy nowadays. Military wives are even busier. The Life Work component is a way to extend the lesson from just being words we hear into making real life

Faith Deployed Small Group Study Guide

changes without having to complete fill-in-the-blank type homework. Each Life Work section has a series of questions or action items for the ladies to do throughout their week. *Print enough copies of the Life Work section to hand out to each participant at the end of your meetings.* Your group can decide to discuss at the beginning of each meeting what changes or impact the lesson from the previous week made in how they lived their lives.

Included on every life work is a memory verse. One way to use this memory verse is to encourage members to memorize the verse throughout the week or two you do not meet. Then, when you come back together, take volunteers to recite the verses. Get small, inexpensive prizes or come up with a reward system for those who memorize the verse. Although it can feel like something we used to do as children, you will be surprised how grown women will get excited and sometimes competitive at hiding God's Word in their hearts.

More Tips for a Successful Small Group

Prayer time: There are a variety of ways you can structure your prayer time. If you have a larger group, you may wish to break up into smaller groups to discuss prayer requests and pray. Have a member from each group write down the requests and then email them out after each meeting so the group as a whole can pray. You can have 3x5 cards available and a box for ladies to write down anonymous requests or ones they did not wish to say aloud. You can partner ladies up and have every person have a prayer partner in the group who they commit to praying for throughout the week. You can do a different method each week if your group prefers or you can choose your method based on how much time you have left after your discussion.

Roles/responsibilities: It is so important to share the roles and responsibilities for the group. Have sign-up sheets for snacks and drinks. Encourage ladies to take turns leading the group (anyone can do it, using the guides in Section Two!). Create committees who can plan fellowship events outside your regular Bible study times, help when there are needs within the group such as meals for new babies or those going through a difficult time, and ladies who can call new ladies who came or those who were absent.

Childcare: One of the greatest challenges a small group may face is the issue of childcare. If you are doing your study through your church, consider putting an “ad” out in your bulletin, asking for volunteers to assist the group with childcare. You can have group members each put in a couple of dollars each week and find paid childcare. Or you can have group members rotate and assist with taking care of children. You might have to get creative. Sometimes a baby monitor where the group is meeting and discussing the topic can make it so those assisting with childcare can at least hear the discussion and talk amongst themselves as time permits.

Accountability: One thing you want to encourage is that the ladies start to hold one another accountable for living the Christian life. Accountability partners are a great way to do this. There are a variety of websites that offer accountability partner questions, in which two equally mature believers will pair up and meet together outside the group. During their time, they can discuss confidentially what struggles they’ve had in their walk as well as what victories they

have had. This will really bond your group as well as move the ladies into a deeper faith and walk.

Spiritual maturity levels: In almost every group, you will have a variety of spiritual maturity levels. You may have non-Christians and new believers all the way to those who have been Christians for most of their lives. It is important for those who are further along in their maturity to disciple those younger in the faith as well as to show grace during group discussions. Create an environment where no matter what a person's maturity level, they will feel comfortable sharing. If you find your group having difficulty with creating an environment of acceptance, take individual members aside and just encourage them to use the various levels as a way to grow their own faith. Those who are more mature should be willing to speak boldly on God's truth without making non-believers and those younger in the faith feel inferior or like they shouldn't discuss the Bible because of their lack of knowledge. Make sure your discussions will have times for all levels of spiritual maturity to be involved.

Week One: Loneliness

Introduction:

What is the difference between aloneness and loneliness? (Aloneness is when you are physically solitary whereas loneliness is a feeling of emotional seclusion)

A 2006 study showed that 25 percent of the population felt like they had no one to confide in, which was up from 10 percent 20 years ago. In an age where we have more ways than ever to communicate: social networking sites, Instant Messenger, text messaging, Skype, etc. etc. Why do you think Americans feel lonelier than ever? (Busyness, surface relationships, they don't actually "interact" with humans: only technology, etc.)

Discussion:

- I. Why is loneliness so difficult for us human types?
 - a. We were made for companionship. Read Genesis 2:18
- II. Is it wrong to *feel* lonely?
 - a. David often felt alone. Let's read Psalm 25:16, Psalm 102:7, and 142:4.
 - i. What did David do with his loneliness? (He expressed it to God.)
 - b. Loneliness only becomes a sin when it creates other sins:
 - i. What bad things do people do with they feel lonely? (Fill the void with other things: alcohol, drugs, TV, food, etc., feel self-pity or depression, focuses on ourselves constantly, choose bad or dangerous relationships: affairs, etc.) Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. What is the difference between "Godly sorrow" and "worldly sorrow"? (Worldly sorrow includes those things like self pity and depression, brings "death." Godly sorrow produces change. If we feel lonely, it can be the result of not having that companionship that God designed us for. But if we feel lonely because we aren't being paid enough attention or people aren't focused completely on us, this could be dangerous)
- III. When is being alone a good thing . . .
 - a. As military wives, we have long periods of being alone. Sometimes, aloneness is a good and necessary thing. Read "The Gift of Solitude" on page 18 of *Faith*

Deployed. Do we try to stay so busy that we crowd out times of loneliness with God?

- b. Loneliness and aloneness is good when:
 - i. It forces us to turn to God:
 - 1. Look back at Psalm 25:16. Sometimes God may use loneliness to get our attention and point us to our NEED for Him. How has God ever used a period of loneliness to focus your attention to Him?
 - ii. It is an opportunity for prayer:
 - 1. Let's read Luke 5:16. Jesus often retreated to places of solitude to pray. We are a naturally over-stimulated society. If we aren't being entertained at every moment, we can often feel lonely and bored. How does this over-saturation of activity, technology, and interaction keep us from God? Why is it so hard for us to model Christ's example in retreating to lonely places and praying? (Distractions, time, etc.)
 - iii. It is an opportunity to show God's power:
 - 1. Read Psalm 68:6. God is the something from nothing God. He takes the lonely and places them in families. A family may not be the "traditional" type we may think of. Sometimes, God gives us a "family" in the midst of our loneliness. How have you ever found this to be true in your military journey? How can this group be a family for the lonely? What do we need to do to make it a place where the lonely can come?
 - iv. What to do with loneliness:
 - 1. Admit You are Lonely:
 - a. Let's read Galatians 6:2. Before we start to try and carry each other's burdens, what do we need to know first? (what the burden is..) So, what is the first step in dealing with loneliness? (Admitting it to someone, saying I feel alone, I need someone)
 - 2. Find a Friend:

- a. Read Ecclesiastes 4:8-10. What is this verse saying about people and our needs? (We need others) Why is this so difficult to admit sometimes? (Pride, we want to appear to have it together, fear of rejection) How many of you were told that to have a friend, you've got to be a friend? When we are lonely, sometimes our best bet is to start *being a friend* to others and putting ourselves out there. Yes, we might get rejected. Yes, we might still feel lonely. But, eventually, God will *set us in a family*, His family.
3. Remind yourself of God's presence:
 - a. We are never truly alone. Let's look at some verses: John 16:32, Hebrews 13:5, Psalm 72:12, 1 Peter 5:7. Again, we have to remind ourselves of this truth as well as communicate with God our feelings of loneliness.
 - b. James 4:4. We also have to draw near to God. If we are feeling alone, it is most likely connected to our spiritual walk. If we aren't spending time in prayer or in His word, our loneliness will grow and fester. If we are constantly communicating with Him, feelings of loneliness will dissipate.
4. Start seeking the lonely:
 - a. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7. God keeps bringing us back to this verse, especially as military wives. We will undoubtedly feel periods of loneliness in this military life. It is inevitable. But, one of the reasons we deal with any struggle or trial, is so that we can use it to comfort and minister to others God puts in our path. Start noticing the lonely, the ones who seem to be in the background. How can you reach out? How can you offer comfort?

Life Work

“One is the Loneliest Number”

Scripture Memory Verse:

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Life Work Assignments:

1. Sometimes the first step in dealing with loneliness is admitting that we are in fact lonely. If you are feeling lonely, first admit it to God. Tell Him why you think you are feeling this way. Is it because of your husband’s deployment? Is it because you isolate yourself? Then, find someone who you think can be a friend to you and admit it to them.
2. Sometimes, we can say, “no one ever invites me out or tries to be my friend,” when in actuality we never attempt to invite others or be their friend. Actively try to engage people. Call someone up and ask them to do something with you. Sure, you might get rejected, but keep trying if at first you don’t succeed. Call others in this group or other “circles” in your life until you find someone who is willing to have another friend.
3. Some of you may not be dealing with the feeling of loneliness in your life right now. Praise God for that! But, undoubtedly, you have experienced a season of loneliness. Be actively seeking those who are lonely and comfort them in their time of loneliness. What are some *actual* things you can do to show someone else they are not alone? Can you send them a card? Can you invite them over for dinner? Be creative and then, do it!
4. If your husband is away or if you are just feeling as though you are in a season of loneliness, use it to grow closer to God. Use times of aloneness for prayer and studying His word. Converse with God as frequently as you do your husband when he is home and you will find your relationship with God grow abundantly. Share the same concerns you would share with your husband, with your Creator.
5. Read “No Separation” on page 127 of *Faith Deployed*. Meditate on God’s ever present nearness and rejoice that we never have to experience separation from Him if we are His children!

Week Two: Fear/Anxiety

Introduction:

Read the poem [“Whatifs” by Shel Silverstein](#). What are some of the whatif’s that we have as military wives? (What if our husband dies? What if he is injured? What if something happens while he is gone? Etc.)

Watch the [Mr. Worry video](#). Are we Mrs. Worry’s? Do you constantly find yourself having to fear or be anxious about SOMETHING and if you are not, you are worried about not having anything to worry about? Why do we sometimes feel the need to worry? (it gives us a false sense of control) Discussion:

- I. Where does fear/anxiety come from?
 - a. Worry is NOT from God:
 - i. Let’s think about this verse, 2 Timothy 1:7 from the NKJV:
“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”
 1. Meditate on that verse for a minute. God did not give us a spirit of fear, so if we have that spirit that is not from him. He gave us a spirit of power and love AND He gave us a sound mind. Who will undoubtedly try to destroy the power, love and sound mind God has given us? (Satan)
 - b. Satan uses fear against us:
 - i. Let’s read John 10:10. In this verse it talks about the thief stealing and killing and destroying our lives. How does Satan do this through our minds with our fears? What has Christ come to give us? (a full life) How is a life riddled with anxiety not full?
 - ii. Listen to this passage from *Moments Together for Couples* by Dennis and Barbara Rainey: “Today, I believe too many Christians suffer from what I call the “What If Syndrome.” Like a dog chasing its tail, they don't make any decisions because they continually worry “What if...?” This is exactly how the devil wants you to think. You see, if Satan can get fear to line the

interior of your soul, it becomes like an impenetrable coating that causes you to take your focus off God. Satan will do all he can to keep us from yielding our lives to God and experiencing His peace and love. First Peter 5:8 tells us, "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." He is trying to use the snare of fear to devour us! " How has Satan used the "What if Syndrome" against you?

- c. Anxiety: What it means, what it causes, what it shows, what it helps
 - i. The Latin root for anxiety means "to choke or to strangle." How does fear and worry do that to us?
[*Web Bonus: Are you a worrier or just concerned? Find out here.](#)
 - ii. What does fear and anxiety cause? What are some of the things that happen when we are fearful, afraid or anxious? What are some of the results of anxiety? (we can become paralyzed, we can lash out, we can lash inward, we can lose opportunities because we are too afraid, we can cause others to become fearful, etc.)
 - iii. When we say we are a believer in Christ, yet are anxious, what does this ultimately say about our faith? (We don't trust Him)
 - 1. His help begins with our trust:
 - a. Psalm 28:7
 - 2. Anxiety is the OPPOSITE of faith. Anxiety is disbelief in God's power in all situations.
 - a. Hebrews 11:1
 - iv. Worry is worthless:
 - 1. How does worry or fear change a situation? (it doesn't, it only makes it more difficult). Let's read Luke 12:22-26. What does Jesus say about worry? (it doesn't add anything to our lives)
[*Web bonus: Ten things worry actually accomplishes.](#)

II. What do we do with worry?

- a. We know that worry is worthless. We know that worry is not from God. The most frequent command given in the Bible is to FEAR NOT and DON'T BE AFRAID. Why do you think God gave that command over and over again? (Because we don't get it, we don't listen, we give in to worry too easily, etc.)

- b. So naturally our next question is, what do we do with our worry? Let's take a look at what God's word says:
- i. Take our worries to Him:
 1. Philippians 4:6: What does this verse tell us to worry about (NOTHING)? What are we to do with our fears as they come? (present them to the Lord) Let's look at some of our "what if's" as military wives. How could those fears become requests to God?
 2. 1 Peter 5:7 Why should we take our worries to God? (because He cares for us) This verse uses the word "cast." What do you think of when you hear the word cast or to cast something such as a net? (throwing it away from you) This verse is literally telling us to throw our worries from ourselves onto our Father.
 3. Psalm 94:19: Bringing our worries to Him can bring us consolation and peace that we have been longing for.
 - ii. Trust Him:
 1. Read "Already Written" on p. 212 of *Faith Deployed*. We need to trust in who God is rather than our own abilities to control.
 2. It is not enough to just tell God our worries and then wrestle Him to take them back. We have to give them completely to Him and realize He is ultimately going to decide how the outcomes of our fears. Sometimes He may allow our worst fears to be realized. Randy Alcorn says in his book *If God is Good* that "Sufferers have told me, 'we did everything right. We attended church and gave our money to missions- and then God did this to us. I don't get it.' At times like these our faith gets exposed as an insurance policy in which we pay our premiums to protect us from harm."
 - a. Often times we view our faith and relationship with God as an insurance policy. So long as we do the right things, He won't let bad things happen. But nowhere in the Bible does it say that believers in Christ will not have bad things happen. In fact, it says quite the opposite, it says that if we do choose to follow Christ we will undoubtedly suffer and face trials of many kinds. Let's look at what God does

promise us: Romans 8:28-39. So what promises does He give us? (He will work all things for our good, Nothing will separate us from Christ's love-no matter what the hardship, we are to be more than simply conquerors of tragedy)

- b. In Beth Moore's study *Esther*, she talked about Esther's journey through her fears. One of the things she discussed was an "if, then" statement Esther spoke: "And if I perish, I perish." Beth suggested that our "if, then" statement for any fear should always be, "And if _____, then God." Think of your worst fear. No matter what the circumstance of difficulty, the answer will always be God. If your worst fear comes true, then God will sustain you as you mourn, pick up the pieces and fulfill the rest of the purpose He has for you. How can thinking like this eliminate our fear?
- iii. Do what you can:
 1. Consider the Proverbs 31 woman. Many of us love her because we aspire to be her. She is continually moving and pushing forward in all she does. Look at verse 21. Why does she have no fear for her household? (She has done what she could to keep certain outcomes from happening) Sometimes our fear is so paralyzing that we do absolutely nothing, even when there is something God has allowed us to do. God wants us to do what we can with our fears. If you are afraid of failing a test, studying is one thing you can do to keep that fear from coming true. What are some fears you have that you have done something about them?
 2. Take things a day at a time. So often our fears lie in the tomorrows that we aren't even guaranteed. Let's look at Matthew 6:34

Conclusion:

As you go through this week, start practicing casting your cares onto God. As a fear comes into your mind, instead of obsessing about it or allowing it to strangle you, start praying. Keep doing it until it is a habit. What has God spoken to you through this discussion today? What changes do you need to make in your own life? [*Web bonus: Tame your worry habit.](#)

Life Work

Fear Not, for I am with You

Scripture Memory Verse:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7

Life Work Assignments:

1. Start practicing turning your fears into prayers, casting your cares onto Him. Throughout the week as worry enters your mind, immediately begin praying about it.
2. Make a box or ring of 3x5 cards with verses on them that speak about fear or worry and about trusting God. Here are some verses to get you started: Matthew 6:34, Psalm 56:3, Psalm 3:5-6, Psalm 27:2-4, Psalm 34:3-5, Psalm 46, Proverbs 3:24-26, Proverbs 17:3, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 26:3-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7, Psalm 62:8, Psalm 28:7, Psalm 31:5-7, Proverbs 12:25, 1 John 4:17-19, Philippians 4:6-7, Luke 12:22-26, Psalm 37:3, 1 Peter 5:7. As you go through your quiet time and find more verses, add them to your cards. Then, when anxiety seems to be taking over, pull out your cards and read them to yourself aloud. Keep reading them until you feel God’s peace replacing anxiety.
[*Web bonus: Go-to Scriptures for when you’re fearful or anxious.](#)
3. One way we can begin to trust God more is to reflect on all the ways He has delivered us from our past fears or out of the midst of terrible suffering. Make a list of times where God has brought you from a pit of fear either by keeping your worst fear from coming true or through being there for you as you journeyed through the realization of that fear. Keep that list somewhere you can refer to it often like your Bible or your bathroom mirror.
4. Write down some of your fears. Then, write the things you *can* do about them and that you have some control over. Then, pray about the things you cannot control.
5. Read “God of All Comfort,” p. 119 of *Faith Deployed*. How can you comfort others who are anxious/afraid with the comfort you yourself have received?

Week Three: Contentment

Introduction:

Finish this sentence: My life will be perfect when . . . (Have ladies yell out answers.)

Watch You Tube Video [“5 Ways to Misery” video](#).

This video is of course a tongue and cheek look at how we can become discontented. What are the five things the lady talks about as a sure fire way to misery? (Entitlement, taking things personally, focusing on problems, losing perspective and not having an attitude of gratitude) What are some reasons military wives might have these issues? (Dealing with emotions during difficult times such as deployments, having too much time to focus on things, not keeping self occupied, etc.) What are some situations or circumstances that could cause these attitudes? (Deployment, difficult work schedule, frustration, being isolated/alone in a new place, etc.)

Discussion:

What does it mean to be to be content? How are contentment and happiness different? (Happiness is dependent on externals: stuff, people, circumstance; contentment is not.)

I. The Contentment Test:

- a. Read “The Struggle for Contentment” from *Faith Deployed*, page 37.
- b. Here’s how to determine if we are truly content or not. How do you react when you hear someone else’s good news? Do you find yourself jealous about what they have or do you find yourself genuinely joyful in their blessings? What are some areas you find yourself constantly unsatisfied in, where things are never “enough”? (marriage, having “stuff”, our husband’s schedule, etc.)

II. The beginning of discontent:

- a. After taking that “contentment test”, we can all see areas in which we may be discontent. Maybe it is about *something* that we want, maybe it is about *someone* that we want to be or act different or maybe it is over some *circumstance* you want to change. Let’s take a look at where our discontent can begin:
 - i. Let’s read Genesis 3:1-13. What do we know about the Garden of Eden? (it was perfect, wonderful, great) So, here Eve is in a PERFECT world,

with PERFECT circumstances, and PERFECT everything, yet she quickly becomes discontent. What causes her discontent with her current situation, pushing her to want MORE? (v. 13-Satan deceives her, starts with questioning-v. 4) What kind of deceptions and questions can begin to cause discontent in us? (Is this it? Am I *just* a mom, *just* a wife, etc.? Why can't I have that? Why does she/he get that and I don't? When is it my turn for something good? Etc.) Eve teaches us a valuable lesson. Even if we DID have it all, even if all circumstances in our lives were perfect, we might still fall into the trap of wanting more.

III. Finding Contentment no matter what:

- a. Figure out where your strength is coming from:
 - i. Paul gave us the solution for discontentment. Let's look at Philippians 4:11-12. What did Paul say about how he became content? (He learned it) What situations did Paul face? (Times of plenty and of want). So, according to Paul, contentment is a *learned choice*. It does not come natural to us human types. It requires us to have knowledge that there is purpose in ALL seasons of life: good and bad, plenty and want, joy and sadness. Paul doesn't stop there, he goes on to tell us how he handled all these circumstances, let's look at verse 13. How did Paul get the strength to handle any circumstance and learn to *be content*? (He got his strength from Christ) Where are some places we try to get our strength from that leave us feeling discontented? (Stuff, husband, friends, kids, circumstance, money, etc.)
 1. We have got to figure out what is *leading us*. Read Psalm 23:1. Sometimes we can make a lot of other things our "shepherd" but it leads us very astray. If we want to be content, we first have to figure out who or what is steering us! Read Ecclesiastes 5:10, Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 6:24.
 - a. How can money or the love of stuff shepherd us? How can this cause discontent?
- b. Learn to accept what God has planned:
 - i. Sometimes circumstances are less than ideal, in fact sometimes they are quite the opposite. No better example of this was given than Jesus

himself. Think about it. From the day He came to the earth, He was staring down the barrel of a gun. He knew the end. He knew what was coming. Let's look at what He asked his father for: Matthew 26:42. Learning to be content does not mean we cannot pray for better circumstance. We can. In fact, Christ himself did. But above better circumstance, His goal was to have *God's will* be done, not His own. Are you wanting things to change because it will be easier on you or make things more enjoyable for you? Sometimes, God has bigger plans than our comfort or pleasure. Why is it so hard to accept God's plan over what we *think* His plan should be?

- c. Change your focus:
 - i. What is at the center of not being content? (ME) It becomes all about what I don't have, what I deserve, what I want, what God should do for ME. It gets our minds focused completely and selfishly on ourselves. Read Philippians 2:3-4. What key to learning contentment does this verse hold? (We need to focus on other's needs)
 - ii. Discontent says, "It's not enough." Contentment says, "Thank God for what I have." Read "Blessed Contentment" from *Faith Deployed*, p. 20. How did Jill combat her discontent? (She made a list of things to be grateful for.)
 - iii. Let's read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 and Ephesians 5:18-20. What role do you think gratitude plays in contentment?

Conclusion:

Let's test ourselves this week. How do we react at the joys of others? What areas of our lives do we constantly feel as though it is not *enough*? How can we start being content with whatever season God has placed us in? Are we on the 5 ways to Misery plan by focusing on our problems, not being gracious, feeling entitled, losing perspective or taking things too personally.

Life Work

Learning to be Content

Scripture Memory Verse:

"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Philippians 4:11-13

Life Work Assignments:

1. The "5 Ways to Misery" clip highlighted five ways to live a discontented life: live as if you are entitled, focus on your problems, magnify situations, take everything personally and live without a sense of gratitude. Start examining your own life. Are you practicing one of these behaviors? If so, pray for God's help to overcome it and then, practice the opposite: live as if everything is a gift from your creator, focus on the blessings, keep perspective, don't take everything so personally and start being grateful. Keep a journal as you overcome a "misery habit."
2. Discontentment starts with questions: Why do they have more? When will it be my turn? Start looking at the questions that are creeping into your life. Start answering them with God's answers. Here are some verses to look at: 1 Pet. 4:12-13, Rom. 8:28, 1 Tim. 6:6, 2 Cor. 12:9-10, and Heb. 13:5. Remember, contentment is a *learned* choice.
3. Focusing on ourselves and our circumstance can keep us from contentment. Make an effort to reach out to others each and every day. Find people who need your help. Pray for God to bring them into your path. Try to help one person in a more difficult circumstance than your own each and every day. Journal about your experience.
4. Start or continue writing in a gratitude journal, tracking how God has turned difficult circumstance into blessing. Refer to it when you find yourself becoming discontented. Remind yourself that you are only seeing a small part of the puzzle. You are looking at one piece, God is looking at the picture on the box and knows how the pieces are going to fit together. Pray for the patience to accept the circumstance or season you are in. Pray for God to focus your mind on what you *do* have, not what you don't!

Week Four: Bitterness

Introduction:

On this 3x5 card, I want you to briefly describe a time you were bitter. Put just a few words that describe who or what caused you to feel bitter. Would anyone be willing to share their scenario?

What are some things in the military life that cause you to be bitter? (Have volunteer write on poster board things such as: husband's schedule, doing things alone, deployments, moving, losing friends, not following my own dreams, etc.)

Many of us have felt a certain amount of bitterness over this military life at one point or another. Today, we are going to look at what God's word says about bitterness.

Discussion:

I. The Root of Bitterness:

a. Bitterness:

- i. What do you think about when you hear this word?
- ii. Do you think bitterness is a trait God likes or dislikes? Why?

b. Let's take a look at Hebrews 12:15:

- i. "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."
 1. How does this verse describe bitterness? (as a root)
 2. What do you know about roots? (They grow underground, they grow outward, they give the tree nutrients, they can take over an area of ground, etc.)
 3. What does this verse say about the bitter root doing? (Growing up and causing trouble and defiling many)
 4. How does bitterness affect others? (causes trouble and defiles many)
 5. Let's look back at the first part of this verse, why do you think there is talk of grace and bitterness together? (Bitterness is the

opposite of grace, when you miss God's grace- the things He has given you undeservedly, you may become bitter) Keep this in mind as we think about how to get rid of the pesky roots of bitterness.

- c. Some things we need to remember about bitterness is that first, it is a sin of our mind. The Greek word is pikros meaning something sharp or pointed. Bitterness is something (or someone) that is difficult to bear, causing animosity and resentment.
 - i. Have you ever considered bitterness to be a sin? Why not?
- d. Starting on p. 40 of *Faith Deployed*, read the first three paragraphs of the devotion.

According to Ellie Kay, when does resentment (another word for bitterness) take root?

II. The Fruit of Bitterness:

- a. Draw a picture of a tree with roots and fruit growing off the tree. Label the roots in big letters: BITTERNESS. Think about the time you were bitter or the time you were with a bitter person. Whenever bitterness creeps in and starts to grow in our lives, it will ultimately produce some spoiled, rotten fruit. Think about that for a minute. When you are bitter over your husband's schedule or him deploying yet again, what are some actions that you do that are negative? On this tree, I want you to write the fruit of bitterness, either actions or emotions that come from us when we are bitter. (Some examples: anger, meanness, gossip, separation from God, complaining, etc.)
- b. Undoubtedly, we know that the fruit of bitterness is the complete contrary to the fruit God calls us to have. The Bible talks about the fruit of the Spirit, the outward expression of those of us who claim to have the Holy Spirit within us. Let's take a look at that:
 - i. Galatians 5:23 NIV: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."
 - 1. How is this fruit different from the fruit of bitterness?

III. The Way Out of Bitterness

- a. What do we need to do with our bitterness, according to the Bible? (Dig up the roots and GET RID OF IT!)
 - i. “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of **all** bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:30-32
 - ii. Pick up with *Faith Deployed* and begin reading where you left off on p. 41(beginning with “Naomi and Ruth . . .”). What does Ellie Kay suggest we do?
- b. Why do we need to get rid of our bitterness? (It does not bring a righteous life that God desires)
 - i. “¹⁹My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ²¹Therefore, get rid of **all** moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.” James 1:19-21
 - ii. Read “Comparing Trials” on p. 27 of *Faith Deployed*. In this story, what did Jocelyn’s bitterness get in the way of? (Being used by Christ, being humble and compassionate.)
- c. How do we get rid of our bitterness?
 - i. *Live by the Spirit*:
 1. The fruit of the Spirit is THE guideline for the fruit our lives should produce. Let’s take a look at a few verses before and after Galatians 5:23:
 - a. “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.” Galatians 5:16-18

- i. The first step in getting out of a place of bitterness is to live by the Spirit. What do you think it means to live by the Spirit? (follow God’s word, use the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us, read God’s word, spend time with Him, etc.)
 - ii. *Stop Complaining:*
 1. What does the Bible tell us about complaining?
 - a. “Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe” Philippians 2:14
 - i. How does complaining add to our bitterness? (Focuses us on our disappointment, anger, etc.)
 - iii. *Change your thinking:*
 1. How does what we think about impact our feelings of bitterness? (If we are constantly fixed on what is wrong, we don’t have time to think about what is right, etc.)
 2. How does the Bible say we should think?
 - a. “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Phillipians 4:8
 - b. I want us to look at this list we created in the beginning of things about military life that make us bitter. Part of getting rid of all bitterness is changing negative things into positive things, like Hebrews 12:15 said, we need to not miss God’s grace. How can this list of negative things that cause us bitterness be changed into things that can be positive, right, excellent or praiseworthy? (Have volunteer list things on backside of posterboard- deployment means more time with God alone, forces us to rely completely on God, etc.)

Life Work

The Root, The Fruit and The Way Out of Bitterness

Scripture Memory Verse:

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Ephesians 4:31-32

Life Work Assignments:

1. Make a list of all the bitter roots you have in your life. It is something you have never gotten over or still hold some sort of resentment about. Next to each item write ways you can start to get rid of the root.
2. Continue writing in your gratitude journal. When you start to focus on what you don't have or are missing, take time to read through your journal of things you are thankful and grateful for.
3. Write down some ways your inner negative emotions have impacted those around you. Pray about them and see how God asks you to respond. Do you need to apologize to someone? Do you need to start acting differently towards someone?
4. Sometimes we need reminders of what to think about: the true, noble, right, pure, excellent, praiseworthy things. One idea is to write “good thoughts” and post them in places you are at a lot: your dashboard in your car, your bathroom mirror, your computer. The best thoughts come from God himself so try writing down scriptures that will focus your mind on good thoughts and post them to remind yourself throughout the day what you should be thinking about.
5. Bitterness is contagious. When we get in a group, especially a group of fellow military wives, it is so easy to start complaining about what is wrong about the military, our husbands, our kids, or anything else in our lives. Try a little experiment. The next time you are in a group with fellow military spouses, try turning every negative comment into a positive one. For instance, if someone is complaining about a husband's upcoming deployment, encourage her to take the time she'll have by herself and enroll in that class she has wanted to take or work on her hobby that she never gets to do. See if your change of thinking can affect others in a positive way!

Week Five: Temptation

Introduction:

(Gather several women's magazines, break women into smaller groups of 3-4) Temptation. What do you think of when you hear that word? (sex, lust, chocolate, shopping, etc.) According to dictionary.com, temptation is, "something that...entices or allures." Allure is defined by as, "to attract or tempt by something flattering or desirable." I am going to give each group a magazine. Look through it as a group and determine how the world is trying to tempt us by something flattering or desirable. Look at the ads in these magazines. Look at the articles. What is the end temptation and how to they try to allure you as a woman? (Allow 5-10 minutes, have groups share findings)

Discussion:

- I. What is Temptation?
 - a. Power. Money. Fame. Lust. These may be some of the big ways the world skews us from the straight and narrow and onto a road of self-made destruction. But, many times, we can resist the big temptations. We can keep away from drugs or alcohol. We can stay true in our relationships. And we can become complacent, thinking that we are doing pretty good in terms of steering clear from temptations. But, what about the little things? What are some temptations we might have that are ones we might justify because they don't seem as "big" as the ones we think are really dangerous? (white lies, stealing time at work on facebook, vanity, pride, etc.)
 - b. Let's look at God's word on temptation. Look at 1 Corinthians 10:13. Based on this verse, do you think temptation itself is a sin? (No, temptation is not sin. Falling into it however, is.) How far will God let us be tempted? (only what we can bear)
- II. What tempts military wives?
 - a. Think about this in terms of our military life. For a large portion of a year, we may find ourselves in a situation where our husband is gone on a deployment or training. What types of things might we find flattering or desirable during that time? (male attention, things/stuff, affection, physical touch, emotional intimacy, etc.) Let's read "Affairs of the Heart" on page 46 in *Faith Deployed*.

- i. What makes us so vulnerable to going down the road of temptation during times of physical separation from our husbands? (loneliness, longing for intimacy/touch, etc.)
 - ii. Look back at 1 Corinthians 10:13. What will God provide in times of temptation (a way out) How can we ensure we don't give in to temptation when it comes to our affections during separations? What are some of the ways Jocelyn Green suggested in "Affairs of the Heart"? (Guard our mouth, have an accountability partner) What are some other things we can do? (keep out of compromising situations, don't be in situations where the "appearance of evil" might happen, etc.)
 - b. Besides sexual sin or even the sin of becoming emotionally intimate with someone other than our husband, what might be other temptations for us during deployments? In our day to day actions? (temptations to different negative emotions: depression, fear, etc.; temptation towards spending money inappropriately or not being a good steward; temptations in spending our time in ways that go against what God desires, etc.)
- III. How to Handle our Temptations:
- a. Find the way out:
 - i. 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us God always provides a way out of temptation. We first have to find it. Let's read the story of how Jesus found the way out of the temptations he faced in the desert. Look at Luke 4:1-13. What are the temptations Jesus faced? (Physical-hunger, Emotional- the promise of power, Mental- the test of Satan using God's words to get Jesus to act.) In each instance, how did Christ respond? (He gave scripture that defeated the temptations presented by Satan) What does this tell us about how we can find the way out of temptation? (We need to *know* God's word, the truth, in order to conquer the lies that the world or Satan will give us to tempt us away from following God's word.)
 - b. Pray:
 - i. Jesus gave his disciples a solution for temptation as well. Let's read Luke 22:39-41. What was his solution? (Pray) How can prayer keep us from giving into our temptation? (It requires us to ask God for *His* strength to

combat temptation, not our own; it helps us recognize *what or who* is tempting us, etc.)

- c. Guard Yourself:
 - i. Read Proverbs 4:23. What does this proverb tell us about our heart? (it is the wellspring of life) And what are we supposed to do with it? (guard it)
 - ii. Think back to those temptations we discussed that we may face as women and military wives. Listen to/read the lyrics to the song, [“Slow Fade” by Casting Crowns](#). Think about the words “slow fade.” Most of the time, things like emotional or physical affairs don’t just happen out of nowhere. It is a slow fade. A compromise here. Letting your guard down there. How have you seen this to be true in your life or the lives of others?
 - iii. In order to keep from temptation, we have to guard our hearts. Watching so closely everything we put in. How can we guard our hearts from temptation? (Sometimes it can be little things like not watching too many romantic movies when our husbands are gone, making that yearning for his presence even greater. Other times it can be big things like not going on spending sprees to deal with loneliness or emailing old boyfriends.)

Conclusion:

My husband always said, “It’s not a question of if I get deployed, it’s a question of when.”

Temptation is the same. It is not a question of if we will face it, it is a question of when. James had a unique perspective on how we were to view these situations (Have someone read James 1:2-4). Joy in times of trials? That can be one of the hardest things we do as Christians. But with each temptation we face, we are given an opportunity to first rely on the resources God provides: his word and a way out, and then, through the experience, we can grow our faith. This week, start looking at the temptations you are dealing with, both old and new ones, as a way to develop your faith. A chance to rely on God to bring you out of the desert and into His arms.

Life Work

Slow Fade

Scripture Memory Verse:

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

Life Work Assignments:

1. This week, try to recognize the temptations you have. What is enticing and alluring you to deviate from the straight path God set before you? Write down the temptations you are facing and pray to God to show you the way out. As you go through the week, write down what He reveals.
2. The best way to stop temptation from ever spiraling into full blown sin is to combat it with God's truth. However, before you can do that, you need to *know* God's truth. Take an honest look at how well you know God's truth. Do you spend time in His word each and every day? If not, start having a daily time to read your Bible. Do you hide scripture in your heart? Remember Christ's perfect example of how to combat the enticements and alluring promises of Satan: to quote God's word directly. When we know God's word by heart, we can immediately combat the lies and tantalizations of Satan.
3. Casting Crown sang words that ring true for so many of us, when they said, "The journey from your mind to your hands is shorter than your thinking/Be careful if you think you stand you might just be sinking/It's a slow fade when you give yourself away/It's a slow fade when black and white are turned to gray." *Slow Fade*, Casting Crowns. Sometimes we think it is ok to focus our thoughts on things as long as we don't act on them. But our thoughts can quickly become our actions. Take a real close look at what you think about and what you put into your thoughts, in other words the music, the television, the reading, or anything else that we focus on. Are there things that are lulling you into a slow fade? Do you need to turn away from certain places? Pray to God for the wisdom and discernment to show you areas in your life that could potentially turn black and white into gray.

Week Six: Weariness

Introduction:

(Hand out 3x5 cards or paper to each person) For the next three minutes, I want you to briefly write down every “to do” you can think of that you have to complete for the next week. They can be your big ones or your small ones. They can be related to your home, ministries, family, job, school or any other area of your life. (Allow 3-5 minutes for everyone to write down their to do’s).

Now, looking at the things you wrote down, assign a number one through five to each task. One being does not cause you much stress or burden and five being causes you a lot of stress. When you are done, count up how many 4’s and 5’s you have. (Have ladies share how many they counted)

Looking at your list, which of your most urgent to do’s are self-imposed? Which are other-imposed? Which are God-imposed?

What do you think of when you think of “weariness”? (burdened, tired, fatigue, broken down, etc.) How can the to do’s that we give ourselves or receive from others lead us to feel weary or heavy burdened?

Discussion:

- I. What is weariness?
 - a. Weary is defined by dictionary.com as, “physically or mentally exhausted by hard work, exertion, strain, etc.; fatigued; tired.” When have you ever felt the extreme exhaustion of both your physical and mental self in your duties and roles? What are some of the causes of becoming weary?
 - b. Read “Weary Hearts” on page 170 of *Faith Deployed*. What can be the results of our weariness? What are some unhealthy ways we deal with it? (Eating, bad relationships, depression, self-pity, etc.) How does military life bring on seasons of weariness? (being alone, the difficulty, the fears, etc.)
- II. Ending Weariness
 - a. God knows best:
 - i. It is easy to see how quickly we can become weary in our military lives and in our lives in general. But this was not the state of being

God intended for a believer! Yet our heavenly father *knew* we would become weary in this life. Let's read Isaiah 40:28-31.

1. What do these verses tell us about God becoming weary? (He doesn't!) What does He give us in our weariness? (Strength, Power)
2. Look at verse 31. How do we get this strength and power? (Hope in the Lord)
3. Consider the word "renew" in this verse. According to Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary, this verb "suggests an exchange of strength." Get a visual of that. Think about your strength right now, whether it be in the tasks you have to do, the roles you have to play and see yourself putting it into a basket. Now imagine God's strength and see Him putting it into a basket. Then, imagine you exchanging baskets. How would that change your ability to do your tasks? What would that realistically *look* like in your life?

b. The solution:

i. Get away and pray:

1. Jesus is our example as we try to figure out how to deal with weariness. Consider his life. As he began to perform miracles and preach, his popularity rose. Read Mark 1: 40-43. Think about your own life: all the phone calls, emails and texts from people asking you to help out here or do something for various events. Think back to your to do list and everything you "have" to get done. What do you think Jesus' to do list looked like in comparison to yours? (MUCH longer) How do you think the number of people asking things from you compares to that of Jesus? (Much smaller)
 - a. The demands on Christ's time make our to-do lists look minute. He dealt with it in a very specific way:
 - i. Read Mark 1:35 and Luke 5:15. What did Jesus do? (Withdrew and PRAYED, often in the morning)
 - ii. Read Matthew 11:28. Before you start every day with every to do list, how often do you start your day with God? How often do you ask Him to help you complete the tasks at hand for the day, even the small ones like laundry or

grocery shopping? How could this make a difference in feeling weary?

- ii. Change your outlook:
 1. After you get yourself into the habit of starting every day, by coming to Christ and allowing Him to give you rest, you have to change your outlook on your tasks.
 - a. Read Colossians 3:23-24. How are we supposed to work? (As if doing it unto the Lord) Think about what that looks like. How does working for the Lord look like as we manage our household tasks: laundry, child rearing, grocery shopping, cleaning? How does working for the Lord look like in the workplace, in how we interact with our co-workers or boss? How could having this outlook make us not feel weary?
 - b. Read Galatians 6:9-10. How can a short term outlook make us feel weary? (it keeps us from seeing the potential reward or outcome of the tasks we are doing) How can quitting rob us of blessings? (We don't see the reward God had after our hard work, we don't see the end result, etc.)
- iii. Be purposeful:
 1. Read "Superwoman or Superstressed?" on page 161 in *Faith Deployed*. Think about Martha. Jesus told her to focus on *one thing*. We can fill our lives with a lot of things. It can begin to feel as though we *have* to do them all. Yet, most of the time, we haven't even consulted with Christ as to what *He* intends for us to do. Do you consistently pray before you give someone an answer? Or do you find yourself saying, "YES!" before you've even prayed?

Conclusion:

God knew we would become weary in this world. He knew it that he said time and time again, and encourages us over and over to come to Him and lay our burdens at His feet. But, so often we find ourselves in a trap of weariness. This week, let's try to start our days and our to do lists by asking God what He has for us to do. Let's start to look at the work we are doing on this earth as more than an earthly chore, but rather, a heavenly assignment. Then, let's take the time to pray over the tasks we are doing and determine which are ones God has for us and which ones are merely busy work.

Life Work

Come all you weary...

Scripture Memory Verse:

“He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Isaiah 40:29-31

Life Work Assignments:

1. Complete the three steps Sara Horn mentioned from Joanna Weaver’s *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*:
 1. Make a list of all activities you and your family do.
 2. Pray over that list and prioritize it, assigning each a number from one to four.
 3. Eliminate all the fours.
 2. Think about the word “renew” and that meaning “exchange of strength.” Start practicing “exchanging strength” with God. When you feel overwhelmed, turn it into a prayer and ask God to exchange strengths with you.
 3. Start each day like Christ did. Go to your Father first thing. Bring your to do list to your prayer time and ask Him to help you complete the “one thing” He has in store for you for that day. Ask Him to help you get done what *He* desires you to get done, not just what you think needs to be accomplished.
- [Web bonus: Bible Verses to Give You Strength](#)
4. When someone asks you to do something for them or to be a part of a group or committee, start responding with, “Let me pray about it.” Then, PRAY about it! If you find yourself not having a peace or clear answer about taking on the task, politely decline. Even Jesus did not help every person he came in contact with. He chose based on who his Father wanted him to help.
 5. Read “Slow Down” on page 159 of *Faith Deployed*. How can you eliminate some “hurry” in your life? Schedule at least one day a week where you and your family have NOTHING planned. Use it as a day to renew yourselves.

About the Author



Catherine Fitzgerald has been married to her husband, Rick, a U.S. Marine pilot, for five years. She has a bachelor of arts in psychology from North Carolina State University and teaching certification from Meredith College, both in Raleigh, N.C. They currently reside outside of Wilmington, N.C., with their three-year-old daughter, Grace.

Catherine has a heart for military spouses and currently leads a ministry at her church to serve the needs of those women and their families in her community. When she is not chasing Grace around, she works from home part-time and writes for her blog and other sites, including www.faithdeployed.com. Her writing has also been published in *P31 Woman Magazine*. God is continuing to reveal to her both the challenges and blessings of being married to a man in uniform and how He can use the least of us for His work! [*For more about Catherine, read an interview with her here.*](#)