

Session 1
Leader Guide

Australia



SAMPLE



Supplies

You'll be leading everyone in a large-group experience.

You'll need:

- ▶ *Worship Instrumental CD**
- ▶ *Music of WonderFull World CD**
- ▶ CD player
- ▶ watch with second hand

*One of these came in your kit. Additional copies are available from Group Publishing (group.com or 800-447-1070) or your church resource supplier.



Travel Tip

Expect a lot of sharing and laughing. To avoid raising your voice to get women's attention, bring along an attention-grabbing noisemaker.

Setup

Getting Ready to Lead Your Session

- ▶ Read through this guide several times. You don't have to memorize it; just be comfortable with the content.
- ▶ Play the *Music of WonderFull World CD* as women arrive, and then continue playing it softly as they talk in small groups. Background music is great for setting a comfortable tone in your room.
- ▶ Have the *Worship Instrumental CD* ready to play. You'll be using the "Australia" segment (track 9).
- ▶ Pray! Ask God to guide your words as you prepare to affirm the women at your retreat.



Start

Welcome

The WonderFull World Director will open this session with a welcome and any announcements, and then she'll introduce the Worship Leader, who will lead women in an opening activity where they will get into small groups. She will also lead a time of singing. The Worship Leader will then introduce you.

Let's Get Started!

After an enthusiastic greeting, have everyone close their eyes. Play the "Australia" track from the *Worship Instrumental CD*. This is a fun way to introduce women to your continent.

When the track is over, turn off the CD, ask women to open their eyes, and say: **We're going to start our tour of God's wonderful world here in Australia. Let's begin with a game to help us get to know each other a little better.**

This game is easy. When it's time to start, everyone will stand and walk slowly around the room, mixing and mingling together. Then I'll call out a number. You'll need to get into a group with *exactly* that many people—no more, no less. Then I'll give you a question to talk about for one minute in that group. If you're not able to get into a group, move away from the other women and stand silently with your eyes closed for one minute while those in the groups are talking. Then we'll do another round!

Have women stand up and move around the room, and then call out “Six!” Wait about 10 seconds for women to get into groups of six.

Say: **For one minute, brainstorm as many facts as you can about Australia.** You may need to remind anyone who didn’t make it into a group of six to move away from others and stand alone with her eyes closed for this minute.

Time the activity for one minute, and then have women mingle and mix around the room again. Play three more rounds of one minute each, with these numbers and questions:

- ▶ **Seven:** Use your best Australian accent to say your full name. Talk fast! You only have a minute!
- ▶ **Twelve:** You can find kangaroos and koalas in Australia; what other animals can you think of from this continent?
- ▶ **Sixteen:** Does anyone in your group know what a billabong is? Find out quickly!

After the game, have women return to their seats. (By the way, a billabong is a stagnant pond or creek.)

Talk About the Game

Have women turn to page 8 in their WonderFull World Participant Guides and read the information there and then discuss the questions on page 9. Be sure to mention that women should talk about all three questions on that page.

Allow about five minutes for discussion, and then have women turn their attention back to you. Say: **This game is a good representation of Australia, which stands alone as the smallest continent. Even though it’s the world’s biggest island, it’s still cut off from the rest of the world through distance and location, just as some of you were cut off in this game and made to stand alone and isolated.**

A Woman From the Bible

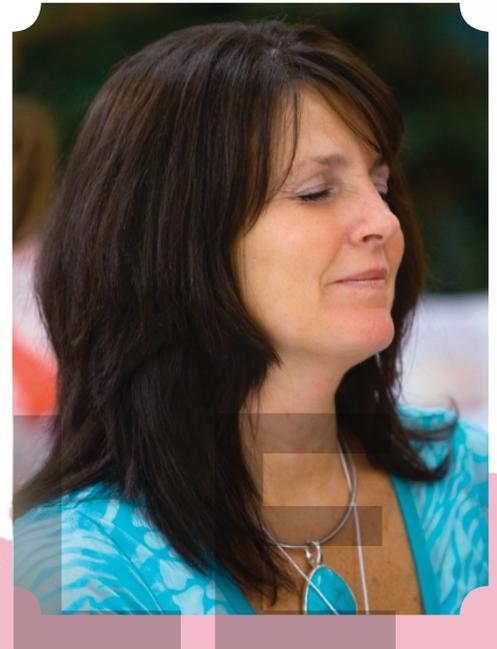
Continue: **We’re going to get to know a woman in the Bible who also was alone and isolated. Her story is told three times in the Bible, and you’ll find all three accounts in your guide. For the moment, we’ll focus on the account from Mark 5:25-34. You’ll find that on page 6 in your guide, or look it up in your Bible if you have it with you. Follow along while I read this account.**

Read Mark 5:25-34 from page 6 of your Participant Guide. Then say: **Let’s consider what life was like for this woman before she met Jesus. Focus on verses 25 and 26, and on page 10 of your guide list as many facts or things that you can guess about this woman from that information. Take about two minutes to work alone, and then share with your Travel Group what you’ve written.**



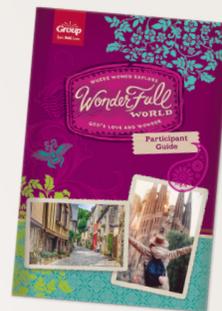
Travel Tip

If your group has fewer than one of the numbers called, everyone will need to stand alone and silent for one minute.



After about two minutes, remind women to share with their Travel Groups. Allow about three more minutes for discussion, and then have a few women call out observations their groups made to share with the entire group. After they've commented, share any of these below that they may not have mentioned:

- ▶ She had a medical condition with bleeding. It's likely this was related to menstrual bleeding, but the Bible doesn't say for sure.
- ▶ She was suffering.
- ▶ She had been to many doctors.
- ▶ She had spent all her money on doctors or treatments, so she may have been poor.
- ▶ Nothing worked. She even got worse.



Say: **So it's not a pretty picture. And what's not mentioned here but is critical to this woman's story is that because of this bleeding, she was considered unclean. The Old Testament laws in Leviticus 15 go into detail about what that meant. Not only was she unclean, but anyone who touched her, her bed, or anything she sat on was considered unclean and untouchable until undergoing a cleansing ritual.**

We're going to spend more time during WonderFull World going deeper into this account and learning more about this woman and her encounter with Jesus, but for now let's just focus on her and what life was like for her. Answer the two questions on page 11 of your guide with your Travel Group. You'll have five minutes. After five minutes have groups turn their attention back to you.

I Wonder If Anyone Cares About Me...

Say: **Here at WonderFull World, we are not only traveling to different continents, we're exploring the "wonders" of our hearts. It's likely that many of us have wondered at one time if anyone cares about us. We, like this woman from so long ago, have felt left out, ostracized, unwelcome, not part of the group, or, like Australia, alone in a big sea. As women, we all have experienced those feelings at one time or another.**

I want to assure you that the Bible says that God cares. First Peter 5:7 is one example of God answering this wonder of our heart. You'll find it on page 11 of your guide, or you can look it up in your own Bible.

Invite a woman from the group to read 1 Peter 5:7 aloud.



Travel Tip

It's helpful if you call out cues such as "You have two minutes left." This helps women gauge how far along in the discussion they should be at that point.

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No Woman Left Behind

Say: **It's a comfort to know that God cares, but it's also a comfort to know that others care. Let's consider what we can do to make sure others don't have this wonder. Let's go back to that Australia game, but this time the number for the circle is *everyone in this room!***

Have everyone get into a big circle and link arms or hold hands. Then have women call out specific things they can do (not someone else—but that they personally can do) to be sure others don't feel like the woman in this Bible account. Take two minutes and see how many great ideas are shared! Encourage women to put these ideas into action immediately.

Then let women know they can drop hands* and simply close their eyes and listen to the music. Begin playing "What a Wonderful World" (track 2) from the *Music of WonderFull World* CD.

While the song is playing, step into the circle and move from woman to woman, speaking one simple sentence of affirmation to each person there. You might say, "I'm glad you're here," "You make a difference," "You light up the room with your smile," or "God has a plan for you." Or you might speak words from the Bible that affirm a woman's worth. Try reading Psalm 139:13-18 ahead of time and gleaning words from those verses that would touch a woman's heart. The affirmations don't have to be specific, as you may not even know each woman ahead of time, but you can offer encouraging words to each one.

When the song and affirmations are over, this session is done. The next session is Europe. Be sure women know when and where that session is.

Turn on the music, and let it play softly as women leave.



Travel Tip

When we did this ourselves, we found the best number for one leader to affirm was 10 to 15 women. Depending on the number of women who attend your retreat, we recommend you ask additional women, such as other leaders from your team, to join you to ensure that each woman is affirmed before the song is over. Start at various points throughout the circle and move in the same direction. Be sure to note where the next woman starts so you don't overlap.



WonderFull Wow!

This was an amazing and moving part of our retreat. Women were caught off guard as they heard specific words of affirmation, and several were moved to tears, so have tissues handy! The two women who did the affirming prayed ahead of time that God would guide their words, and they shared portions of verses or words expressing the value of each person—even though they had never met more than half of the women there! Go into this with prayer, and let God guide you.



I wonder...
if anyone cares about me.

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WonderFull World

Session 1: Australia Leader Guide

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