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Leader’s Guide/Discussion Guide: <https://bit.ly/2Qv8PIU>

Introduction

KAREN HODGE

A hinge is a utilitarian piece of hardware that connects two things for a useful purpose. It is hidden in the gap of a door or cabinet. When a door hinge is operational, we rarely notice, but there are other hinges in life that are far more vital. Being vitally connected to Christ and His Church, well, that is life.

The book of Ephesians hinges on those two grand ideas. Chapters 1–3 focus us on being vertically connected to Christ. They challenge us to think biblically about the indicatives, the truths about who God is. Chapters 4–6 focus us horizontally on being vitally connected to each other. They focus on the imperatives (commands), or what God is calling us to do to live covenantally. Simply put, the indicatives tell us who we are already in Christ, and the imperatives instruct us in how we should live out that new reality.

When you get things backward and try to put the imperatives in front of the indicatives, life becomes unhinged. In fact, almost any struggle or failure in our lives can be traced back to forgetting who God is and what He is calling us to be.

Our worship informs our walk. The hinge point is in Ephesians 4:1, “I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.” The work of God on our behalf hinges to our walk as a believer. Our position “in Christ,” connects to our practices in the home, church, and workplace. Our blessings from Christ are the pivot point to our behavior: the way we talk, forgive, and love each other. All Christ has done for us overflows to the praise of His glory through us. Ephesians plumbs the height, depth, and width of living the content of the gospel in the context of community.

This is our prayer for the *Hinged Bible Study*. We pray you, too, will explore these dimensions together. This book is written by a diverse but unified group of our National Women’s Ministry Team. We want you to hear their various voices singing as one and to learn the truths from the Book of Ephesians so that your lives, homes, workplaces, and communities will be Word-based and relationally-driven. We hope as you look around your circle, you will see not only the beauty in community, but also hear a gospel echo.

THE HINGED TEAM

RACHEL CRADDOCK is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University (B.A. in Education) and a first-grade teacher at heart. Rachel has been a member of the PCA since becoming a Christian in 2003 through the ministry of Campus Outreach. She currently serves as Women's Ministry Coordinator at North Cincinnati Community Church and CDM's Regional Advisor to Women's Ministry in Mid-America. She is the author of *Slowly Unraveled: Changed from the Inside Out* (CDM 2019). Rachel is married to Michael, and they have four amazing children: Ezra, Asher, Caleb, and Lydia Jane. The Craddocks are members of North Cincinnati Community Church in Mason, Ohio, where Michael serves as lead pastor.

CHRISTINA FOX received her undergraduate degree from Covenant College and her Master's Degree in Counseling from Palm Beach Atlantic University. She is a writer, speaker, and author of several books: *A Heart Set Free: A Journey to Hope Through the Psalms of Lament*, *Closer Than a Sister: How Union with Christ Helps Friendships to Flourish*, *Idols of a Mother's Heart*, and *Sufficient Hope: Gospel Meditations and Prayers for Moms*. You can also find her work at The Gospel Coalition, Ligonier Ministries, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Revive Our Hearts, and Desiring God, among others. Christina is on the National Women's Ministry Team as Regional Advisor for the Southeast. She lives in the Atlanta area with her husband and two boys and attends East Cobb Presbyterian Church. You can find her at www.christinafox.com, @christinarfox, and at [Facebook.com/ChristinaFoxAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/ChristinaFoxAuthor).

KAREN HODGE serves as the Coordinator for PCA Women's Ministry, where she seeks to connect women and churches to one another and to sound resources. She is also having the time of her life serving alongside her husband, pastor, and best friend Chris, as they plant King's Cross Church in Fort Mill, South Carolina. Chris and Karen have two adult children, Anna Grace Botka and Haddon Hodge. It is from the perspective of a wife, mother, leader, and fellow pilgrim that she hopes to offer insights from God's Word concerning how she and her family can most effectively learn to enjoy and extend God's glory. Karen, along with Susan Hunt, authored *Transformed: Life-taker to Life-giver* and *Life-giving Leadership*.

PAULA MILES is wife to Kevin, a ruling elder at Clemson Presbyterian. She is also mother of Wimberly Johnson, Janie Gotfredson, Clary, and Judy. She grew up in Anderson, South Carolina, and graduated from Clemson University. Paula has been a full-time homemaker and a public school teacher. Studying and teach-

ing God's Word, as well as encouraging and equipping women to understand their design and fulfill their individual callings, are her passions. Paula has been on staff at Clemson Presbyterian as Women's Ministry Coordinator since 2014. She is a conference speaker and serves on CDM's National Women's Ministry team as a trainer. She enjoys regular exercise, a good cup of coffee, watching sporting events, and investing in the lives of her family and friends.

CONNIE MILLER has been married to Mike for thirty-five years and has three children. She was on staff with Campus Crusade for Christ for twelve years at USC. Then, she served alongside her husband while church planting in Jupiter, Florida. Connie now serves with her husband at Christ Covenant Church in Matthews, North Carolina, where she is involved with Titus 2 Women's Ministries and Bible studies. She is serving as a CDM Women's Ministry Trainer and as an Advisor for Women's International Ministry.

SHEA PATRICK is a former attorney from Alabama, now stay-at-home mom, living in Orangeburg, South Carolina. She and her pastor-husband, John Mark, have four children: Judah, Harper, Alexandra, and Raybon. Two of their children were adopted from foster care. She loves her church, Trinity Presbyterian, and serves with the children's, music, missions, and women's ministries. Shea serves on CDM's National Women's Ministry Team as a Regional Advisor.

LISA TARPLEE is wife to Adam and mother to Andrew and Matthew. A graduate from Belhaven University, she is most thankful for BU as the place where her love for the Lord was ignited. Lisa attends Denton Presbyterian Church and currently volunteers in her church's women's ministry. She loves teaching and discipling women. A creative at heart, Lisa enjoys painting with wax (encaustic) and growing as an artist who reflects God's grace through her work. Lisa serves on CDM's National Women's Ministry Team as a Regional Advisor.

RONJANETT TAYLOR is the wife of ruling elder Bryant, mother of three, and GiGi to two little granddaughters. She has been a member of Redeemer Church PCA in Jackson, Mississippi, since its inception in 2004 and coordinates the Sister Cooks ministry. She served as the Advisor for Diversity on the PCA Women's Ministry team. The common thread running through all her ministry involvement is serving and connecting God's people of many ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds with joy through the gospel. She works full-time as state director for the America Reads—Mississippi AmeriCorps Program.

SUSAN TYNER enjoys teaching and helping women involved in their local churches as well as serving Jesus's Church beyond the local level. She just finished her term as a PCA Women's Ministry Mid-South Regional Advisor and is currently an Advisor to the PCA Reformed University Fellowship Permanent Committee. Since moving to Fort Worth, Texas, from Oxford, Mississippi, Susan recently joined the staff at Trinity Presbyterian Church as Women's Ministry Coordinator. Susan and her husband Lee have five children and an almost empty nest.

MELANIE COGDILL

I am a poster child for the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. In other words, I'm a meme for predestination. When I think of God predestining me, a third-generation Japanese American whose grandparents were non-English speaking, devout Buddhist immigrants from Japan, the "odds" were against me ever being adopted by God. But God takes the impossible situation, a 4-year-old kid baptized by (at the time) non-believing parents in a church that did not recognize Scripture as the Word of God, and turns that life of an undeserving sinner into something for the praise of His glorious grace (Eph. 1:6).

I don't think I'm the only meme for the doctrine of predestination. Every believer in the household of God is one too. As I make my journey to the Celestial City through this broken world, and many times as I've faced adversity, trials, suffering, or the overwhelming mundane tasks and details of life, I literally remind myself of Ephesians 1 and the spiritual blessings I have in Christ.

The forgiveness of my sins is not merely a judicial and theological transaction, it's so much more. God has lavished the riches of His grace upon me (Eph. 1:8). His grace is extravagant (Eph. 1:7). And my presence in the household of God is almost hard to fathom since Ephesians 1 reminds me that God had set His affection and love upon me from the time before I even existed (Eph. 1:4).

My story is not unique. Each believer can share the wonder and marvel of being called a child of God. And as we marvel at our salvation, we can eagerly await the day in which all things in heaven and earth will be united in Christ (Eph. 1:10).

Melanie is the general editor of ***Beyond the Roles: A Biblical Foundation for Women and Ministry***. She serves on CDM's National Women's Ministry Team as a Trainer and as an Advisor to the PCA's Committee on Discipleship Ministries Permanent Committee.