

A Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible
Sunday, October 16, 2011
Facilitator: Dr. Toni G. Alvarado

I. Mary & Elizabeth (Luke 1: 5-56)

II. Excerpts from Just A Sister Away by Renita J. Weems, Ph.D.

“To begin with, two women – Jesus’ mother, Mary, and her kinswoman Elizabeth – specifically learned what it meant to be blessed women, women chosen by God to be instruments through whom perfect redemption would come into the world.”

“To be chosen by God is a humbling experience. To be used by God is an awesome experience. To be blessed by God is a joyous experience...most of the time.”

“To prepare for their blessings, Mary and Elizabeth first had to come to grips with the irony of blessedness: namely, that behind every blessing there is a burden. Their blessings changed the course of each of their lives forever. Their blessings altered each woman’s perception of herself. And, more importantly, being singled out by God as mothers of redemption made them need one another all the more.”

III. Finding Our Story in Their Stories (Discussion Questions)

- A. In what ways were Mary & Elizabeth similar? In what ways were they different? How did they overcome their differences?
- B. How did Elizabeth show her excitement for Mary’s blessing? How did Elizabeth confirm what God was doing in Mary?
- C. We all feel envy at times. How can we keep it under control and prevent it from driving us to destructive behavior?
- D. In a society like our own which is distinguished by its obsession with competitiveness, in what ways can women prevent competitive behavior from destroying relationships? What is the difference between competing and striving for excellence?