



MANY BEAUTIFUL THINGS

THE LIFE AND VISION OF LILIAS TROTTER



REFLECTION GUIDE

The Holy Spirit worked powerfully through the life of Liliias Trotter and in the subsequent work of Miriam Rockness to resurrect her legacy. May the lessons of this film bear fruit in your life as well. Offered here are questions and Scripture for your consideration — as personal meditation or group discussion.

REVELATION: PERCEIVING GOD IN CREATION AND THROUGH SCRIPTURE

1. How does art help Liliias share the glory of God revealed in Creation? What gifts has God given you to express and communicate God's revelation to others?



"How the angels must watch when that light reaches a new spot on this earth that God so loves." —Liliias Trotter

2. Liliias wove together Scripture, theological reflection, and artwork—all part of her worshipful practice. In the film, what words of faith from Liliias spoke to you? In what ways could you and your church community use the arts to meditate upon Scripture?
3. For Liliias, the desert felt oppressive and isolating, but she also found it full of adventure and beauty, proclaiming it is "lovely in its restfulness, everything is so full of God." How does your Father, the Creator, teach you lessons through his creation?
4. Consider Liliias's reflection on the dandelion that "holds itself no longer for its own keeping, only as something to be given." How did Christ's death and resurrection influence the ways she portrayed death and life in her art? In the context of your faith, reflect personally on how death and loss might be connected to life and gain.

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 92:4-5: "For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord; I sing for joy at the works of your hand. How great are your works, O Lord, how profound your thoughts!"

ISAIAH 35:1-2: "The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.”

LUKE 12:27–28: “Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith.”

VOCATION: DISCERNING GOD’S UNIQUE CALLING FOR A LIFE

1. Vocational discernment is not always easy and can be accompanied by a “crisis of soul.” How did Liliias listen to the Holy Spirit in the midst of tormented decisions about her life path? In what ways are you creating a posture of receiving the guidance of the Holy Spirit?



“Take the very hardest thing in your life—the place of difficulty, outward or inward and expect God to triumph gloriously in that very spot. Just there he can bring your soul into blossom.”

2. It must have been difficult for Liliias to defy Ruskin’s advice to follow in his footsteps. How does worldly glory challenge us to first seek the kingdom of God? Consider times when you have had to make a similar decision between affirmation from the world and obedience to God.
3. Liliias responded to a call to serve in an unfamiliar land, facing many unknowns. How did God weave Liliias’s talents together for fruitful service in Algeria? Consider how the Holy Spirit might be calling you to do something God imagines for you, but you are not imagining for yourself.
4. Ruskin was surprised that a woman had such an artistic talent. Where are your cultural, communal, or personal prejudices holding you back from a flourishing life or ministry? In what ways can your church community be more inclusive of all types of spiritual gifts?
5. Liliias and Miriam each provide examples of life-giving relationships. How was the relationship between Liliias and Ruskin both nurturing and complex? What holy friendships are you cultivating in your life?

SCRIPTURE

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9–10: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him’—but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.”

JOHN 16:13: “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth .”



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PHILIPPIANS 4:6: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

SERVICE: SURRENDER TO GOD’S WILL AND SACRIFICE FOR OTHERS

1. Driven by her call to share the love of Christ, Liliias crossed boundaries of class, religion, and culture. What parts of her mission work intrigued or inspired you and why? What risks might you need to take to live a “beautiful possible life, one with a passion for giving that shall be poured forth to God, but spent out” for others?
2. Liliias demonstrates a faithful endurance when “the light does not come,” and she can hold on only “to a dim Christ.” How do you interpret her statement that “it is out of a low place one can best believe”? When life has been dark, what have you held on to? How does the gospel teach us to hold on to faith?
3. At times Liliias could not see the fruits of her labor but was comforted by the image of a bee who left “life, life, life” behind with every flower. How did Liliias embrace the truth that only God can see the full fruition of our service to Him? How do you cultivate patience and faith when your earthy labors seem to bear no fruit?
4. Liliias exemplified “joy in service” in her work, both in her art and ministry. Likewise, Miriam found deep fulfillment in her work—resurrecting Liliias’ story and art. In the film, when did you see this joy revealed? How does God give you great delight when you are obedient to Him?



“The true ideal flower is the one that uses its gifts as a means to an end. The brightness and sweetness are not for its own glory. They are but to attract the bees and butterflies that will fertilize and make it fruitful, for it is more blessed to give than to receive.” —Liliias Trotter

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 10:2–3: He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

ROMANS 8:24–35: “Hope that is seen is no hope at all...But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”

HEBREWS 12:2: “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.”

May you reflect upon and appreciate each and every one of the many beautiful things God has created in your life.



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