

intro

A Women's Small Group Bible Study  
from Concordia Publishing House

How to Use This Study



*How beautiful are the feet  
of those who bring good news.*

Romans 10:15 (NIV)

by **Deb Burma**

*Beautiful Feet* is a Bible study designed to be fresh and uplifting by combining a fun topic, familiar to every woman—shoes—with the powerful and exciting message of God’s love in Christ! The unique format includes a lively leader’s PowerPoint and scripted presentation and a follow-along participant’s handout that promotes interactive learning and group discussion. Participants’ understanding of God’s Word deepens as they listen to the presentation, receive the message visually, and actively participate in the study.

The following suggestions will help guide you as you prepare to lead participants through an exciting time of discovery and growth in God’s Word! These suggestions are not, however, exhaustive, nor are they designed to be read aloud during your session.

1. Before you begin preparation of the study, spend time in prayer, asking God to strengthen your faith through this study of His Word. The Scriptures were written that we might believe in Jesus Christ and have life in His name (John 20:31). Ask that He would guide and bless your words as you lead the study. Also, pray for group participants by name, if possible.
2. To prepare for each session, begin by reading through the leader’s presentation a few times until you are familiar with the points it makes and comfortable with the flow of the Bible study. Practice giving the complete presentation and look over the participant handout as you practice. Read the Bible passages found throughout the study. Answer the questions on the participant handout. (Suggested answers and further guidance are given in the leader’s materials.) Your familiarity with the components of the study will give you confidence as you lead the session.
3. **If you are using the optional PowerPoint presentation:** The script and the slide presentation work together to provide an attention-grabbing, learner-friendly mes-

sage. (PowerPoint slides are clearly marked throughout the leader’s presentation. Simply click on each slide as it appears in your script.)

Set up your computer/laptop and screen before participants arrive. The slide presentation can be operated from the computer’s keyboard; however, it is easier to lead using a remote control to click to each slide in the presentation. Use one if available.

**If you are not using the PowerPoint presentation:** Be mindful of the directions included in the leader presentation. You may have to make adjustments to your copy of the presentation.

4. Have your leader’s materials in front of you, and be sure that each participant has a Bible and a copy of the participant handout. (Make as many copies as needed.)
5. As a courtesy to participants, begin and end each session on time.
6. Your role as a leader and presenter is unique to this Bible study format. Participants are guided through the study, following the lead of your presentation both verbally and visually. Sprinkled throughout your presentation are a variety of interactive questions and other directives. Pause to give participants time to answer these questions, write in words or phrases, or write out Bible verses, as directed, throughout the study. Ask for volunteers to read Bible passages, as directed in the study. By name, thank each participant who reads a passage or answers a question; then invite other input. For example, you may say, “Thank you, Sue. Would anyone else like to read/share?”
7. Many of the questions are reflective, or personal, in nature. Be sensitive to each participant’s desire to either openly share

or privately answer those questions on her handout. Remember that some of the questions provided during each session, as well as the “Reflections” questions at the end, are discussion starters. Allow participants to ask further questions that relate to the session. However, keep discussions on track with the session. It is important to continue a steady pace throughout the presentation portion of the study. As time allows, invite further discussion at the end of the study, following the “Reflections” questions.

8. Sessions 2, 3 and 4 begin with a review of the previous material, as a refresher for all participants before they move into the next session of this four-part Bible study. The review also provides an overview for any participant who may have missed a previous session. You may wish to add or invite comments during the review as they apply to your group. You may, instead, choose to abbreviate the review if your group is holding more than one session on the same day (such as in a retreat setting) and the previous session was just presented.

9. Everyone is a learner! If you don't know the answer to a question, simply tell participants that you need time to look at more Scripture passages or to ask your pastor. Let participants know that you will follow up with a response to their question in as timely a manner as you are able.



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Written by Deb Burma

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# 1

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Session 1: Leader Presentation



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Romans 10:15 (NIV)

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**Presentation Key:**

*Italicized Text* = Directives (including numbered PowerPoint slides) and suggestions for the Bible study leader as well as answers for the questions that also appear on the participant handout.

**Bold Text** = Words that also appear on the participant handout and/or the presentation slides.

Underlined Text = A blank line on the participant handout (the answer to a fill-in-the-blank statement).

**[1—title slide]**

*(Open with prayer.)*

Beautiful feet. Look down at your gorgeous tootsies right now. Go ahead. Take a good look and smile. They are beautiful. And it's not just the classy shoes you're sporting that give them their beauty. When you slip out of those shoes tonight, and as we continue our study of "Beautiful Feet," you will begin to see your feet differently, perhaps with an entirely new perspective. You will see your crooked toes, ingrown toenails, calluses, blisters, and bunions as *beautiful* for the very first time.

Let me share a story with you about one woman's special memory from her awkward adolescent years. As an insecure twelve-year-old, she didn't think she was beautiful at all. One night, she was lying on the sofa when her mother walked in and lifted her feet so she could sit on the sofa with her daughter. Putting her daughter's feet on her lap, this mother took careful stock of her daughter's little piggies. "Honey, your feet are just about perfect," she said.

**[2—slide]**

"You have straight long toes and nicely shaped arches. Why, you could be a foot model!" Think about that. Someone had just told this twelve-year-old girl that a part of her was beautiful, even model quality! Did her mother remember those casually-stated words? Probably not. But that insecure adolescent girl remembered them! Why, she had beautiful feet!

**[pause]**

After she was grown, that same girl sadly reported that time and miles and especially those cruel, pointy-toed shoes took a toll on her beautiful feet. When her own daughter was at that same delicate age, she scrutinized her mother's feet one day and exclaimed, "Ewww, Mom, your pinky toes are deformed! Your feet look BAD!" (Sigh!) So much for a modeling career.

Perhaps outwardly our feet are not perfect.

When we put beautiful shoes on our not-so-beautiful feet, suddenly we are styling! This will sound cliché, but women love shoes!

Some of the men we know might tell us that shoes have two purposes: (1) comfort, not style; and (2) moving the body from point A to point B. That's why most men own just two or three pairs of shoes. Not us women, no sir! Some of us even have a shoe obsession!

Off the top of your head, please share:

**[3—slide]**

How many pairs of shoes do you own?

*(Allow time for women's responses; they may write a number on their handouts, if desired.)*

I counted \_\_\_\_\_ pairs in my closet one day! *(You may fill in the blank, sharing your personal inventory of shoes with the participants. You may also wish to share a funny anecdote concerning the number of pairs that you own.)*

Why the need for so many kinds of shoes? As we talk about them today and in our sessions that follow, let's prepare to

**[4—slide]**

**"lift the lid"** off of some proverbial shoe boxes and check out various must-have styles! As we do, I want you to think of the shoes in each box as representing a portion of your walk through this life—your walk with the Lord. Get ready to slip your beautiful feet into each pair, one pair at a time, as we begin.

How do we prepare to lift the lid? Before we pick out our first pair today, we need to take care of one important detail.

**[5—slide]**

What **size** shoes do your beautiful feet require? After all, it is imperative that your shoes fit well! You would never walk into a store and grab the first shoes you see without knowing your size and trying them on. So fess up if you're a mammoth size 11 or a petite size 4.

The same woman whose story I shared earlier experienced another "adolescent feet" incident. During her first year of high school, she pretended her tootsies were smaller than they were. It seemed the shoe store carrying the must-have, latest style was ALWAYS out of 9s (the size her beautiful feet required), and on one particular day, they had no 8s left either. This girl insisted that she could wear the 7½ on the shelf, so she bought them. She felt very cool in her new petite shoes. After all, she was finally sporting shoes the same size as her friends' footwear. Day after day, she wore them. Her feet got sorer and sorer, and the bandages on the backs of her heels got larger and larger to cover the growing blisters. Finally, the pain was so intense she was taken to the doctor and given an antibiotic for the infection. She soaked her beautiful feet in Epsom salts and had to miss a week of school. Did she learn a valuable lesson? Definitely.

Are your shoes the right "fit" for your walk? You see, God custom-fits us with the perfect combination of gifts and abilities for the walk He has planned for us. God lovingly designed your feet to be like no other. Your "shoe size"—your complete set of gifts and abilities—is uniquely yours.

Are you wearing the size God meant for you or are you trying to force yourself into something else? When that young woman tried to wear shoes not meant for her, it caused pain and discomfort, and it frustrated the people affected by it.

Here's an example of what I'm talking about: perhaps a woman takes on a demanding leadership role, although her experience has taught her that she is better suited as a hard worker following another's lead. Maybe another woman accepts a detail-oriented role simply because the need is there, although she knows she can more easily see the big picture and details are not her area of strength.

These women will struggle in their roles; they may even frustrate others in the process. Their hearts are in the right place, but they're wearing the wrong shoes.

Praise God that He can and DOES use our willing hearts and hands, although sometimes we may lack discernment about our God-given gifts and choose our commitments poorly. How much more effectively we can glorify Him and serve others if we are aware of our gifts and prayerfully consider how He wants us to use them.

Generally speaking, we can recognize our gifts as those we have faithfully used in the past, or those we have joyfully learned or willingly received instruction about because of our eagerness and desire to serve in those ways. We may, instead, recognize our gifts simply because they jump out at us. We see the idea or need, and our hearts cry out, "I can do that! I WANT to do that! That is my joy and my heart's delight!"

Recognizing and accepting your shoe size puts a bounce in your step and enables you to put your best foot forward in all He has called you to do!

Are you using the custom-fit gifts and talents He gave you to glorify Him and help others? Let's look at that.

**What's your "shoe size"?**

*(Refer, again, to 5—slide.)*

**[6—slide]**

**Circle at least 3 gifts or abilities God has custom-sized just for you:**

*(Encourage participants to carefully read through the list and circle any gifts that apply to them. Point out that the list is not all-inclusive; they may add other gifts at the bottom.)*

- |               |              |           |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| Encouraging   | Creative     | Giving    |
| Artistic      | Athletic     | Teaching  |
| Hard-working  | Dramatic     | Praying   |
| Supportive    | Academic     | Serving   |
| Communicative | Musical      | Leading   |
| Merciful      | Reaching Out | Listening |
| Others _____  |              |           |
| _____         |              |           |
| _____         |              |           |

**[7—slide]**

Read Romans 12:4–8 to see what the Lord has to say about the gifts He has given us:

*For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*

What are the various gifts specifically mentioned in this passage?

(Prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, leadership, and showing mercy. This is not a complete list of the many and varied gifts God gives His people, but it gives us many important examples.)

Share with others some details about your “shoe size,” the gifts and abilities God has given you. Give examples of how you are using (or would like to use) those gifts.

**[8—slide]**

Don't be afraid to say, “**I'm good at \_\_\_\_\_.**” Admitting your gifts is not boastful; it is God-pleasing when your gifts are credited to Him. Boast in your Creator, because:

**[9—slide]**

*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. James 1:17*

*(Take time now to have participants share some of their gifts with each other; then have each of them share with the group a gift of the person next to them.)*

Your beautiful feet began so tiny . . . and bare!

**[10—slide]**

Those were your **beautiful bare beginnings** . . .

**[11—slide]**

And your **first fabulous footwear** was probably an adorable pair of little booties. But you have grown, and now your beautiful feet are sporting all kinds of fabulous footwear! It's time to take a confident step forward as we step out in style. We are . . .

**[12—slide] Lifting the Lid on Fabulous Footwear for our Beautiful Feet!**

Let's lift the lid off our first box today and see what's inside:

**[13—slide] High Heels**

What were shoe designers thinking when they came up with this piece of fabulous footwear, or should I say, “faulty footwear”? One faulty design is the triangular toe. Who has naturally triangular feet? Another fault is those 3-inch, 4-inch, or 5-inch heels. They make our toes, our legs, and our backs hurt. Do you ever wonder if super-models are cringing behind those blank expressions as they stride down the runway?

But admit it, girls, when we want to get really dressed up for work, for church, for a party . . . what do we wear? High heels. They look good.

**[14—slide]**

*(Ask participants to fill in the blanks.)*

**How can high heels make us look so good, when they hurt so bad?**

High heels are proof that we can have beautiful-looking feet on the outside and be hurting on the inside. Our walk through life has its high-heel moments, doesn't it? Outwardly, everything looks good, beautiful . . . perfect. Inside, everything feels bad, ugly . . . painful.

At times, we look at other women with envy, thinking, “Why do THEY have it ‘all together’ and I don't? Why do THEY look so good?” The truth is, we don't know what's taking place in their lives, what's happening on the inside. Yes, outwardly, all can look good. But inside, there may be pain. Hurt feelings and hurt relationships. Illness and loss. Disappointment and anxiety.

Those high-heeled moments of life are indeed painful. What relief when we are finally able to step out of them. So let's take them off to talk about some Good News . . .

If you are hurting inside, know that

**[15—slide]** You are not alone in your pain:

**[16—slide]**

Jesus took on all the pain and sorrow you would ever know when He went to the cross for you.

*(Give participants time to write the statement from the slide.)*

**[17—slide]**

Read aloud with me from the screen: ***[Jesus said,] "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33***

Notice Jesus didn't say, "IF you have trouble," or "You might have trouble." He said, "In the world you WILL have tribulation." Yes, we are sinners, living in a fallen, sin-filled world. There will be trouble, pain, and hurt in all our lives as a result of sin. But we can take heart! Jesus says so! He overcame the world—sin, death, and the devil—when He died for us. In His suffering, He bore the pain of the sins and the sorrow of the whole world.

We can take refuge in Christ, assured of His promise of forgiveness and salvation, freely given to us on the cross and the empty tomb *[refer to slide]*. Jesus is our sure hope in the midst of pain. He brings healing to our hurt and suffering.

God uses our high-heeled moments, our times of pain and difficulty, to draw us closer to Him. To help us see our need for a deeper relationship with Him. Limping with pain, we learn to lean more heavily on the One who walks beside us always.

Perhaps your heart has been wounded from broken relationships, or you have suffered bodily pain from injury or illness. Maybe your pain comes from a rebellious child or the loss of a loved one. Remember that Jesus understands. He has been there. He is with you in the midst of your suffering, and He will use the painful high-heel portion of your walk in this life for your good and for the good of others.

Once again, let's read aloud from the screen. Romans 8:28:

**[18—slide]**

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.*

Not just in the good things, the easy things, or the pain-free things. In ALL things God works for your good. You can take His Word for it!

**[19—slide]**

In our next session, we're going to lighten the load a little and lift the lid on a few more pairs of shoes. What fabulous footwear awaits under those lids? We will soon find out! Prepare to slip your feet into several more styles as we continue our study of Beautiful Feet.

### Reflections

**[20—slide]**

1. Have you tried squeezing into the wrong size "shoes"? Have you tried to be someone you were not meant to be? What did you learn from it? What was the outcome?

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*(Answers will vary.)*

**[21—slide]**

2. Read Romans 12:4–5 again. How can we compare the many members of our body to the Body of Christ and its many members? Give examples of members using their unique gifts within the Body of Christ in your church or community. *(How are some members gifted to be the eyes, and others the ears or mouth? How are some the arms or hands? legs or feet? heart or mind?)*

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*(As many members who form one body, our varied gifts fulfill all the needs of the Body of Christ. Answers will vary. Encourage discussion about the various roles Christians fill, from leadership to serving.)*

### [22—slide]

3. Read Romans 5:3–5. How and when have you seen God use the sufferings, hurt, and pain in your walk to produce perseverance, character, and hope in you? How do we know that hope will not disappoint us?

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*(Answers will vary. Encourage participants to openly share or privately write down their answers about their sufferings, depending on their circumstances. Hope will not disappoint us, “because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Romans 5:5). The power of the Holy Spirit enables us to cling to the hope we have in the salvation that is ours in Christ.)*

### [23—slide]

Given just the right “shoe size” for your daily walk, you can kick off your heels and praise the Lord for giving you beautiful feet!

*(Close with prayer)*

Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us beautiful feet! You lovingly created each of us so uniquely, with just the right “shoe size”—gifts and abilities to glorify You and serve others! Help us to recognize those gifts and use them boldly for You. Lord, we know we will have trouble in this fallen, sinful world. We praise and thank You, Jesus, that You have overcome the world; that You took on all the pain and sorrow we would ever know when You went to the cross for us, giving us forgiveness and salvation. Please use our high-heeled moments to draw us closer to You, for our good and for the good of others. In Your name we pray. Amen.



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Written by Deb Burma

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# 1

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Session 1: Participant Handout



*How beautiful are the feet  
of those who bring good news.*

Romans 10:15 (NIV)

by **Deb Burma**

*How beautiful are the feet  
of those who bring good news.*

Romans 10:15 (NIV)

How many pairs of shoes do you own?

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What's your "shoe size?" Circle at least three gifts or abilities God has custom-sized just for you:

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|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| Encouraging   | Creative     | Giving    |
| Artistic      | Athletic     | Teaching  |
| Hard-working  | Dramatic     | Praying   |
| Supportive    | Academic     | Serving   |
| Communicative | Musical      | Leading   |
| Merciful      | Reaching Out | Listening |
| Others        |              |           |

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• Romans 12:4-8

Write down the various gifts specifically mentioned in this passage.

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"I'm good at

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•Every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights. James 1:17

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### Lifting the Lid on Fabulous Footwear for our Beautiful Feet!

#### High Heels

How can high heels make us look so \_\_\_\_\_

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You are not alone in your pain:

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• John 16:33

• Romans 8:28

Reflections

1. Have you tried squeezing into the wrong size “shoes”? Have you tried to be someone you were not meant to be? What did you learn from it? What was the outcome?

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2. Read Romans 12:4–5 again. How can we compare the many members of our body to the Body of Christ and its many members? Give examples of members using their unique gifts within the Body of Christ in your church or community. (How are some members gifted to be the eyes and others the ears or mouth? How are some the arms or hands? legs or feet? heart or mind?)

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3. Read Romans 5:3–5. How and when have you seen God use the sufferings, hurt and pain in your walk to produce perseverance, character, and hope in you? How do we know that hope will not disappoint us?

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