**Study Outline: *Invitations from God* by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun**

**Review at the start of each chapter: Chart- The Invitation, Scriptures, Roadblocks, Awareness and Practices.**

**Study I: Introduction… The Invitation-Shaped Life**

* P. 9 Invitations are powerful; no one escapes the forming motion of invitations; invitations shaped who we know, where we go, what we do and what we become.
* P. 10 The giving and receiving of invitations offers something essential to our sense of wellbeing. They assure us we are wanted, welcomed and included.
* P. 11 Life is all about navigating invitations.
* P. 16 God’s invitations are meant to mend, shape, anchor and grow us into the character of Christ. Invitations from the Holy One serve God’s dream for the world: God is the great inviter.
* P. 18 Responsiveness to invitations; List of Jesus’ invitations in scripture.
* P. 21 We can easily miss God’s invitations.

**Study II: Chapter Two- Invitation to Follow**

* P. 39 Jesus’ first invitation is to follow him. (Mark 1:17) He focused on what it means to follow. He modeled it, taught it, and taught it. Following builds character, sands away the ego and shapes the heart.
* P. 39 Followers can’t barge ahead or simply do the next thing that pops into their heads. Jesus’ followers take up the challenge of turning where he turns, stopping when he stops, detouring where he detours, loving whom he loves and serving whom he serves.
* P. 38\* Following requires humility, risk, attention, awareness and guts… following someone else’s agenda when “everything in (us) resists trailing behind.”
* P. 40 The embarrassing truth is that many of us like the power and control that come with taking the lead. Serving is not a pyramid structure—but a circle.
* P. 41 List of scripture examples of followers who delight God.
* P. 43 Jesus’ invitation to follow is to become like him. (lay aside power) Questions- P. 44.
* P. 45 Following always involves “coming down, a humbling of one’s self and serving others.
* P. 53 Following is where discipleship begins and ends.

**Study III: Chapter Three- Invitation to Practice the Presence of People**

* P. 55 Brother Lawrence—practicing the presence of God. Mike Masson (people).
* P. 56 Both God and people remind us that holy invitations to love take me out of self into God.
* P. 57 Loving requires all of us—body, mind, soul. It takes practice to engage your whole self.
* P. 58 Jesus’ invitation to let people really matter summons us to be as much like God as possible. Saying yes to being like God (in our attentiveness to people) is how we grow a heart that loves (all kinds of people.)
* P. 59 Island of Trinidad: the practice of “Liming.” Jesus “limed with people.”
* P. 61 Love boils down to attentiveness; it is all about vulnerability. (C. S. Lewis)
* P. 63 Jesus (Luke 7) sees people as more than meets the eye.
* P. 69 Practicing the presence of people is what it takes to become God’s presence in the world.

**Study IV: Chapter Four- Invitation to Rest**

* P. 72 Overwork and busyness have become our cultural badges of honor. They can leave us depleted, anxious, and weary.
* P. 74 List of adages of the Protestant Work Ethic: full throttle living. If we are not resting, we are a slave to something.
* P. 76 We can easily become a human “doing” rather than a human “being.”
* P. 77 Our non-work activities can become “soft addictions.”
* P. 78 Jesus teaches how to live freely and lightly. (Mt. 11:28-30) “Rhythms of Grace”
* P. 79 Rest is a transcendent anchor in the midst of doing. (Honoring our limits)
* P. 81 Our bodies send us messages. (Do a body inventory)
* P. 82 Our goal should be body-satisfying, soul-replenishing rest. Listen to your body and Jesus.

**Study V: Chapter Five- Invitation to Weep**

* P. 88 Emotion-based tears have a scientifically proven therapeutic chemical makeup. (List) There are 690 references in scripture to tears; 894 references to crying.
* P. 91 Often weeping (lament) becomes part of the storm crest of a search for God, answers and relief. (List of questions related to redemptive weeping)
* P. 94 What Jesus taught about weeping
* P. 96 Jesus invited others into his pain.
* P. 97 The process of receiving the invitation to lament. (six steps)

**Study VI: Chapter Six- Invitation to Admit You May Be Wrong**

* P. 104 Admitting we are wrong or wrong-doing doesn’t come easily.
* P. 105-106 List from scripture
* P. 107 Getting to know Jesus was an invitation to rethink what you think you knew. (List)
* P. 109 We often live in what David Brooks calls an “information cocoon”- not knowing what we don’t know (from a different viewpoint or vantage point).
* P. 110 (Because we think we are right), we have a propensity to judge (be judgmental).
* P. 112 The invitation to “teachability.” (rooted in humility)
* P. 113 “The type of humility that admits you are wrong when you know you are wrong is called confession.” Confession is good for the soul—admitting you are wrong or even might be wrong. (Read quote p. 115-116).
* P. 119 Confession-- the red and white blood cells in the Body of Christ.

**Study VII: Chapter Seven- Invitation to Forgive**

* P. 123 Revenge is the need to get even; to punish. See Colossians 3:13: forgive as you were forgiven. (An alternative to revenge.)
* P. 124 When is enough, enough? Jesus invites his followers to forgive 70 x 7. (Mt. 18:21 Leviticus: relief of debts and burdens)
* P. 127 Miroslav Volf- condemning fault but sparing the wrong-doer is the heart of forgiveness.
* P. 128 Are you praying of a heart that works forgiveness into your relationships?
* P. 131 Participating in God’s forgiving is the antidote for a world filled with wrong doing and evil.
* P. 133 The process of forgiving: (List of six steps)
* P. 134 Forgiving is soul-healing.

**Study VIII: Chapter Eight- Invitation to Wait and**

**(Chapter One) Participate in Your Own Healing**

* P. 135 Waiting is one of God’s immensely sweeping invitations.
* P, 137 Waiting is a central, unchangeable, universal fact of life.
* P. 139 The divine/Spirit characteristic of patience.
* P. 143 Expectant waiting requires openness to something good happening beyond our expectations. God comes to us in our waiting.
* P. 145 Following Jesus makes us apprentices in waiting; waiting is the crucible of transformation.
* P. 147 Waiting is the space between desire and demand.
* P. 149 God’s time.

**Return to Chapter One: Participating in our own healing.**

* P. 24 We are like athletes whose body is protesting.
* P. 25 Whether in body, mind or soul- we all have to participate in our own healing. (God’s salvation is an invitation to participate in our own healing) Hebrews: salvation—rooted in healing and the desire for wholeness and well-being.
* P. 28 Claiming or reclaiming a desire for wellness.
* P. 29 We can get stuck in our pain. The invitation to participate in our own healing is to receive and to be acted upon.
* P. 31 None of us are free of disease or destructive patterns of sin. (See list)
* P. 33 Transformation and healing always begins with cooperating with God (where we are).