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## 2026 ECR Women's Ministry

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Dear fellow Women's Ministry Leaders,

Greetings in the name of Jesus our Lord! As I have thought on writing this letter and wondering how I can encourage each of you in the work that you are doing in your corner of God's Kingdom, I felt God saying, "Just share what I have been teaching you." And, so, that is what I will do- you get a glimpse into my wrestling with Him over the last several months. *Ultimatums. Grace. Holiness.* These are the top three areas in which God has been working in my heart recently.

*Ultimatums:* This is a very common way in which our culture operates. *If this happens, then I will... If that doesn't happen, then I will not...* Sadly, this is not found uniquely in the world- we can find it in Christian settings, as well. Too often we draw lines in the sand, pre-determining how we will respond to the outcome. As the Lord shone light on this issue in certain areas of my life, I realized that when I do that, I am quenching the Spirit. I am not trusting Him with the outcome of circumstances, nor am I trusting Him to guide me. I am making the decisions (*taking control*) before I even go through the experience. I am robbing Him of working in my heart, and in the circumstance.

*Grace:* While grace is a very wide topic, I have been processing how I do not always have grace for other people. I can sometimes have cynical thoughts toward others, and that hinders me from seeing the potential they have and that they are made in the image of the Lord. As we serve through ministry, we can come into contact with some very hard-to-love people. God has never told me that I am to have grace toward only the easy-to-love people. His Grace should never stop in me- He has called me to be a vessel of His grace to *everyone*, not just the ones that will be easy to serve.

*Holiness:* There is a standard which the Lord has called us to as we represent Him. That expectation He puts on our lives is this: "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (see 1 Peter 1:13-25). No matter the circumstance, no matter the people, He expects us to conduct ourselves in holiness. But, how, in every circumstance? This can only be accomplished by surrendering to the Spirit that is in us (see Romans 8:10-11). It is when we allow Him to be our Helper, Teacher, and Guide that we can live a life of holiness.

And, how do these three come together into one lesson? I was introduced to a book this summer that has helped me refocus my whole life. Both the title and the teaching of this book is, *Heaven Rules*. Heaven rules in all circumstances. Heaven rules in all relationships. The Lord is sovereign and, as His children, there is nothing and no one that enters into our lives except that it passes first through Him. The opposite is true, as well: nothing will be withheld from us, except that it is by His doing. Heaven rules. And that brings me a lot of comfort.

As we end 2025 and enter into 2026, we look forward to learn what the Lord has in store for us, the women of the East Central Region. The possibilities are endless and without limits when we allow the Lord to lead and direct us. As we enter into a new year, may our prayer be that He moves mightily in and through each one of us!

Love to you in Christ,

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Die to self so others may live.