

## Foreword

Another wedding banquet. Another food fest. Twelve family members and relatives crowded around a table. Some gossiping and catching up. One or two reading a book. All of us greedily eating appetizers and waiting for the arrival of the bride and groom so we can “officially” begin the food orgy.

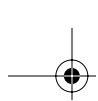
During the long wait for the guests of honor, relatives and friends come by the table to greet us: “My, how you have grown!” “How is school? Work?” Then the *real* question, “When are you going to get married so I can come to *your* wedding banquet?” With their eyes on the prize, my well-meaning Chinese relatives wanted me to reach the big goal of life—marriage, husband, children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, I’ve not run the race according to the ancient rules.

Long, long ago in a land far away, a script for being female in a patriarchal culture was written. Generations later, in a new land, the script is not easily changed. Fashion, language, religious, economic and educational circumstances may be different, but role and gender expectations seem to change at a glacial pace.

Being Asian, American and female—and a follower of Jesus as well—makes growing up hard to do! Is there a way of doing all of it well?

In this book, five wonderful young women, who have this same struggle, talk about their lives, their families, their challenges, their joys. They all grew up biculturally in the United States, but they represent East Asian (Japanese [Nikki], Korean [Kathy] and Chinese [Tracey]) cultures and the new voices of the South Asian (Pakistani [Asifa]) and Southeast Asian (Filipina [Christie]) experience. As we have spent time together and learned from one





another in a leadership development and mentoring program sponsored by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, I have come to appreciate each of these women in a unique way. I am honored to know them!

The authors investigate the intersection of gender, race and Christian discipleship by addressing questions related to parents, expectations, suffering, perfectionism, friendship, sexuality, stereotypes, leadership and finding one's voice. Simple answers don't show up in these chapters. But integrity and authenticity are here, making the book ring true.

Asian American women (and those who love them) will find this book speaking to them in specific ways. But in addition, readers from any culture will find great help in these stories and insights. As you consider the freedom God wants his children to have, may you grow far beyond merely serving tea. Jesus offers wholeness that benefits the entire family of God. Read on and see how.

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