

VOLUME 7 MAY/JUNE 2024

GRATEFUL GIRL

a christian magazine celebrating faith, family, food & friendships

ALL
THINGS
NEW

ELLA AUTREY

WHAT YOUR
KIDS
REALLY
NEED TO
LEARN
BEFORE
THEY
LEAVE HOME

SUE DONALDSON

FREE
DOWNLOADS

MOTHER'S DAY
BRUNCH RECIPES

1
Year
ANNIVERSARY

TAMMY ANGLIN

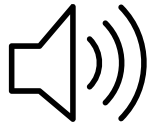
LET IT BE!

SPECIAL
ANNIVERSARY
SECTION WITH
SELECT ARTICLE
REPRINTS FROM
EACH ISSUE.



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welcome



Welcome to the Anniversary issue of the Grateful Girl Magazine! I can't believe I am saying that. A full year of issues published!

When I felt God's calling to launch this magazine over a year ago, I had no idea where it would go. I had no idea where the article contributors would come from. No idea if anyone would read the magazine. I just knew that I was supposed to launch it and believe that God would make the way. And He did.

We have had amazing Christian women contributors in each issue and thousands of you have taken the time to sit down and read each issue. We have been blessed with business partners who have come alongside us each issue because they want to help support the magazine's efforts to spread the love of Jesus. It's been amazing to experience.

But even with all of the good things, I admit there have been times during this year that I have felt lonely in working on this project. I have had thoughts many times in my head that there's no point in keeping it going. That no one really cares. See that's what the devil does when you are pursuing God's will in your life. He attacks you wherever he thinks he can put a doubt in your mind. He doesn't want you focusing on God. And he certainly doesn't want us to actually spread God's word, His love and encouragement. And if I'm honest, there have been days that I felt like he was winning.

But God. God's plans and His word will not be defeated. In Isaiah 55 He says "so shall My word be that goes out from My mouth, it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it." What does that mean? It just means that God's words, His plans, are given to us and they don't just go out into the world and sit there. They don't return to Him empty and unfulfilled. His plans WILL be accomplished in that way that He intends....whether we answer the call or not. Yes, even if He calls us and we say no thank you....His will is not stopped. He will find someone to say Yes. And they will get the blessing.

During the last few years, the one thing that God has shown me is that if we give God our "yes", He will take it and use it far beyond our abilities. I am in awe of what God has done with my simple yes. There's no doubt that He can and will use flawed people to accomplish His will.

I admit I don't know the future of this magazine. But I do know that I will continue to say Yes and listen for God's will. Maybe He has other plans for me. Maybe He wants to grow this platform and have me keep going. But when I get messages like this one, I hear His voice whispering to me...keep going
."I enjoy every edition of Grateful Girl Magazine."

"Patti what a huge impact you have on people's lives. You are a blessing to so many! Love your heart for Jesus and his people!"

I don't share that to brag or shine light on me. I share it because it is an example of how God uses others to speak into our hearts when He knows we need it most. He knows. He knows when our hearts are heavy and need encouragement.

I hope that you enjoy this anniversary issue. We have three amazing women contributors this issue who have been with us in previous issues PLUS a special reprint section with an article from each of the past year's issues.

And of course there are some fun downloads and printables, plus recipes including a Mother's Day brunch!

I hope you enjoy this issue and share it with your friends and family! Be a part of the ministry to spread the love and encouragement of Jesus. We are all in this together.

Patti Jensen

EDITOR/CREATOR/GRATEFUL GIRL

04



Former CIA undercover officer tells how her fear was overcome while serving in the most dangerous places on earth.



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What Your Kids Really Need To Learn Before They Leave Home by Sue Donaldson



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Anniversary Reprint Section

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ALL THINGS NEW

Ella Autrey



ella autrey

Ella Autrey is a native of Western North Carolina. She loves spending time with her family, and is always ready for a travel adventure. Ella works with Summit Wellness Centers PLLC, as an LCHMCA counselor.

The house we live in was built in the 1950's by my husband's great grandfather. After we were married we had to decide if we were going to live in the house and remodel, or if we were going to build a new house on the property. We weighed all of our options, going back and forth on what would make the most sense in all areas of our life.

"we can fix this up and it be like an HGTV show" knowing very well I had no idea what I was truly asking for. "



all things new

I am a very visual person, however I have no vision when it comes to trying to imagine what something will look like so the thought of a remodel was overwhelming to me because I couldn't envision what the end result would look like.

The thought of starting completely new also seemed daunting knowing there is so much that goes into building a new house.

I knew there were pros and cons to both, but admittedly I truly had no real idea the amount of work that would go into either, as home improvements and building are not in my areas of expertise.



My husband thought it would end up being easier to just build completely new, but I kept going back to the fact I hated to give up on a house that had sentimental value and seemed to just need a "remodel" from what I could see. After much prayer, consideration and conversation we decided to go with the remodel. Although my husband had his hesitations, he also was willing to go with my "we can fix this up and it be like an HGTV show" knowing very well I had no idea what I was truly asking for. Being his agreeable and hard working self, he agreed knowing the amount of work I was getting ready to ask him to undertake.

all things new



What I quickly realized was our remodel wasn't just cosmetic, it was a complete renovation.

As in gutting the house down to the studs, rewiring, plumbing, new insulation etc. You see, I quickly realized when you start pulling back the layers of an over 70 year old house there are a lot of things hidden by paint and siding.

I wish I could say that I handled it all with grace, a good attitude, and stress free but that would be a lie. The Lord quickly began to use the project to keep me humble and gently remind me that He can restore all things.

We live in a world filled with photo filters, social media, even artificial intelligence that can create a persona of almost anything whether it is real or not and often we can't even tell the difference. However, most of the time if we were to pull back the layers we would be able to see wrinkles, gray hair, messy homes, arguments, fast food meals, shame, regret and sin that we do our best to cover up.

Sometimes we are really successful in being able to cover it up from the outside looking in. But the Lord, knowing all things, knows we all need more than a filter, a fake smile or the right photo angle to really be able to live a life of peace, contentment and joy that can only come from Him. Oftentimes I feel like this is where we tend to think of a "remodel" but in reality we need to realize the Lord is truly into renovation and complete restoration.

all things new

There is absolutely nothing in our lives that we have done, have said or have thought that He can't forgive and restore. Whether we have lived a life full of public sin that we regret and feel it following us everywhere or that we carry some secret shame from things only we know about. We can find hope and confidence in knowing if we go to the Lord and surrender to Him, then He can begin putting the pieces of our life back together in a way that is more beautiful than we could ever imagine.

You may ask "How could the Lord restore me? I have done too much and I am too far gone." The enemy wants us to believe this lie but in God's word He clearly states when we accept Him as our Savior we are a new creature.

2nd Corinthians 5:17 says "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. " I love the detail in this verse because it doesn't just say some things are new, it says all things are new.



Now I realize, just as in our house project a complete renovation doesn't just happen overnight, it comes with mistakes, tears and lots of hard work.

Allowing the Lord to effect change in our lives takes a lot of work from us and that comes with being intentional of leaning into His Word, clinging to His promises and remembering the Lord can continue to use our past pain and poor choices for His glory.

Thankfully the Lord knows we are all still a work in progress on this side of Heaven. He knows and constantly reassures us that through Him all things can be made new and He wants us to believe in that.



Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

matthew 6:26

sue donaldson

**WHAT YOUR KIDS
REALLY NEED TO
LEARN BEFORE THEY
LEAVE HOME**



BY sue donaldson

what your kids really need to learn before they leave home

OUR GOOGLE CHILDREN

Stanford Business School offers a class that's hard to get into because it's so popular. "Touchy Feely, 101" teaches the brightest and smartest how to get along with other people.

Grad students are exposed to "Emotional Intelligence" and their premise is: "You will learn what you need to know about business when you get into business. But no one will teach you necessary people-skills."

Unless you had a good mother, that is.



what your kids really need to learn

When I look back at my parenting experience, I wish I could start over and call it: “Let’s Try This Again.” But that’s not how it works. I asked our girls for input,

“What did we teach you that you needed to know as an adult?” and added, “But please don’t hurt my feelings.” (I needed some toughened-up emotional intelligence.)

“And yes, I know we didn’t teach you to budget...” Sure enough, the runt wrote right back: “You mean you taught us to pour concrete but not to budget?” Yes. That’s what I meant. And that was your dad’s fault.

You may be feeling like you need some touchy-feely warm fuzzies about now. The good news is that our young adults have Google.

What I didn’t teach them they will learn, maybe even better than how I would have taught them.



“

When I look back at my parenting experience, I wish I could start over and call it: “Let’s Try This Again.” But that’s not how it works. I asked our girls for input,

”

Speaker, Podcaster, and Author Sue Donaldson and her husband, Mark, live in San Luis Obispo, California. Sue taught high school English in Brazil with Wycliffe Bible Translators. She and her husband, Mark, have raised 3 daughters who keep them at the bank and on their knees. Sue loves connecting people to one another, to God, and to His Word. She blogs at [Welcome Heart](#), hosts a weekly [podcast](#), and has been speaking for women's retreats and ~~conferences~~ for the past 20 years with long pauses for babies, diapers and soccer pasta parties.

Changing the World One Cup of Coffee at a Time
Tea works, too.
The host of WELCOME HEART: Living a Legacy Life
Podcast. [Listen Here.](#)

There's a story of one of our daughters that's become the stuff of family legend. Those stories are the ones that everyone laughs about except for the one that it's about.

This particular daughter, who is one of those brightest and smartest (because of her dad) was studying in London, and cooking for herself for the first time.

One evening she Googled: "How to make a quesadilla?" We laughed. A lot. But as the mother, I felt a stab of guilt. How come she didn't know how to make a quesadilla? Why didn't I teach her that simple process? I'm a terrible mother. Suffice it to say, it wasn't on the SAT and she got a scholarship.

Some things are okay to GOOGLE. Other things are best taught by the parents.

I'll begin with what may have been of help to my children, but I didn't actually think about teaching them (I've apologized more than once.)



WHAT I COULD HAVE TAUGHT MY CHILDREN BUT PROBABLY DIDN'T



1. How to Do Laundry

All the mechanics. Using money to begin the machine. How to interpret all the Egyptian-like symbols of hot, cold, warm. Separating lights and darks. Oh, and when to use fabric softener (I'll blame my mother who didn't teach me about fabric softener.)

2. How to Do Banking

All the intricacies of opening a checking and savings account. Learning to balance your statements. I took each of the girls into the bank at age 16 and we sat down with the nice bank lady and I ended up inviting her to dinner. I'm not sure what else happened that day but we made a new friend. Of course, everything is online now and my girls can never find their checks if they ever have to write one.

WHAT I COULD HAVE TAUGHT MY CHILDREN BUT PROBABLY DIDN'T

3. How to Change Your Oil

Really? We have daughters. I'm sure they could find a nice, young man to help them out—especially if bribed with a Google-inspired quesadilla. Besides, their dad's love language is service. You can find him under any number of cars when blessed by visits from his female tribe.

4. How to Buy a Car

What I learned from buying a car was to make sure you had good credit. It's easier. Also, take your father. He brings a certain authority so your girls don't get swindled.

5. How to Get Good Credit

Spend money and then pay it off. It works. I borrowed \$2,000.00 to go to Europe for 10 weeks with a backpack and two girlfriends. I paid it back (I had to. It was deducted automatically from my paycheck.) Without my knowing, I got great credit.

6. How to Cook Healthy Meals

Well, yes, that would've have been a good idea, obviously (see London example above.) But our girls live near Trader Joe's, and often date fireman or attorneys who cook better than their mother.

7. How to Clean Toilets

I taught this one. It was important to me. Do they do it while living with roommates who insist on hiring professional housekeepers? I doubt it. A wasted lesson.

8. How to Make Meals for a Month

I liked this one. It led to surprising dinners since I forgot to label the freezer bags. The girls may have rejected this teaching due to the mysterious meat that appeared too many nights in a row.

9. How to Tip

They all worked in the restaurant industry. I didn't have to teach them. They over-tip as a matter of principle.

10. How to Get a Job

We started early. At 16, they made a list of potential employers, washed their hair, practiced their pitch ("Excuse me, Sir. Are you hiring? I'm a hard worker. My dad's from Iowa.") They bowed their trembling heads while I prayed over them that they would be met with kindness, and that they would return home with a job, and off they went. They all have jobs.

WHAT I HOPED I TAUGHT OUR CHILDREN (IF NOT, THEY HAVE MY PHONE NUMBER)



1. How to Lead/Follow

You don't need to be loud to be a leader. Lead with quiet assurance, confidence in your values, and compassion for those you are leading. Look out for the person less-secure, and show them their strengths. They will grow, and you will never lead alone. When following, you may not always like your boss, but respect the "office" if not the person. Keep from bad-mouthing those in authority when you're with others. Instead, be a leader with your fellow-employees in how to be a better person in a difficult situation.

2. How to Say "I'm Sorry."

Humility is the road to maturity. Own your responsibility and say out loud to the one who is hurt, "I'm sorry I hurt you. Please forgive me. I was wrong." Even if you were also wronged, take the high road. Keep short accounts with God and others. Repentance is one of God's greatest gifts.

WHAT I HOPED I TAUGHT OUR CHILDREN (IF NOT, THEY HAVE MY PHONE NUMBER)

3. How to Ask Questions

People love to talk—even the introverts. Asking questions is one of the best ways to gain wisdom, and to love your neighbor. There's not enough love in the world. Change your world by asking questions and discipline yourself to listen to their answers.

4. How to Work Hard

It will pay off. Maybe not how and when you think. Remember that you work not only for yourself, but for an Audience of One. How you work is a way to worship God who created you with unique strengths. You honor Him when you work hard, and you gain a holy self-satisfaction which will carry you through challenging days.

5. How to Seek Wisdom

Sitting at Jesus' feet is the beginning of wisdom and it's available when we ask. (James 1:5) Ask God for it, even when you feel reasonably confident you know what you're doing. God's wisdom is beyond the world's, so when we invite Him into our daily lives, we have an advantage that Jesus spoke of when He chided Martha, "Martha, Martha, you are worried ... about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part that which is to her advantage." (Luke 10:41,42 Amplified)

6. How to Be People of Integrity

When you say you will do something, do it. And vice-versa. Honest intent and follow-through is rare. Be rare and you will stand out. More importantly, God will use you for His kingdom.

7. How to Create Boundaries

You are only one person, and you can't do everything to please everyone even half of the time. It takes life-experience to learn your limits. Embrace them and guard your heart, mind and body. People-pleasing doesn't help you nor the person you are trying to please. Practice the "sanctified 'no.'" Rid your life of toxic people, and let God deal with them. You are not anyone's savior. That job's been taken.

8. How to Host a Gathering

There are always people needing to be gathered. It doesn't have to be elaborate. Purposefully host. Is it to celebrate someone or something? Will you include a mix of strangers and friends? How can you show others that God loves them? Loneliness is rampant. Hosting will help your loneliness, as well.

9. How Deal with Failure/Success

Failure is hard. Grieve the loss, but ask God to teach you all you need to know from that loss. You learn more from failure so make sure you do, so you don't find yourself back in the same place. Success is sweet. Give your accolades to God. It's good practice for later on when we will throw our crowns at His feet. And celebrate each success with a toast to Heaven and to those who helped you along the way.

WHAT I HOPED I TAUGHT OUR CHILDREN (IF NOT, THEY HAVE MY PHONE NUMBER)



10. How to Know God

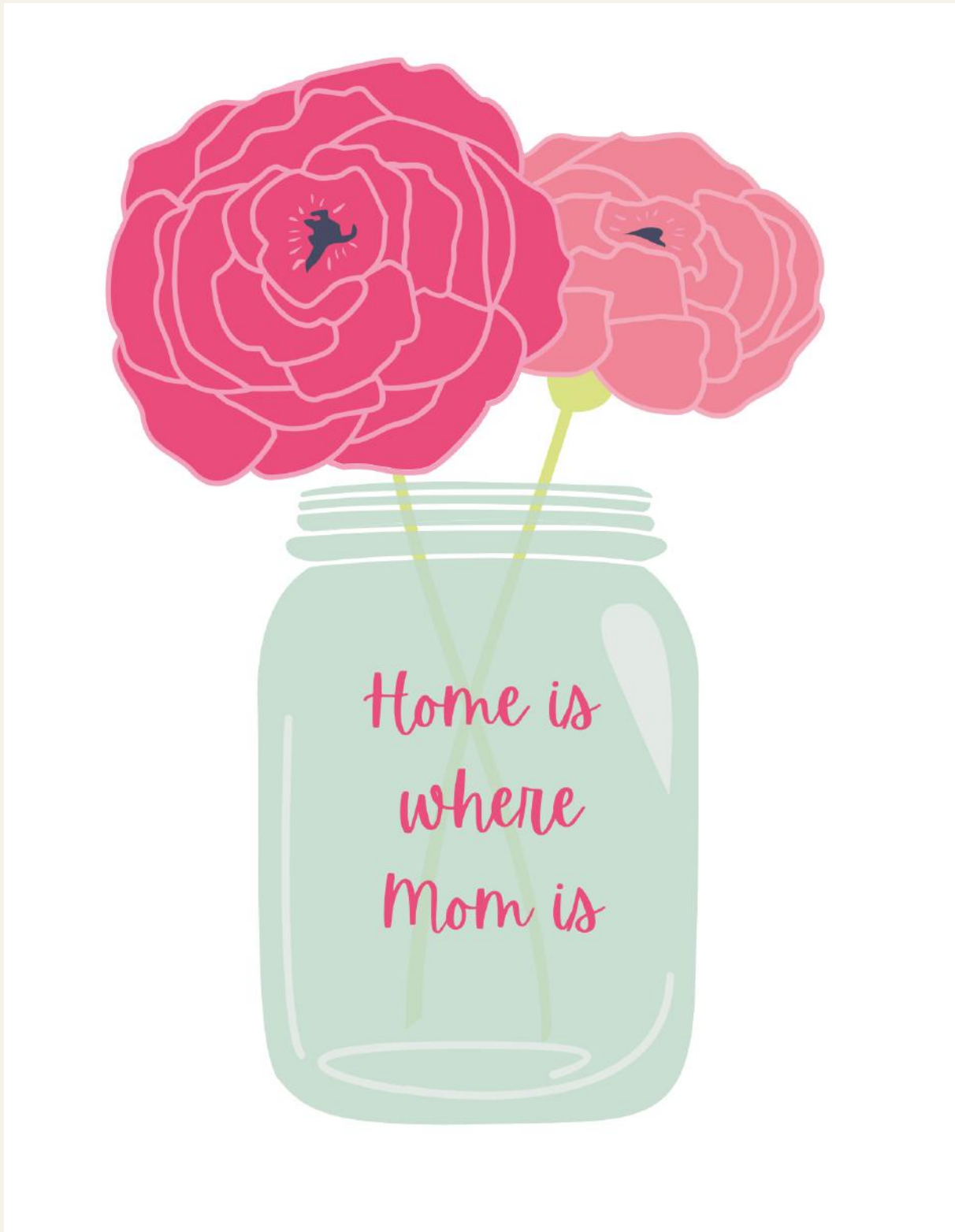
You are deeply loved by God. He's there for the seeking, but seeking is a verb. Your spiritual life is your responsibility, but don't think you can do it alone. Find community that will nurture your relationship with Him. Every day wake up and say, "Lord, I love you but I want to love You more. Help Yourself to my life. Show me how to love my neighbor well. Thank You and Amen."

You don't need to go to Stanford Business School to be successful. You do need to love God and love others like you love yourself. And if you don't know what to do on a Saturday night, call your mother.

PS

The girls wanted me to add: "Eat protein by 10 am." I taught them that life skill and it has served them well.

Download and print to frame & gift



DOWNLOAD





Peaches and Cream Oatmeal Cookies

Peaches are my favorite fruit and when summer time rolls around there is nothing better than a fresh peach! These cookies combine all kinds of goodness..peaches and cream, oatmeal, white chocolate...yes...yum!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup brown sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3.4 oz instant vanilla pudding
- 8 peaches and cream instant oatmeal packets (1.25 ounces each packet)
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups white chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

- Combine the butter, brown sugar, white sugar, eggs, and vanilla until well blended. Then add in the salt, flour, baking soda, pudding mix and the oatmeal packets. Stir until all mixed well. Then fold in the white chocolate chips.
- Chill in the fridge for about 1 hour. Roll dough into 1 1/4 inch balls and place on ungreased cookie sheet.
- Heat oven to 350 degrees and cook for 9 to 11 minutes.
- enjoy!

Cookies



[Click for Full Recipe & Instructions](#)
[Print or Pin](#)

grateful girl

GATHERING

9/14/2024

The Grateful Girl Gathering Christian Women's Conference will host our 4th annual conference in 2024! It's going to be great! Stay connected with us on Facebook and Instagram and visit our website below for updates and announcements! Tickets are on sale SOON!

click here!

WWW.GRATEFULGIRLGATHERING.COM



getting excited?

GRATEFUL GIRL GATHERING



Grateful Girl Gathering
September 14, 2024
www.gratefulgirlgathering.com

GRATITUDE JOURNAL

DATE: S M T W T F S

TODAY I'M GRATEFUL FOR

- _____
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WATER INTAKE

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1L 2L 3L



TODAY'S POSITIVE THOUGHTS

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TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

SOMETHING I'M PROUD OF

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

TOMORROW I LOOK FORWARD TO

- _____
- _____
- _____

[Click to download and print](#)



LET IT BE!

Tammy Anglin

Contributor
Tammy Anglin



LET IT BE!

This year, the Lord began to speak to me about letting things in my life be what they need to be, whether that is saying "yes" to what needs to remain, or to let go to what He asks of me. As I began to dwell on thought, I started reading and studying about four women in the Bible, all with different stories, but all who were met with the faithfulness of God.

Just like the May flowers that so faithfully appear each year with their beauty to enjoy, it reminded me of God's faithfulness that continues to show up to bring something beautiful in our lives when we say "yes" to Him, and let Him do His work in us.

In the same way, just like these four women in the Bible, I knew I needed to let some beauty come to my life by letting God do some things in me.



After time passed, and Moses grew into a man, he became one of the greatest leaders. In life, letting go of things is sometimes hard, whether good or bad. It is a sacrifice. When we are unwilling to let go of things in our lives, we can tend to hide them just as Jocabed did. How about hiding our unforgiveness and bitterness, not to mention sin that needs to go? There are things that need to end. "Letting go" can change the trajectory of our life.

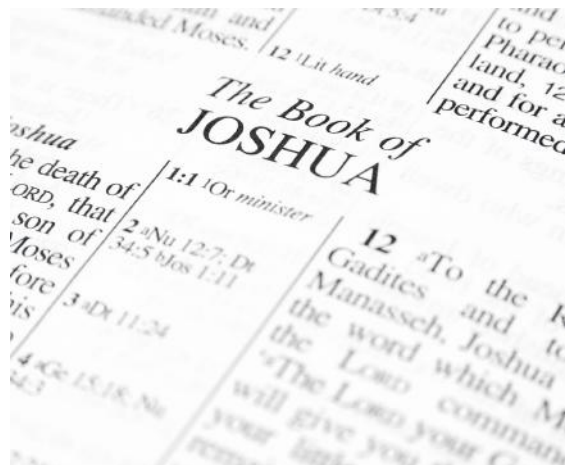
"Letting go" can change the trajectory of our life.

The first woman is Jocabed. (Exodus 2: 1-10) Jocabed was the mother of Moses, and she hid him to protect him from Pharaoh's death order which was to kill all Hebrew boy babies.

But, she then made the decision to let go of her most precious child by putting him in a basket where she placed him on the Nile River in hopes that God would still save his life.

In her decision to let go of Moses, it brought about so much more than she could ever expect. He was rescued by Pharaoh's daughter, and brought to safety. Jocabed, Moses' own mother, became the very one to nurse and care for this special child.

The second woman was Rahab. (Joshua 2) She chose faith by letting the red cord down the window. Rahab had a not so good history. She was considered a harlot. She lived in Jericho and many men visitors came to her along the way. She was probably not proud of her life choices.





.When two Israelite spies came by, she rescued and hid them from the soldiers who were looking for them. Rahab more than likely heard of the Israelite people and that God was on their side. She and the spies made an agreement that when they came to capture the city, they would remember her and her family as long as they saw the red cord coming down from her window, and they would be spared. Her life was spared, and she was graciously given a husband.

.The third woman was Ruth. (Ruth 1 & 2) Ruth chose to stay and cling to Naomi. She was a Moabite woman, who was married to the son of Naomi, Mahlon, who were Israelites. Ruth's husband passed away along with his brother and father. This left Ruth and Naomi as widows. Naomi made the decision that she would go back to her homeland. Upon telling her two daughter-in-laws her decision, Ruth decided to go with Naomi, as it is so well stated in scripture, "Wither thou goest, I will go."

Faith in God is the turnaround to all our desperate struggles and hopeless moments. God is the God of the impossible!

She also became in direct lineage to Jesus. By letting go of fear and the unknown, she put her faith in God and believed that God would make something new of her life.

Faith in God is the turnaround to all our desperate struggles and hopeless moments. God is the God of the impossible!

Naomi and Ruth made the journey to her homeland together. I can picture them singing songs and talking along the way about their God. I am sure too, that to Ruth, the sense of family and love for her mother-in-law kept her feeling secure in their journey. Once they arrived at Naomi's homeland where her kinfolk lived, Ruth met a man named Boaz. He was a farmer, and a generous man. Ruth gleaned in His fields, and eventually he takes her as his wife, and she has children.



In this, she became in direct lineage to King David and to Jesus! Just like Ruth, when we cling to Jesus, and let him keep us in his perfect embrace, we become safe and secure by the Lord's presence, even when He takes us through places that are unknown, a place we have never been before. We live in a time where we must cling to Jesus with everything within us and hang on tight.

The fourth woman is the Woman at the Well. (John 4: 1-29) This woman was a Samaritan, and during this time, Jews and Samaritans did not socialize, but here is Jesus asking her for a drink of water. She replies to Jesus, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" John 4:13-14 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Jesus tells her, if you knew who I was, you would ask him for a drink. He is the living water and whoever drinks of Him will never thirst again and have everlasting life.

He begins to tell her all about her life, all the secret things. I am pretty sure she wasn't proud of her life, and she felt empty, unfulfilled, and less than those around her. But Jesus came to bring living water to her.

We may be in a place we feel less than, empty, dry, almost like there is no meaning to life. Jesus is the living water. Let our emptiness be filled with all of Him.

These are just a few of my favorite women in the Bible. As I learn from their lives, I am confident that there is so much beauty, joy, and fulfillment that can be ours. In each of their stories, I see that through their "yes", God did a beautiful and miraculous work in their lives. He is a faithful God.



LET IT BE!

I encourage us to let go of things that hold us back from true freedom, and keep us in cycles that bear no fruit. Let go of sin that so easily besets us. Let go of unforgiveness that stunts our growth and our relationship with the Lord. Anything that doesn't please the Lord! Let it go!

Put your faith in God that can turn your situation and your life around. In our struggles and hopelessness, He can make something beautiful in your life. Put your faith in God, because He is faithful!!

Cling to Jesus like never before. As John 6:68 says, "Where can we go, you have the words of life!" We all have that temptation to run to and fro to find the answer. Life is full of uncertainty and unanswered questions, but when we cling to Jesus no matter what comes our way, He will sustain us and get us through.

In that dry, empty, unfulfilled place, where you believe you are not worthy of anything good...Good News! Jesus is the living water, and he is ready to fill you up to overflowing.

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Let it be! Let it be!



Tammy Anglin has been married to her husband Tom for 44 years and has been in Pastoral Ministry for 41 years. They have 4 Children, with their wonderful spouses and 10 grandchildren. They are now serving at a Church on the Gulf Coast of Florida.

As For Me And
My House
We Will Serve
The Lord

Joshua 24:15



[DOWNLOAD](#)



Make Mom's Day with a Craveable BRUNCH

FAMILY FEATURES

There's perhaps no better occasion to show off your kitchen skills than Mother's Day, a perfect opportunity to turn the tables on mom and let her relax while you handle cooking duties. A homemade breakfast – or better yet, letting her sleep in for brunch – is a sure way to win her over and show how much you care.

Show your delicate side by working up a batch of Apple Ricotta Crepes, which require a soft touch to cook the light, silky batter to golden perfection. This rendition of the beloved thin pancakes calls for a ricotta spread and apple-cinnamon topping for a delightful pairing of savory and sweet.

If a full Mother's Day celebration is on the menu, something a bit heartier may be required. A frittata provides the best of both worlds, as it's a filling meal that's also easy to make – just let the oven do the

work. This Apple, Tomato and Goat Cheese Frittata is no exception as it calls for a handful of everyday ingredients you can whisk together in a cinch. While it's in the oven (about 30 minutes, give or take) you can put the finishing touches on your last-minute decorations and handwritten cards.

Special occasions with those you love can be uplifted with the aroma and flavor Envy Apples that offer an invitation to savor small moments around the table. Available at Whole Foods and other major grocery stores, the craveable texture and crunch of this leading apple variety provides balanced sweetness as the ultimate apple experience for Mother's Day gatherings. Along with their delicious flavor, the flesh remains whiter longer, even after cutting, slicing, dicing or cubing, so that homemade meals look as good as they taste.

Visit EnvyApple.com to find more Mother's Day brunch inspiration.



Scan to Find Ingredients



Apple Ricotta Crepes

Yield: 12 crepes (2-3 crepes per serving)

Crepes:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla butter, for cooking

Apple Topping:

- butter
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- Envy Apples, sliced or cubed
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg salt, to taste
- maple syrup

Ricotta Filling:

- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 lemon, zest and juice only
- 2-3 tablespoons sugar, or to taste

To make crepes: In bowl, combine flour, sugar and salt. Add milk, eggs and vanilla then, using whisk, combine thoroughly. Mixture should be silky smooth. Refrigerate.

To make apple topping: In pan over medium heat, heat butter and brown sugar until bubbly and golden.

Add apples, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt, to taste; cook over medium-low heat until apples are soft. Turn off heat and finish with maple syrup.

To make ricotta filling: Combine ricotta, lemon zest, lemon juice and sugar, mix well and set aside.

In nonstick pan over medium-low heat, melt small amount of butter.

Add one ladle crepe batter, cook until bubbles form, flip and cook until golden. Repeat with remaining batter. Stack crepes to keep warm and soft.

Spread ricotta mixture thinly onto crepes and fold into quarters. Top with apple mixture and serve.



Apple, Tomato and Goat Cheese Frittata

- 6 eggs
- 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 20 turns fresh cracked pepper
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1 Envy Apple, small diced
- 1/2 cup sundried tomatoes, chopped
- 4 ounces goat cheese, crumbled
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced chives

Preheat oven to 350 F.

In large mixing bowl, whisk eggs, hot pepper sauce, salt, pepper and milk until well combined.

Stir in apples, tomatoes, goat cheese and chives until well combined.

Using 1/3 measuring cup, spoon frittata mixture into oven-safe large skillet or 9-by-9-inch pan.

Bake 25-30 minutes, or until eggs are set. Let cool slightly then serve.



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Special Section

Anniversary Reprints



As we celebrate our anniversary of the Grateful Girl Magazine, I wanted to share one article from each of our issues during the past year..

We have had so many amazing women contribute articles in each of the issues. They have shared their hearts, their stories and have encouraged us in each issue.

In this special section, enjoy an article reprinted from each of the issues over the past year.

Want to go back and read every issue again?

Go to [Grateful Girl Magazine](#) and click on each magazine cover to go to each issue.

Enjoy!





THE GOOD LIFE

Anniversary Reprint From Our First Issue

EXCLUSIVE



JILL DASHER

Jill Dasher is the author of the brand new book *SHALLOW*, drowning in the shallow end of people's approval. She is a writer and Christian speaker who is passionate about sharing the freedom that exists when you refuse to live in hiding & freely submit all of your fears, flaws, & failures to the God who made you. She resides in the mountains of NC with her husband and five children.

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ON INSTAGRAM @JILLDASHER
WWW.JILLDASHER.COM

How many of you have purchased something from a Facebook or Instagram ad, and upon arrival, (if it ever arrived,) it was not exactly what you expected? I bet you're smiling as you think about it. The funniest purchase my mom ever made was of a nativity scene that she was excited to display in her yard for Christmas only to discover that it was no taller than a foot. Her yard display became a table display and this still makes me laugh.

The truth is I know something about every one of us – you and I are in search of the “good life.” We're looking for that place where everything is balanced. We're looking for the perfect mixture of love, adventure, success, and joy. Now while our versions of what that might look like may differ, nonetheless, we're looking for the “good life.”

"We're looking for the good life because we were created with an eternal longing."

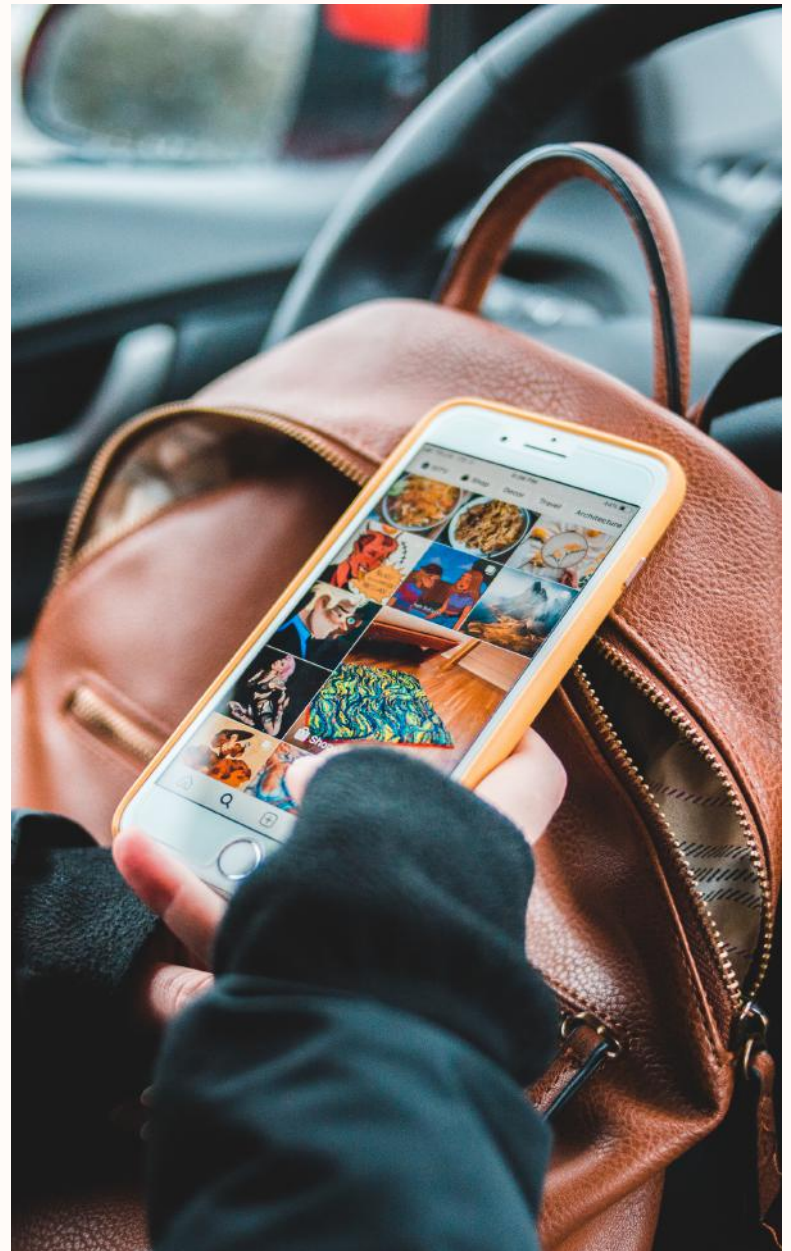


The Good Life

When you consider how God created man and what we were created for it makes sense that we're in search of the good life. In the first chapter of Genesis, God gives specific details about how and what we were created for.

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life...And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good."



We're looking for the good life because we were created with an eternal longing. We were meant to live forever with our Creator. The Garden was to be our home and within it was all that we would need for life, love, and purpose. The "Garden" was abundant; flowing rivers, teeming wildlife, and fruitful work. The man and woman were secure – they weren't living in comparison, instead, they were "naked and unashamed." Adam and Eve were put in charge. We like to be in charge, right? They walked with God.

The Good Life



There's not a version of the good life that you or I could come up with that would trump the one we were created to live. Since the day we found out about this "Garden of Eden" we have been trying to find it. Archeologists all over the world have devoted their life's work to locating the "Garden." However, there's a problem. Scripture tells us that God placed an angel with a flaming sword rotating in every direction to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever" therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. Gen 3:22-23

We're not getting to the Tree of Life. Growing up I viewed this verse as the "discipline moment." The point where God dished out the punishment for their disobedience, rightly so, but now I also see a beautiful act of love and mercy between the Creator and His creation. God is making the point that Adam and Eve's eyes have been opened. Where they once didn't know shame, they now do. Where they once didn't know fear and disappointment, they now do. They also now know what it means to live in hiding and God says I don't want them "knowing what they know," to eat from the Tree of Life and live forever. It's not that He didn't want them to live forever, it's that He didn't want them to live forever in a state of brokenness and death.

The angel placed to guard the way to the Tree of Life was a foreshadowing of The One who would grant us access to eternal life through His death and resurrection. Jesus. This eternal life that God is offering us is an invitation back to the Garden and it's available today.

Eternal life is not your "one-day ticket" into heaven, it's an invitation to begin living eternally today. What do you mean? If you believe eternal life isn't available to you until you die, then you'll look for anything and everything to add meaning to your life while living on this earth. You'll believe all the ads, you'll purchase all the cheap products, you'll sample all the versions of the "good life" that the world is throwing at you and you'll end up with a house full of junk, a flimsy nativity scene, and a hole in your heart. You will miss out on an abundant life in the here and now.

The Good Life

God's word defines eternal life in John 17:3; "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." This is a present "knowing." So often as believers, we forget this. We forget that those of us who know God and Jesus, have the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling us. Death can no longer touch us and although our bodies may be in a state of decay our souls are living in the eternal.

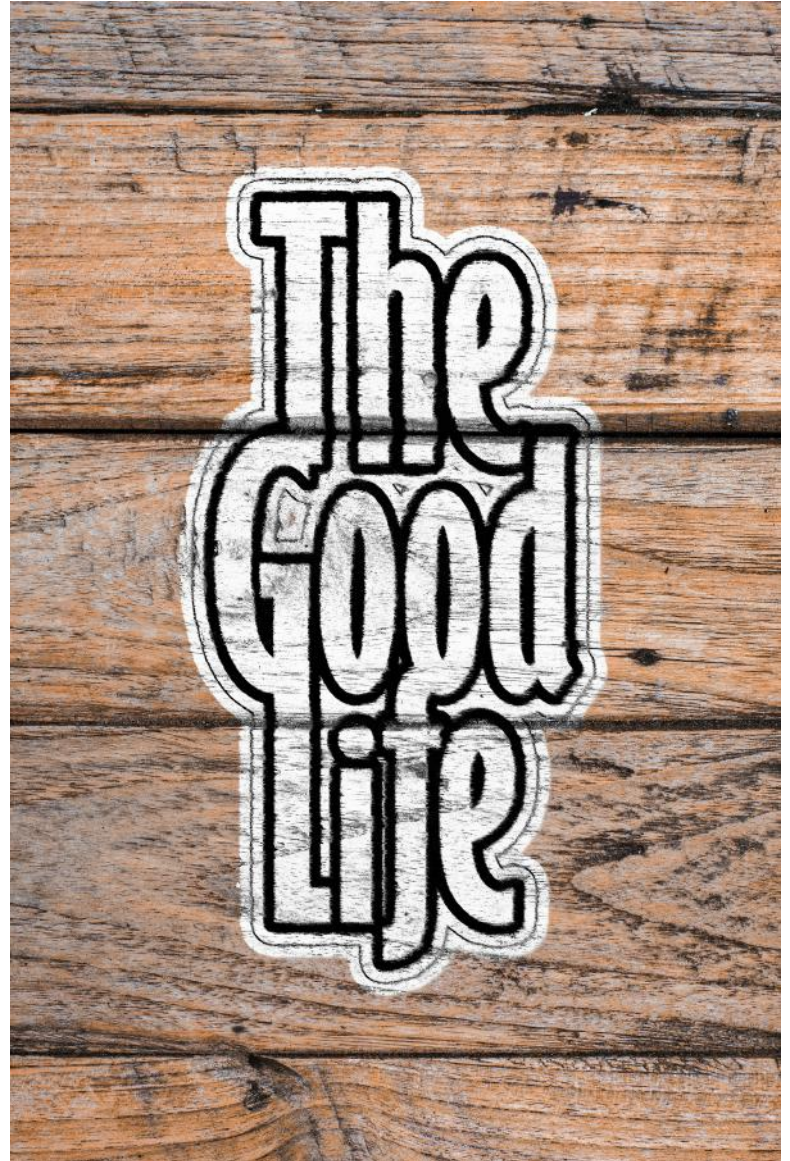
Understanding this gives me immense peace because my hope is not built around the possessions and "pleasures" of this world. My joy isn't dependent on obtaining a picture-perfect life, because that's not what will ultimately satisfy. The "good life" that you and I are in search of is what made the Garden of Eden so special. It wasn't the flowing rivers, teeming wildlife, or fruit. It was the presence of the Living God. His presence is what made it so special and it's His presence that brings fulfillment to our lives.

**"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."
Psalm 16:11**

For too long we have "scrolled" through version after version of the "good life" as defined by our culture - the perfect guy, the Pinterest house, a life well-traveled, the perfect body, sensual pleasures, etc.. and yet, we're still left empty.

This is the Good Life. He is the Good Life.

Maybe it's time we begin scrolling through words and stories that lead to life. Particularly the story about God becoming flesh to pave the way for His creation to live and love with Him forever. This is the Good Life. He is the Good Life.





FAITH OVER FEAR

Former Undercover CIA Agent Michele Rigby Assad

Anniversary Reprint From July / August Issue

EXCLUSIVE



MICHELE RIGBY ASSAD

Michele served five tours in the Arab World and has traveled to more than 48 countries. This extensive overseas experience informs her ability to deal with the most challenging people, including terrorists and insurgents which are highlighted in her bestselling book *Breaking Cover: My Secret Life in the CIA and What it Taught Me About What's Worth Fighting For*.

Fear. Determination. Grit. These aren't the first words that typically come to mind when one thinks of a nice and polite Christian woman. However, my time in the CIA changed that for me completely.

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ON INSTAGRAM
WWW.MICHELERIGBYASSAD.COM/

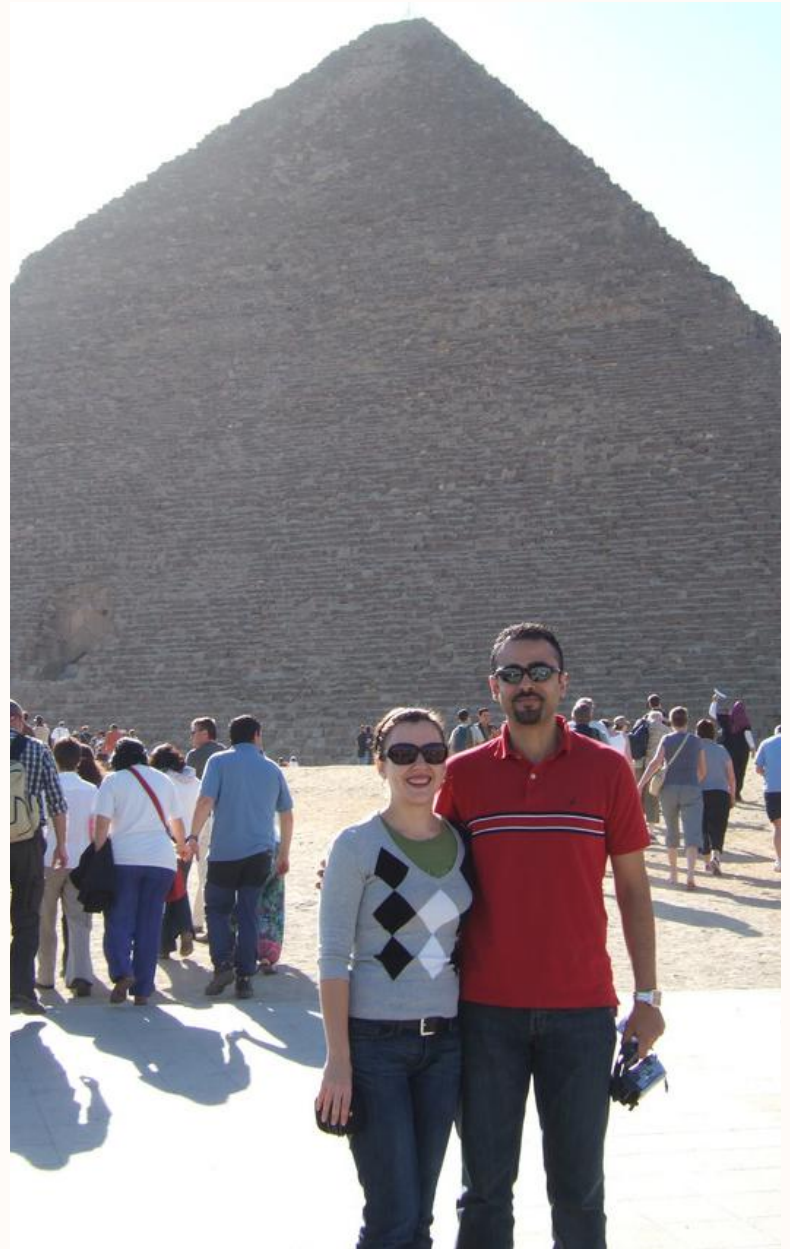
" ordinary people can do extraordinary things when our faith is bigger than our fears."



faith over fear

As a former intelligence officer in the CIA, I spent over ten years in the Middle East helping to fight the War on Terror. If you asked me as a child what I wanted to be when I grew up, becoming an international spy was not on my radar.

However, God had other plans. Instead of the American dream of having a nice house in the suburbs with a white picket fence, my home became war zones and my office became battlefields.



Although this may seem wild and scary to some, I could not be more grateful for all God has done in my life and all that He has brought me through.

It was through these experiences that I found my voice, developed an unassailable faith, unshakable perseverance, and a willingness to do hard things. (One of the most beautiful things that God has taught me is that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when our faith is bigger than our fears.)

faith over fear



I spent the beginning of my career in espionage pushing through my own self-limiting ideas, false assumptions of my capabilities, conscious and unconscious bias in the CIA, and the misogynistic views of our terrorism sources.

It seemed as if there were giants in front of me, but once I finally defeated these obstacles I discovered that I was more than capable of overcoming them all along. I was capable because I remembered that God had crafted me in His hands. I remembered that He had created me for hard and beautiful things.

I remembered that in Him I was strong and courageous and that He was going before me and behind me. I also remembered that I could have courage, and I could have comfort, but I couldn't have both. If I wanted to move forward in my career and even just survive working in dangerous places, I had to choose courage by pushing past my comfort zones and walking into all that He had for me.

Fear is a common emotion. You don't have to be face to face with a terrorist or spend your lunch break in a bomb shelter like I did to experience it. We all have fear in our lives in some form or another, and you can't be brave without the presence of it. However, choosing to drive through fear is when the courage comes in. When we make the choice to trust God and step onto the other side of what we are afraid of, the miracles in our lives start to take flight.

faith over fear

God is not going to force you to do anything, but He knows you are wildly capable of the incredible things He has planned for you. He knows He has given you a spirit of love, and power, and of a sound mind. Whatever it is you're afraid of, whether it's finally starting that business, putting up that boundary, or confessing that sin; with Him, all things are possible when we believe and trust in Him.

In my time overseas, I learned a whole new meaning of trusting in the Lord. When He said in Genesis 28:15, "I will protect you wherever you go," I had to believe Him. When God said in Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon formed against you shall prosper," I had to trust that He was telling the truth. By His amazing mercy and grace, He really was doing exactly what He said He would, and He has never let me down.

God is in the business of doing exceedingly more than we ask.

I've learned that God is always in the business of doing exceedingly more than we can ask, think or imagine when we put our lives in His hands. However, sometimes more than we can ask or imagine seems more than we can comprehend or handle



" ordinary people can do extraordinary things when our faith is bigger than our fears."

faith over fear

What has consistently brought me through even the most difficult season of life is gratitude. Gratitude does something beautiful in us. It can shift our entire demeanor and perspectives when we stop in our tracks and just give thanks. I used to think God would be disappointed if I was feeling anxious or defeated. But we do not serve that kind of God.

We serve the God that cares so much for us that He knew anxiousness would be something His children struggled with He even gave us the antidote for it. Philippians 4:6-7 NLT states, "Don't worry about anything, instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus." Gratitude changes everything.

I am so grateful for our God. Being in so many different countries in the Middle East, I watched people give their entire lives for a religion that was based on fear.

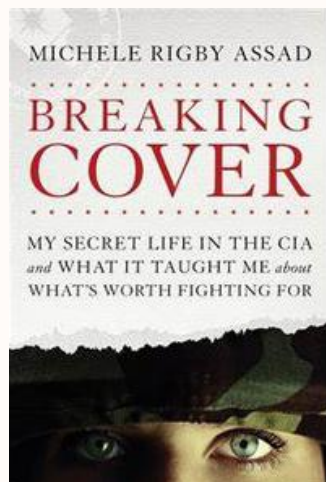
How special is Jesus, that He said our relationship with Him would be based on love. I am so grateful that He has carried me across oceans, that He has protected me and provided for me in every season.

I am so grateful that He gave me my husband, the kindest man to walk by my side and experience this life with.

I am so grateful for the prayers of my family and friends; prayers that have gone to war for us on earth in the Heavenly realm.

Most of all, I am so grateful I said yes to Jesus. Saying yes to Him was the beginning of the greatest adventure of my life.

You can read about my story in my memoir and bestselling book, Breaking Cover: My Secret Life in the CIA and What it Taught Me About What's Worth Fighting For. I pray you discover where you can choose faith over fear in your own life, and then watch God do the extraordinary.





he makes all things new

**candice
coffey**

From a dream to a growing Christian cosmetics company, Candice Coffey encourages women to Speak It, Apply It, Be It.

Bonus Partner Reprint July / August Issue

SPEAK IT. APPLY IT. BE IT.

GRATEFUL GIRL

candice coffey



He Makes All Things New

Morning after morning, night after night, and year after year, I've stared into the mirror. At almost 40 years old, I thought I knew who I was. I thought I was confident, emotionally and spiritually healthy, and well-established. Life seemed pretty good.

My relationship with the Lord had grown over the past years, and my heart had truly come to a place of complete surrender. This seemed like a great place to be as I began to ask him for a calling, and a commissioning into the greater purpose he had set aside for me, and me alone. Little did I know that God was going to turn my life upside down. Everything I thought I knew about myself was about to be challenged, and staring into the mirror would take on an entirely new perspective for me. Knowing who you are when you look into the mirror is one thing, but believing it and walking it out is another.

Candice Coffey is the founder of Everbe Cosmetics. She is a former teacher, and wife and mom who lives in Myrtle Beach, SC

“

I woke up and immediately read Psalm 34 in The Passion Translation. I was blown away by the imagery which describes how our countenance changes when we praise and keep our gaze upon the Lord.



he makes all things new

In 2018, the Lord gave me a beautiful dream. In the dream, I was in a department store, and I picked up a black and gold tube of lipstick. On the side of the lipstick, it said: "Psalm 34." I woke up and immediately read Psalm 34 in The Passion Translation. I was blown away by the imagery which describes how our countenance changes when we praise and keep our gaze upon the Lord.

Psalm 34: 1-5 (TPT)

Lord! I'm bursting with joy over what you've done for me!

My lips are full of perpetual praise.

I'm boasting of you and all your works, so let all who are discouraged take heart.

Join me, everyone! Let's praise the Lord together.

Let's make him famous!

Let's make his name glorious to all.

Listen to my testimony: I cried to God in my distress, and he answered me.

He freed me from all my fears!

Gaze upon him, join your life with his, and joy will come.

Your faces will glisten with glory.

You'll never wear that shame-face again.

“Speak it. Apply it. Be it,” would be the message.

As I meditated on the Scripture, and the dream, the Lord showed me the calling he had for me - to create a line of makeup to affirm his daughters. I began dreaming, planning, and reading the Word of God like never before. I knew the Father wanted women to speak His Word over themselves every day as they looked in the mirror. “Speak it. Apply it. Be it,” would be the message.

It takes His written Word and our mouths to speak His words into the atmosphere and pierce the darkness to bring light into dark situations. The sound of our voice carries weight, for it is backed up by the Creator of the universe, the Great I Am!

In the beginning of time, He chose us, His children, to give both a mouth and a voice. No other creature has a voice. What would happen if we truly allowed this to seep deep down into our hearts and souls, and we truly grabbed ahold of what this looks like for us?

The Word of God is alive, full of energy, and moving. He showed me that partnering with Him in speaking His Word out loud on Earth is part of our calling as sons and daughters of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Speaking the Word of God shifts atmospheres, changes situations, brings down strongholds, reveals truth. Angels are waiting for the sound of our voice to send them on assignments to work on our behalf. Our voice partnered with the Word of God releases the Kingdom to go forth on Earth as it is in Heaven!



he makes all things new



As I set out on this journey, I quickly learned how God saw me was different from how I saw myself. Under the pressure of this calling, I began to question myself and who I was—how would I start my own business? How would I start a company? Where would the makeup come from? Every corner I tried to turn, I was faced with fear, doubt, or intimidation. When staring in the mirror, my identity began to melt away, and I questioned myself. Very gently, God showed me I once again needed to reclaim my time in front of the mirror. After all, how could I ask other women to, “Speak it. Apply it. Be it,” without doing it myself?

I honestly wanted to run from this entire idea. I wanted to pretend I hadn’t had the dream or revelation of what God was telling me. Why couldn’t I just pray with someone and make all the fear, doubt, and intimidation go away?

Slowly, God revealed to me that He wanted to walk with me on this journey. No, it wouldn’t be easy, but He wanted me to need Him. To be close to Him. To rely on Him. He wanted to show me where all these doubts and fears were coming from so I could deal with them.

It hasn’t been an easy journey. I have scripture and truths written all over my mirror. I am speaking the Word of God out loud over myself each day. And I am finally beginning to see myself the way He sees me. What I once knew in my head is slowly sinking in as truth into my heart and soul.

My lips are full of perpetual praise.” Psalm 34:1

“Gaze upon Him, join your life with His, and joy will come.” Psalm 34:5

Your faces will glisten with glory. You’ll never wear that shame-face again.” Psalm 34:5

“EverBe is a movement that revolutionizes the way women apply their makeup. We empower women to feel beautiful because they are pure, lovely, and daughters of the King—royalty.

Women will stop being driven by the need to feel sexy. They will now be driven by their destiny and who God has called them to be. Women will understand the need for their voices to be used and the responsibility that follows.

This industry today is filled with hypersexualized messages and explicit advertisements that bombard all women, young and old. EverBe is God’s solution to this problem. The mirror will no longer be a place of lies, fear, and doubt, but rather a place where women will speak truth and build their faith in their Father and themselves!

EverBe will serve as a reminder each time a woman looks in the mirror. Each EverBe product has a Psalm 34 scripture on it. As she applies these products, she will say the scriptures out loud and declare truths about who she is. Along with the EverBe products, there is also a dry erase marker that is used to write scriptures on the mirror along with truths about who she is. In this way, each woman will: Speak it. Apply it. Be it.

I know that every woman’s story is different; what we all see and think about ourselves is different when we look in the mirror. Whatever your story is, I know there is power in speaking the Word of God.

I am living proof that when God calls you to do something, He will sustain you throughout the process, and the reward is worth the hard work and heartache. Our Heavenly Father is waiting to walk with all of us as we journey to truly believe who we are and who we are to become. After all, we were created in His image, and we reflect His image and His glory.

“We can all draw close to Him with the veil removed from our faces. And with no veil we all become like mirrors who brightly reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus. We are being transfigured into His very image as we move from one brighter level of glory to another...” 2 Corinthians 3:18 (TPT)

God is doing something new in our culture, not just in the Church. He is in the business of reclaiming it ALL for His glory! This is just one, small way He is going to invade our culture. We are to be the hands and feet of Jesus, and He is going to use those who are yielded and postured for something greater than themselves! Are you willing to join Him in this invasion? Get ready!

SCRIPTURES FOR YOUR MIRROR

Below are a list of scriptures to choose from if you are struggling in certain areas.

Write them on your mirror and speak them out loud each time you look into it.

SPEAK IT, APPLY IT, BE IT!

#reclaimthemirror

Reclaim the Mirror

Worry

Refuse to worry about tomorrow, but deal with each challenge that comes your way, one day at a time. Tomorrow will take care of itself. Matthew 6:34

Doubt

Embrace the power of salvation's full deliverance, like a helmet to protect your thoughts from lies. Ephesians 6:17

Healing

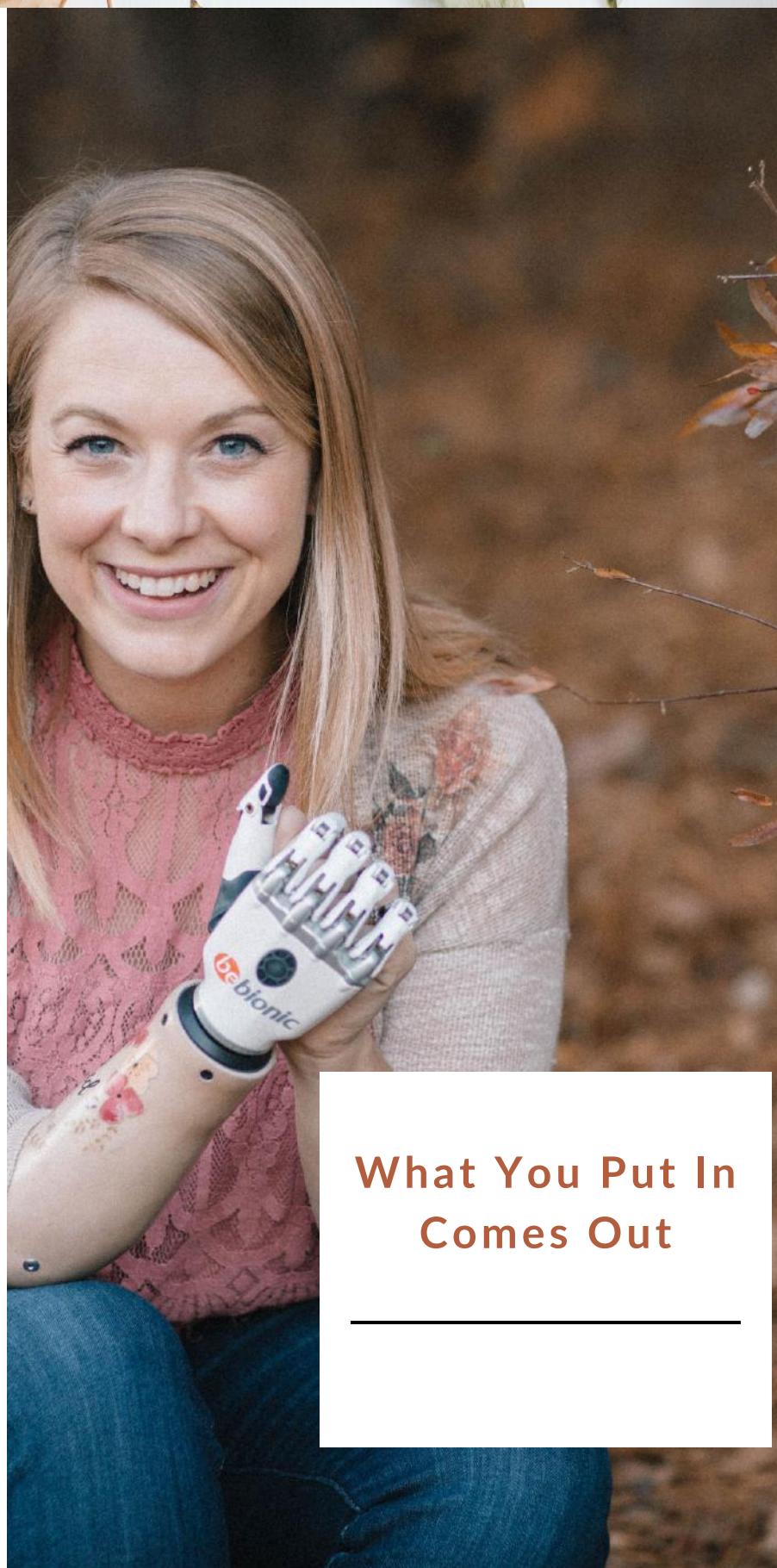
Fill your thoughts with my words until they penetrate deep into your spirit. Then as you unwrap my words they will impart true life and radiant health into the very core of your being. Proverbs 4:20

Lonely

And never forget that I am with you every day, even to the completion of this age. Matthew 28:20

For Many More Mirror Scriptures [Click Here](#)

Tiffany Johnson



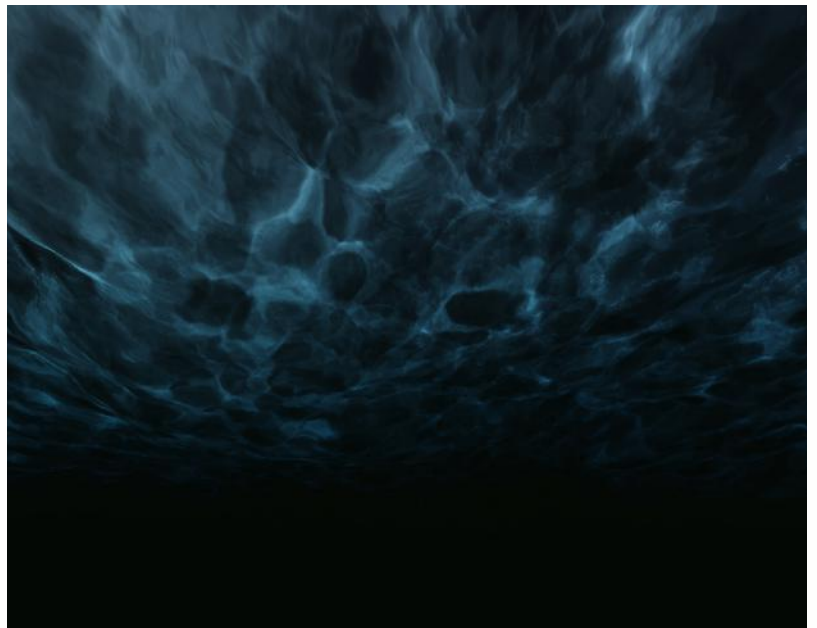
What You Put In
Comes Out

Anniversary Reprint From Sept/Oct Issue

BY TIFFANY JOHNSON

What You Put In Comes Out

I have heard this phrase a lot growing up. Usually, it was in reference to content from music, TV shows, and magazines and how cuss words and inappropriate content can seep into us the more we entertain it. Garbage in, garbage out. This is absolutely true and something we should pay attention to. But the opposite is also true - truth in, truth out. I have seen this proven time and time again. When we choose to be rooted in the word of God, His truth will come pouring out of us. I have personally seen this example come alive in me 6 years ago when I survived a shark attack. The moment that shark took my arm, the phrase "what you put in comes out" took on a whole new meaning.



What You Put In Comes Out

To give a little context, my husband and I were on a cruise just the two of us. We are intentional about getting away and investing in our marriage and that was this trip 6 years ago. We went out snorkeling at the last stop, Nassau, Bahamas. It was there that a seemingly normal day on vacation turned into a life altering event that should have ended my life. But God!

I remember crying out to Jesus in that water with half my arm missing as I was desperately trying to swim back after I had gotten free from the shark's jaws. I remember prayers flowing from my lips with every stroke I took. I had no time to think, it was just what came out of me. I remember being wheeled into the hospital after the 30 min boat ride to the port and watching the chaos of the emergency room staff trying to take care of me. Thoughts of fear came and I remember taking those thoughts captive and making them align with God's word just like 2 Corinthians 10:5 says.

“
Thoughts of fear came and
I remember taking those
thoughts captive and
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Corinthians 10:5 says.

TIFFANY JOHNSON

Tiffany Johnson is a gifted speaker, author, and singer who shares her message of hope and restoration with audiences worldwide.

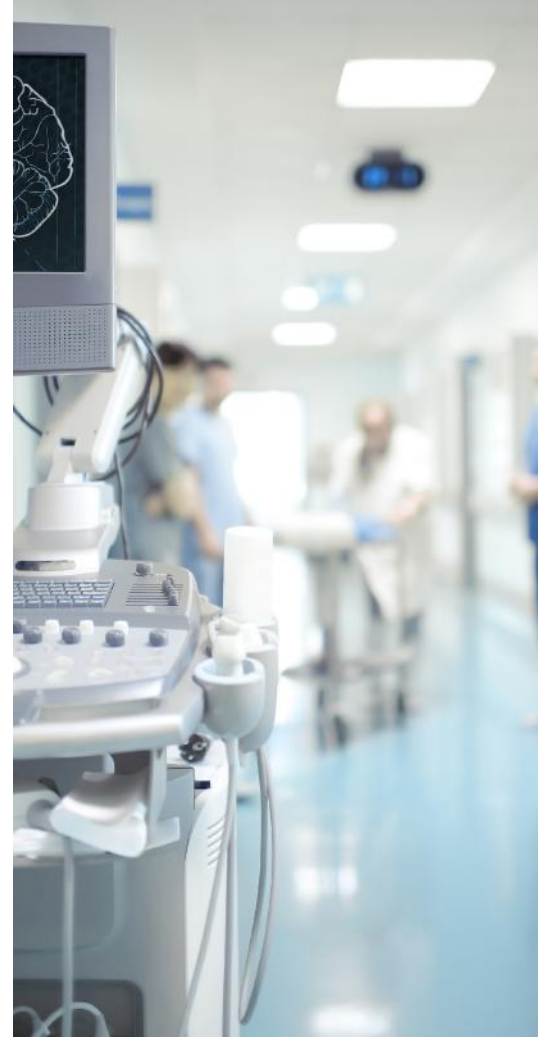
Her message focuses on how to overcome difficulties, deal with change and take practical steps to process it all.

Tiffany has been in a speaking/training role for over a decade. She and her husband James have 3 young children and reside in Charlotte, NC. They just recently launched Be An Overcomer Ministries aimed at helping others find hope and strength in challenging circumstances.



[Follow Tiffany on Instagram](#)

[Visit Tiffany's Website](#)



I didn't have time to pull out my Bible and research a scripture, it was coming alive in me because I had hidden it in my heart. I remember the next day when the ministry of tourism came into our hospital room and told us it is impossible for us to get back home for another 3 days, even though we had been told by the Bahama surgeon that we needed to get to an American doctor immediately. But I remember praying with my husband after she left the room and claiming scripture over our circumstance. We believed we served a God of the impossible and He could move the mountains in our way to get us back home.

And God did – less than 24 hours later, we were transported to the hospital in our hometown. It wasn't my own strength, or wisdom, or even spiritual maturity that was kicking in.

No, I know me - I am not that strong. But greater is Jesus that is in me than the one who had tried to take me out! It is in those moments where I can confidently say, what I put in was flowing out of me.





God Equips Us

See, as Christians we want to have strong faith. But we never really know the depth of our faith until it is tested. If you would have told me 10 years ago that I would have survived a shark attack and this is how I would respond, I would have told you that you're crazy! I am not strong enough to handle something like that. But it is in those times of crisis that the rubber meets the road and all the times spent with Jesus in prayer, worship, and studying His Word come flowing out. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."

God equips us through His word not only for the everyday moments of life, but for when the wind, rain, and all out storms come. The Holy Spirit calls to mind the biblical truth and promises we have already hidden in our hearts and all of a sudden, we see the fruit of all of the time we spent with Jesus.



You probably know the song, “Do It Again,” by Elevation Worship. That song became popular right before the shark attack. I remember listening to it on repeat! In fact, it got stuck in my head while we were on the cruise and I vividly remember belting it out when there was nobody around while my husband and I waited for the elevator one night. That had to be just a day or two before everything changed. I had no idea what was coming, I was just enjoying an amazing vacation with my husband. And yet the lyrics to that song were playing on repeat in my head. Lyrics that were saying to remember His promises, God is Faithful, and He won’t fail me. I didn’t know how much I would need that truth in my life just a day or two later. I wept later in the hospital bed as I recalled this song and the memory of me belting it out on the cruise. It was as if God had set it on repeat in me to remind me of His promises when I needed it the most.




Listen ladies, don’t put off your time with the Lord. Don’t let the devil trick you into thinking it doesn’t matter. Don’t busy your schedule so much so that you can’t spend time with Jesus. It is a necessity! Even when we don’t feel like we get a huge revelation or the “holy spirit goose bumps” after we have read the Bible or spent time praying & worshipping - He is faithful and His word does not return void. We may not always feel the immediate impact, but time with Jesus is never wasted time!



When we root ourselves in Jesus, who He is becomes who we are!

When we choose to fill ourselves with His word, spend time in worship, and talk to Jesus through prayer, we are getting deposits of peace, joy, love, strength, hope, confidence, patience, etc. The very characteristics of Jesus take root in our hearts and we are filled with God's power. That's how the same power that raised Christ from the dead lives in us (Eph 1:19-20). And that power activates in us when we need it. When we root ourselves in Jesus, who He is becomes who we are! And what does that look like?

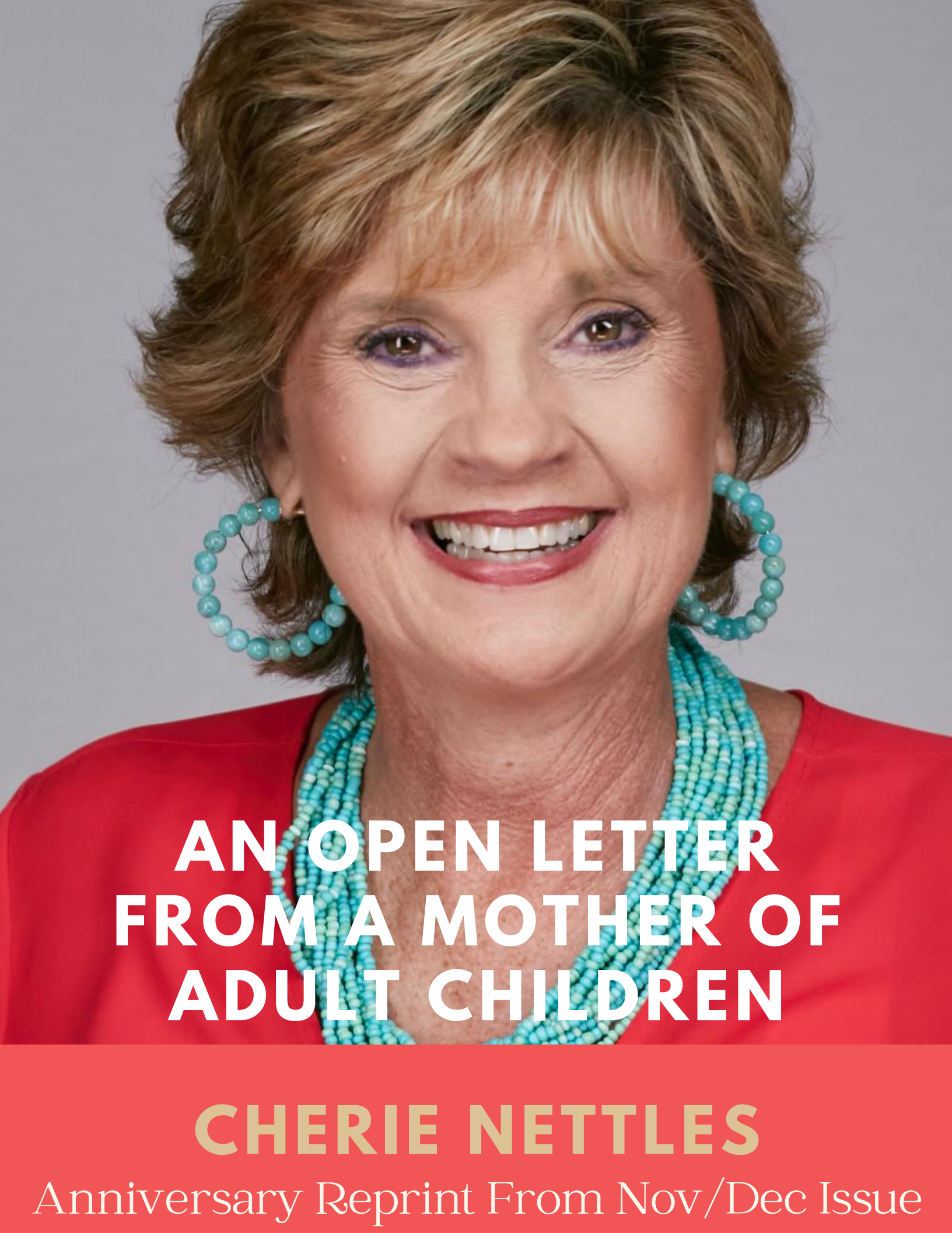
- A response of peace in the midst of chaos (Phil 4:7)
- An outpouring of love when being attacked (Luke 6:27-31)
- An overflowing joy when depression should be taking over (Psalm 16:10-11)
- Hope unfolding when the mountain looks unmovable (Matt 17:20)
- A renewed mind when PTSD tries to rear its head (Phil 4:8-9)



"As we root ourselves
in Him, we are
planting seeds for
things to come."

Are we going to be perfect at this? No. Will we always have the right response? Absolutely not. But God doesn't require perfection. He just wants a heart that is willing to follow Him. You may not know where to pick back up or even start with studying God's word. There are so many resources available for us from studies digitally on apps like the YouVersion Bible app to specific Bible reading plans to printed books we can use to journal our findings. One amazing resource I have found that has been incredibly helpful to me is the bible studies that Proverbs 31 Ministries develops on the different books of the Bible. Whatever you choose, just find something that challenges, encourages, and helps you dig into God's Word.

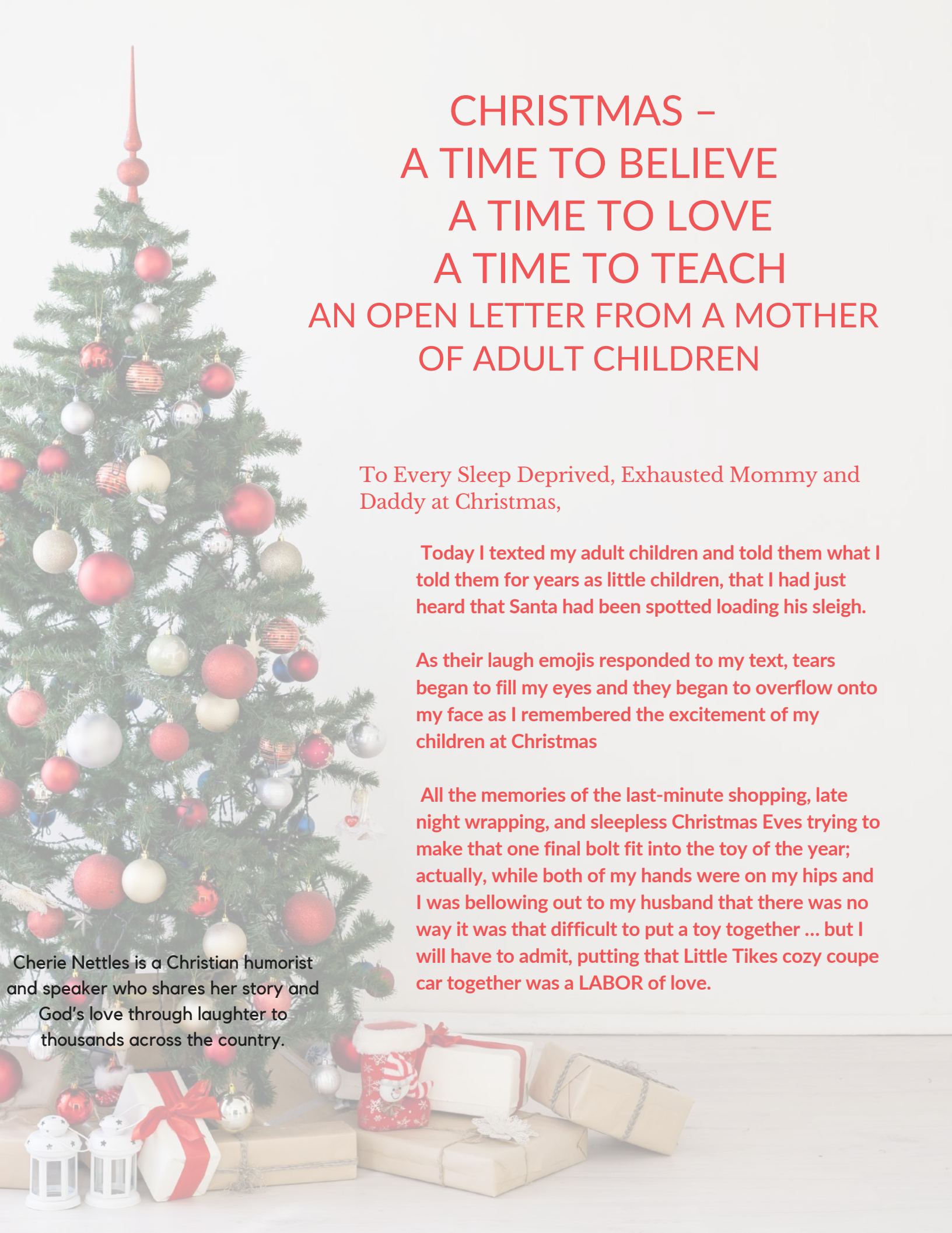
I want to encourage you as you read this that God is for you and not against you. He has the best in mind for you and knows exactly what you need. But we have a part to play in it. Our part is to continue to fix our eyes on Him, seek Him and study out His word. And as we spend time with Jesus, we will start to see a shift in our everyday responses. As we root ourselves in Him, we are planting seeds for things to come. So, I challenge you ladies to keep Jesus at the center. Keep yourself in community with others who will encourage you and lift you up. Keep pulling out your bible and studying His word. We will eventually see that what we put in will come out.

A close-up portrait of a woman with short, wavy, light brown hair. She is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. She is wearing a bright red top, a multi-strand necklace of light blue beads, and large hoop earrings made of light blue beads. The background is a plain, light gray.

**AN OPEN LETTER
FROM A MOTHER OF
ADULT CHILDREN**

CHERIE NETTLES

Anniversary Reprint From Nov/Dec Issue



CHRISTMAS –
A TIME TO BELIEVE
A TIME TO LOVE
A TIME TO TEACH
AN OPEN LETTER FROM A MOTHER
OF ADULT CHILDREN

To Every Sleep Deprived, Exhausted Mommy and
Daddy at Christmas,

Today I texted my adult children and told them what I
told them for years as little children, that I had just
heard that Santa had been spotted loading his sleigh.

As their laugh emojis responded to my text, tears
began to fill my eyes and they began to overflow onto
my face as I remembered the excitement of my
children at Christmas

All the memories of the last-minute shopping, late
night wrapping, and sleepless Christmas Eves trying to
make that one final bolt fit into the toy of the year;
actually, while both of my hands were on my hips and
I was bellowing out to my husband that there was no
way it was that difficult to put a toy together ... but I
will have to admit, putting that Little Tikes cozy coupe
car together was a LABOR of love.

Cherie Nettles is a Christian humorist
and speaker who shares her story and
God's love through laughter to
thousands across the country.

“I had to catch my breath, as I remembered why I believe so much in Christmas”.

I had to catch my breath, as I remembered why I believe so much in Christmas. The memories of the love that poured out of our hearts and into our home is the very love that fills the homes of my adult children and their families today.

Yes, Christmas is a time to believe and a time to love but Christmas is also, a time to teach. Christmas teaches us that:

1-Sleepless nights putting toys together is a sacrifice of love

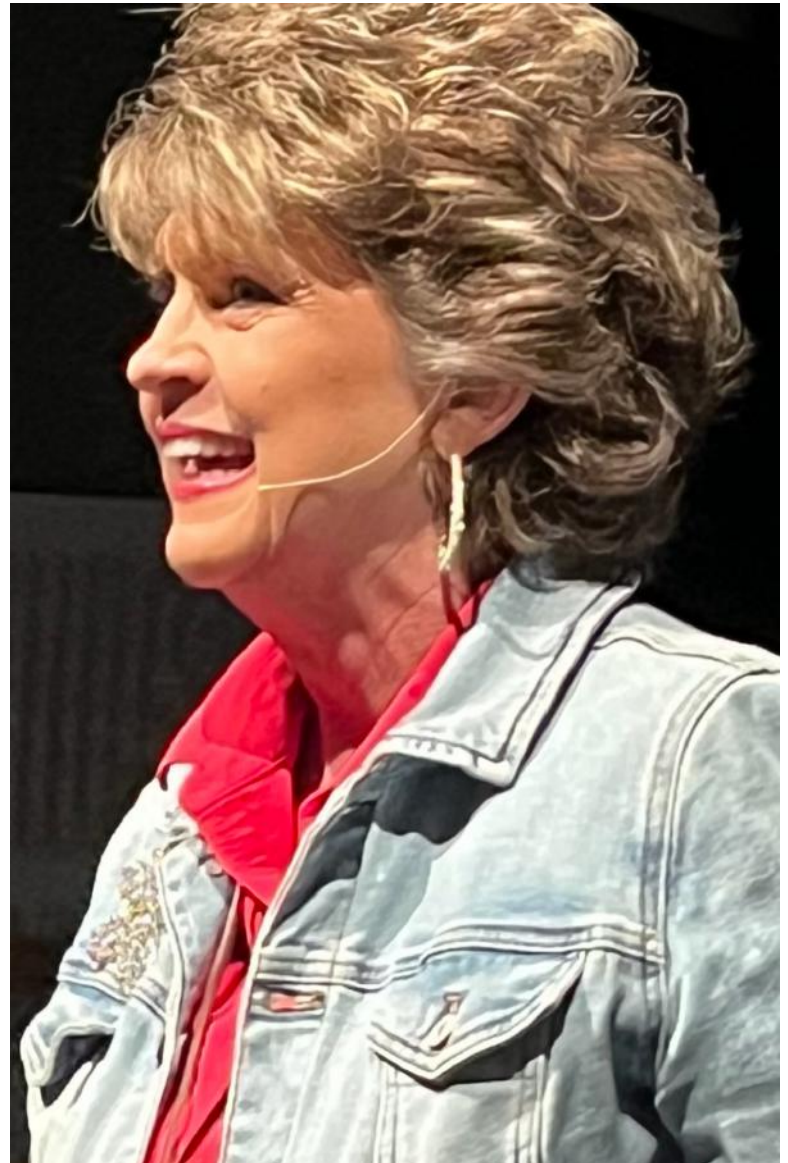
2-Late nights after Christmas programs are to be relished

3-Budgeting everything to the penny in the month of December and leaving gifts, your gifts, off is not a sacrifice but a blessings

4- The excitement and anticipation and even the 4:00 a m wake ups on Christmas morning are truly a gift to every parent.

5- Memories are the greatest gifts of all

6- And last-but-certainly-not least ...
Christmas teaches us ...



“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

So, you better watch out, you better not pout,
you better not cry
I am telling you why ...
I just heard today
That Santa is loading his sleigh!

7 Biblical Habits to remember daily during the Holidays:

1- On Monday be encouraging.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.

2- On Tuesday be flexible ... helping others by rearranging your plans.

Hebrews 6:10

God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.

3- On Wednesday be grateful.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

4- On Thursday be kind. Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another,

5- On Friday be forgiving.

Colossians 3:13

Bear with each other and forgive one another ... Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

6- Saturday is for sweetness.


Proverbs 16:24 (Saturday is chocolate day; on Saturday, we are counting blessings and not calories)

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

7- Sunday is for Praise. Psalm 103:1

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His Holy Name.



A photograph of a woman with long, wavy blonde hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a grey, textured knit sweater. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting, possibly a living room with a window and a tufted sofa.

**LAYING DOWN
STRIVING FOR
SURRENDERED EFFORT**

MICHELLE MYERS

Anniversary Reprint Jan/Feb Issue

LAYING DOWN STRIVING FOR SURRENDERED EFFORT

Life includes numerous roles and responsibilities. In the home alone, you can be nurse, teacher, chef, and taxi driver—all in the same five minutes. But can I ask you a question? When you look at “all the things,” do you ever get overwhelmed? Do you ever feel the pressure to find “balance” in your life, but don’t know where to begin?

I’ve been there, friend. I spent years trying to achieve life balance. But whenever I had a glimmer of hope that balance was in sight, our season would change, causing me to begin again. Can you relate?

MICHELLE’S WEBSITES + SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

she works HIS way: sheworksHisway.com

Network Marketing Nobility:

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Famous in Heaven and at Home book:

tinyurl.com/heavenandhomebook

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Twitter: [@michellelmyers](https://twitter.com/michellelmyers)



Michelle Myers is the founder of She Works His Way, a non-profit discipleship community for working women that exists to strengthen the churches (Acts 15:41) and stir one another up to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24) With the gospel as the foundation, Michelle helps puts practical steps to the ultimate goal of working for the glory of God and the good of others. Most recently, she co-authored a book with her best friend, Somer Phoebus, called She Works His Way: A Practical Guide for Doing What Matters Most in a Get Things Done World. She and her husband, James, live in Asheville, NC where James is the Central Discipleship Pastor at Biltmore Church, with their three children: Noah, Cole and Shea.

LAYING DOWN STRIVING FOR SURRENDERED EFFORT

michelle myers



“
*God never
intended me to
balance my life.*”

It's been an imperfect journey, but over the last few years, I've realized why I never achieved that life balance I strived so hard to find:

God never intended me to balance my life.

The word “balance” implies everything in your life has equal importance. But God's Word lovingly teaches about our priorities:

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” –
Matthew 6:33

In simple terms? Put God first, and He orders everything else.



I know I've spent a large portion of my life striving to get "all the things." Growing up, I strived for good grades and praise from adults. In my teen years, I added striving for extracurricular achievements, the right clothes, and popularity. Then, it was about getting into the right college, getting the right job, and getting married. The striving cycle continued into adulthood. I strived to be a great mom, to be a leader in my work, and to be an encouraging and influential voice within my church, my community, and on social media.

It wasn't necessarily that I wanted bad things. But my striving tried to accomplish good things in the wrong way. God doesn't want us to go about our lives striving for our own purposes, friend. The Christian life isn't about striving to be good so we "measure up" to deserve Jesus.

God knew that no matter how hard we tried, in our sin, we would all fall short of His glory, so he offers salvation as a free gift (Romans 3:23).

Jesus came to live the life we never could, to die the death we deserved, and to defeat the grave, so we could share in His righteousness and victory through our faith in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The gospel centers on surrender, and so should our lives. Through Jesus, God provides us a way out of the cycle of striving for our own goals that will never satisfy us. Instead, we can surrender to live for Him fully, which is the only way to find lasting satisfaction.

Striving is about me and what I want. Surrendered effort is about God and what He wants.



Surrendered effort is about God and what He wants.

Here are three ways I've discovered I can put this truth into practice:

1. Priorities aren't proven by merely a written list, but how we actually live.

If we don't live proactively, we will naturally default to living reactively. With reactive living, our priorities will change depending on the opinions and opportunities in front of us at that given moment. Proactive living allows us to keep our priorities by honoring them as we make decisions. For example, saying we prioritize family before work is easy.

But do we actually live that out? There will always be exceptions, but consider these questions:

- Are you more likely to make work wait because it's family time or more likely to cheat family time so you can get more done?
- Who gets your best and who gets your leftovers?

And here's the one that always gets me.

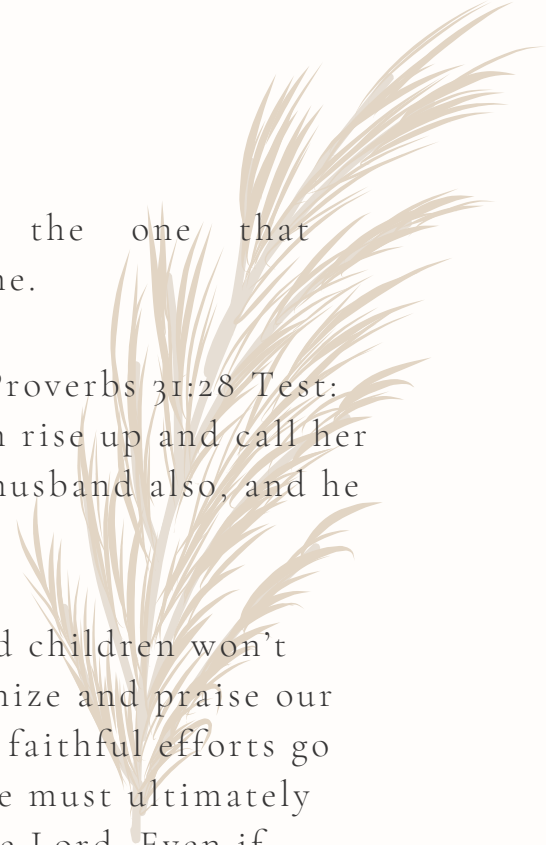
I call it the Proverbs 31:28 Test: "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her."

Husbands and children won't always recognize and praise our work. As our faithful efforts go unnoticed, we must ultimately work unto the Lord. Even if others around us aren't calling us "blessed," it's a question that challenges us to consider whether or not our family feels loved and cared for:

- From the way I lived my life today, would my highest earthly praise come from my family?

Deciding to live our priorities means that, most of the time, our big decisions are already made before specific situations arise.

John Maxwell said it best: "Learn to say 'no' to the good so you can say 'yes' to the best."



Surrender



2. Her life won't look exactly like yours (and that's a good thing!).

Social media is not terrible in itself, but just like a hammer is a useful tool in the hands of a carpenter but it becomes a dangerous weapon in the hands of your toddler, we must be careful not to let the ability to watch someone else live their life prevent us from living our own lives.

Too often, we fall for the lie that the unfulfilled feeling that rises up inside of us would leave if we just had that new job, or that natural ability, or if we were simply in that next season of raising kids.

But often, that unfulfilled feeling is simply because we aren't making the most of where we are right now. We can stop waiting for what's next or wanting more. Fully investing in where God has us now is far more fulfilling than waiting on things beyond our control.

In fact, a popular verse about "doing all things thought Christ" that we often see accompany victory is really about contentment more than achievement. Read the preceding verses:

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me." – Philippians 4:11-13

Contentment is much more likely to result from trusting God, no matter what, not in longing for another assignment.

3. Join God's main mission to find your specific assignment.

Most of us would prefer our own burning bush moment like Moses had or the blinding light on the road to Damascus that sparked the Apostle Paul's conversion. But those moments are the exceptions in the Bible, not the rule.

Think of it this way. If you played a sport when you were younger, you joined a team first, and then, you were assigned a position.

So ask yourself: Are you asking God for a specific position without showing up to be a part of the team?

Jesus put it this way:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" – Matthew. 28:18-20



This is God's agenda.

So when we find ourselves in those new seasons, trying to identify where God wants to use us, we can aim to be obedient to His general call to all believers.

Right where He has us.

Right now.

You know the beautiful part of the Great Commission? God doesn't ask any of us to take on this giant task alone. As Christ-followers, we come together, knowing God has uniquely placed and called each of us to be His representative to those around us.

“Surrendered effort leads you to the only One who satisfies.”

For some, God's call will mean actually picking up and going to the ends of the earth to spread the gospel.

For others, it will mean pursuing intentional discipleship in their homes and their local churches.

Both matter, and both are needed. There are no insignificant Kingdom contributions.

God doesn't merely love what is big; He loves what is His.

Please know the work you do to display the gospel, whether leading a Bible study for hundreds, or reading a Bible story to your kids at bedtime, is eternally significant.

There is a very real battle for your heart happening. The world's view often makes us believe that our impact is attached to doing “more.”

But God's truth reminds us that our impact is tied to doing less of most things so we can do more of what really matters.

So the next time you find yourself navigating “all the things”, remember this:

**Striving will never satisfy you.
Surrendered effort leads you to the only One who satisfies.**



Lauren Diggs

**simple
but significant**

Anniversary Reprint March/April Issue



simple but significant

“Make it simple but significant.” Wise words once spoken to me by the Titus 2 woman in my life. *If you don’t have a woman like that in your life, ask the Lord to show you one, buy her a coffee and be encouraged and strengthened by her wisdom in the Lord!

In the early years of marriage we were too poor to afford a babysitter for date nights so, Stephen and I would have our date night at home. We even gave it a title: Wing Night because we would cook up a couple of boxes of Tyson’s hot wings and watch whatever movie we got in our mailbox from Netflix. Remember those days?! Then, we would put the kids to bed and have our date night. It was affordable, it was fun, and most of all, it was simple. Simple, but significant.

We would hold hands walking into the store or while driving in the car or as we sat next to each other on the couch.

Simple, but significant.

Sometimes, we would leave handwritten notes in places the other would find later in the day.

Simple, but significant.

Or we’d buy a favorite snack or drink for the other just because.

Simple, but significant.

These little, simple moments throughout our twenty-three years of marriage don’t look like much but they hold some of our laugh-until-we-cry-moments, some of our deepest conversations, and some of our most precious memories.



This kind of love is stirred up in the simple, everyday choices we make. Simple doesn't mean easy, but easy almost never leads to anything significant.

When we surrender our simple but intentional thoughts and actions to the Lord, He will always produce results greater than what we ever could on our own.

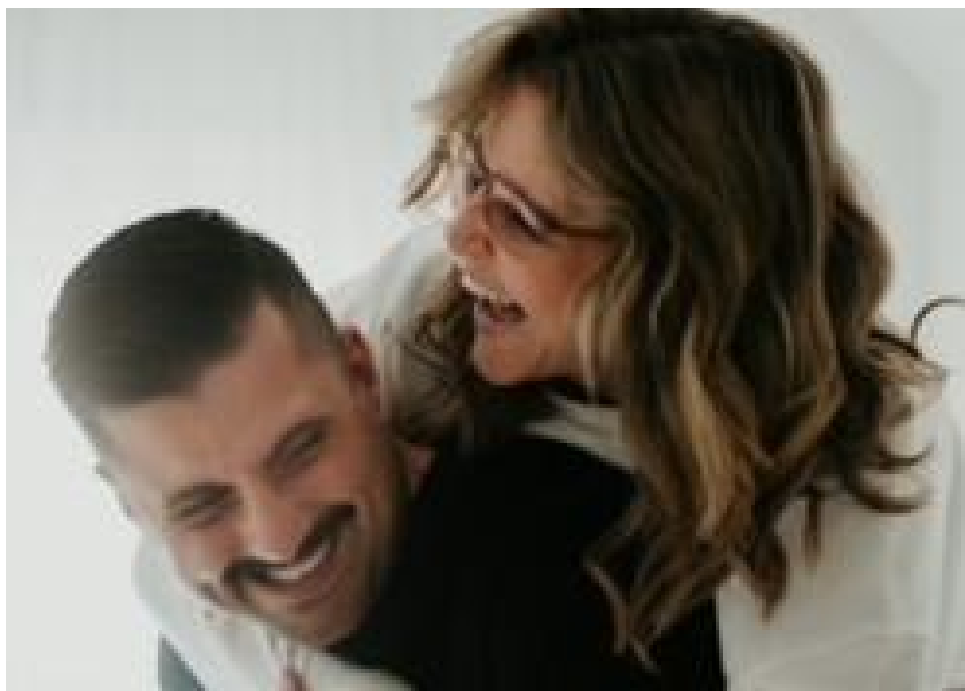
So, choose to honor God and your spouse in the simple things today and watch God produce something significant.

In this with you—LD

But more than what these simple moments held for us, is what they cultivated. A deep and significant love for one another grew from the everyday choices we made to love each other in spite of our feelings or circumstances, to count the other as more significant than ourselves, and to look to each other's interests, not just our own—Philippians 2:3-4 doesn't play around!

I'm not talking about the kind of love carried on the fleeting wings of butterflies, but the kind of love that has endured remarkable pain along with remarkable healing. It's the kind of love that has suffered the deepest betrayal only to be met with overflowing grace and God-sized redemption. It's the kind of love that questioned over and over again, "Why?" and "How long, Lord?" to find the answer to those questions may never come on this side of Heaven but that our security isn't in answers, it's in Christ alone and the hope He gives. It's the kind of love that makes a multitude of mistakes but continues to offer a multitude of forgiveness through God's grace.

**SIMPLE DOESN'T MEAN
EASY, BUT EASY ALMOST
NEVER LEADS TO
ANYTHING SIGNIFICANT.**



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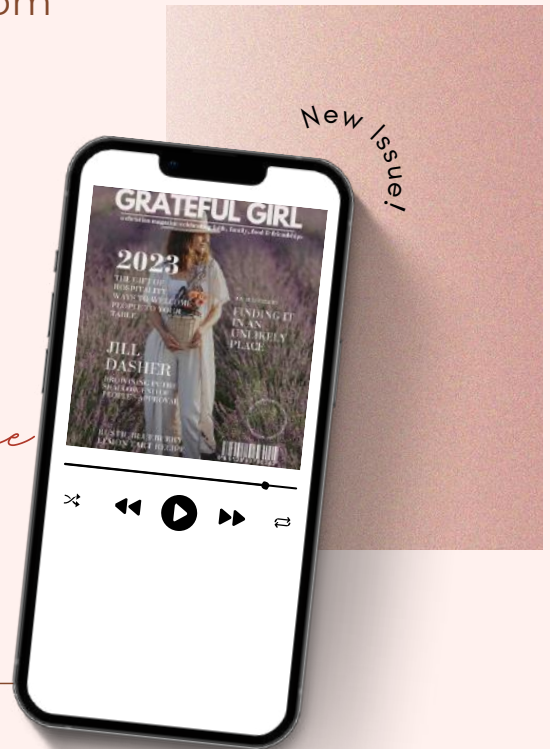
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