

VOLUME 3

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023

GRATEFUL GIRL

a christian magazine celebrating faith, family, food & friendships

FINISHED SEASONS

NICKI KOZIARZ
PROVERBS31 MINISTRY

TIFFANY JOHNSON

WHAT YOU PUT IN
COMES OUT

UPON CLOSER
INSPECTION
TARA LORENCEN

*ALSO IN THIS
ISSUE:*

*EXCLUSIVE
WITH
KAY ROBERTSON*

LAELA DASHER

FALL RECIPES

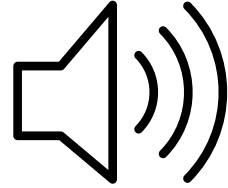
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welcome



Welcome to the 3rd issue of the Grateful Girl Magazine!

Thank you for being here! As I write this, September has just begun and it's one of my favorite months! So many good things about September! The weather is beautiful with bright blue skies and crisp morning air. September is a busy month for me with my children's anniversaries and the Grateful Girl Gathering Women's Conference. September also brings sadness each year as I remember the passing of my mother. I suppose September is an example for me that you can have both good and bad in a situation or month, or relationship, or church... and it still be special to you. In other words, nothing is perfect.

This month's issue is filled with amazing contributors! Last month I was honored to be invited to the premiere of *The Blind* movie. *The Blind* Movie is a Christian movie about Kay and Phil Robertson (you may know them from *Duck Dynasty*) and Phil's fall and redemption story. It's powerful! We are honored to have an exclusive Q&A with Miss Kay in month's issue. Be sure to check out the *Blind* movie page after her article for links to get your tickets early! Did you know buying your tickets early sends a message to movie theaters that we want to see more Christian movies in their theaters.

Our three amazing speakers from the Grateful Girl Gathering have contributed articles in this issue and I can tell you now, they are good! If you had a chance to attend the Grateful Girl Gathering this year, you will enjoy another chance to hear from them.

If you have a college age daughter or granddaughter, be sure to share Laela Dasher's article with them. Laela is a college student and also an incredible worship singer with the Live Original (LO) Worship team. She gets real and honest in her article about our tendencies to want to run from God rather to Him when we sin.

And course we have new printables for Fall to download, print and frame for your home or a friend and two recipes you can print or Pin to Pinterest!

It's a full issue and I hope that you will take the time to read each page and also share with a friend! Be sure to visit with our Magazine Partners in our Partner Directory! They are pouring into this ministry because they want to see Jesus lifted high and shared far and wide. Tell them thank you when you can!

Now it's time to start turning the pages and enjoying all that these women of God have to share with you in this issue! Enjoy!

Patti Jensen

EDITOR/CREATOR/GRATEFUL GIRL

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THE WOMAN BEHIND THE BLIND

**AN EXCLUSIVE WITH
KAY ROBERSTON**

THE WOMAN BEHIND THE BLIND

We were honored to have an exclusive Q&A with “Miss Kay” Robertson leading up to the release of the new Christian movie “The Blind”. The movie is based on the life of Kay and Phil Robertson and shares never-before-revealed moments in Phil’s life as he seeks to conquer the shame of his past, ultimately finding redemption in an unlikely place.

GG Magazine: What are your hopes for the movie in regard to how it is received?

Miss Kay: Number one, we want the movie to help people and to show that even through the bad you can get to the good. I’m praying that maybe someone who wouldn’t show up at church might choose to come and see this movie and be changed by the grace of God. When we were debating about whether or not to go through with this project the one thing that pushed us to say yes was the hope that even one person could be changed by this story. Stories of redemption are our way to share with the world the saving grace of Jesus.

GG Magazine: What is the most difficult part about telling a hard testimony? What are the rewards you have seen in your own life?

Miss Kay: I think it’s hard to just open it all up. You’ve got this deep dark memory that you haven’t shared and then all of a sudden you open it up and it’s not easy. But once you do you’re so glad that you did, because you see the impact it can have on other people who have or are currently going through something similar. So many people would say things like “I didn’t know that you struggled with what I’m struggling with and you’re telling me that you can make it through?” I then have the opportunity to share my faith with them, because that is the only way I made it through those hard years. The first 10 years were terrible and I often wondered if things would ever change, but I didn’t give up. Growing up I was very close to my grandmother, she practically raised me, and she always talked about having to fight for your marriage. I didn’t really understand what she meant then, but I sure do now.

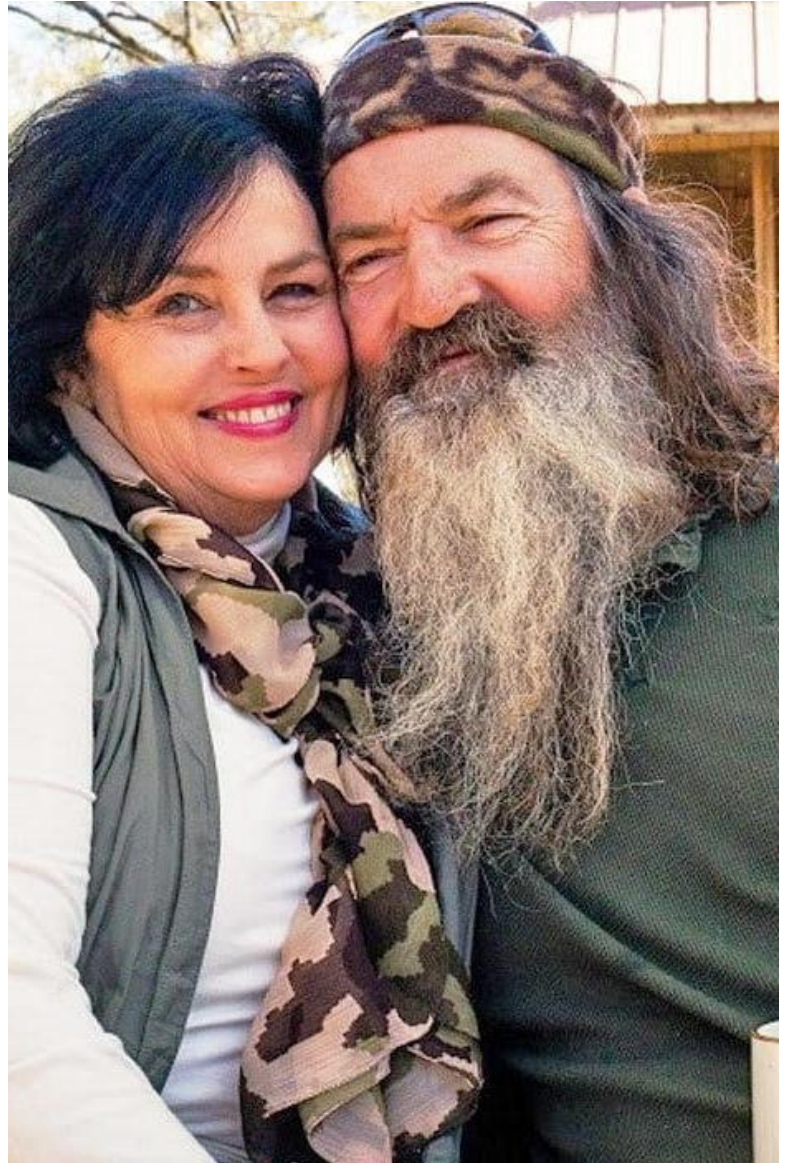
“You can’t get through life without the Lord.”

GG Magazine: What is your favorite scene in the movie and why?

Oh man, this is tough, but I would have to say the “bathroom scene.” This was the lowest point in my life and yet somehow the beginning of the greatest moment. I don’t want to give too much away about this scene, but I will just say that I was struggling with some very dark thoughts until my sister-in-law spoke words of truth over me that, for the first time in my life, brought a sense of hope to my soul. The impact that Jan (my sister-in-law) had in my life is too enormous for words. She loved the Lord with all of her heart and never gave up on her brother Phil. She always said that if Phil ever came to the Lord that he would bring thousands with him. She was right.

GG Magazine: If a woman finds herself in the same kind of life that Miss Kay was living during her early married years, what are some words that could speak encouragement to them?

You cannot get through something like this without the Lord. You can’t get through life without the Lord. I had to realize all those years ago that I had to learn to put God first and to ask others for help. Sometimes as woman we have a hard time asking for help, we tend to keep it all hidden and then Satan uses that against us. He tells us that no one would want to help someone like us or that our situation is hopeless. He is a liar. Look for a mentor who has wisdom and one that loves the Lord.



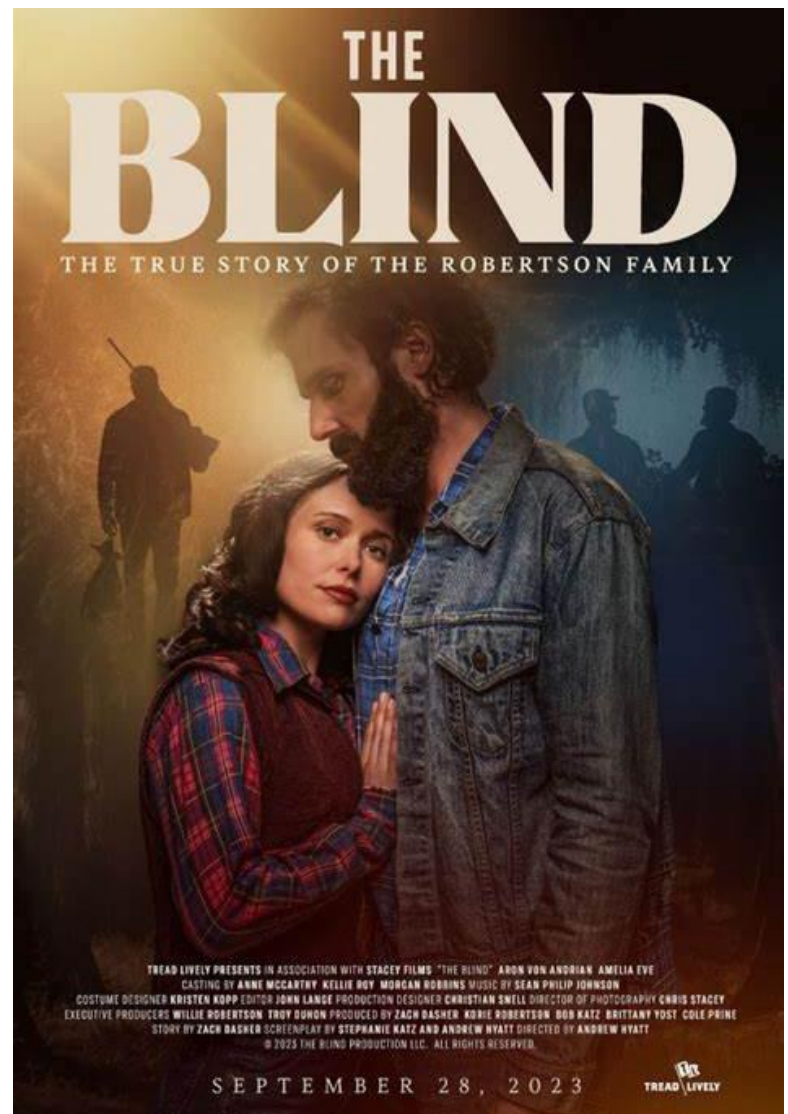
“God will refine anything that is placed in his hand.”

GG Magazine: What is your go-to scripture when things get hard in your life?

Miss Kay: Phil 4:13

GG Magazine: For the daughters, granddaughters, nieces and other women of the Robertson family, how has the story of Phil and Miss Kay affected their lives, marriages and their walk with God?

Miss Kay: It's hard to answer that question without tearing up. My daughter-in-laws are like the daughters I never had and my granddaughters are just the sweetest blessings this side of heaven. I think that mine and Phil's story has, more than anything, taught them about patience. Life and marriage are a process and almost nobody has it down just right, especially in the beginning. Knowing what Phil and I went through taught them to not give up. We live¹ in a world that is quick to move on to something better. A world that is always looking for the next best thing and I have come to learn that most of the time “the next best thing,” is actually what you already have. It just needs a little fine tuning. God will refine anything that is placed in his hand. The problem is that we so often hold onto all of our pain, pride, and problems and refuse to give them over to the only one who can restore them.



GG Magazine: Any additional thoughts you would like to share with our readers?

Miss Kay: God's people need each other. We were not made to live in isolation and we were not made to walk through this life alone. It's important to plug into a local church and to develop relationships with mature Godly women who have lived a little longer than you. Their wisdom is worth gold and they will love to share it with you. Most of all I want anyone reading this to know that they are not alone. We all have our share of hurt, heartache, and pain. That is the result of living in a broken world, but we do not have to be defined by our darkest moments. God can and wants to work in and through you no matter what you are going through. It may not be an easy process, but it will definitely be worth it.

THE BLIND

THE TRUE STORY OF THE ROBERTSON FAMILY



GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!



Help movie theaters across the U.S. know that there is a demand for movies like The Blind! Early ticket sales gets their attention!



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BLIND MOVIE?



Visit The Blind movie website for videos, movie stills, links and more!

BRING THE BLIND TO YOUR CHURCH



Available to host September 28 -October 8 if you are located 25 miles from a movie theater.

WATCH THE BLIND MOVIE TRAILER

IN THEATERS SEPTEMBER 28TH

THE BLIND shares never-before-revealed moments in Phil's life as he seeks to conquer the shame of his past, ultimately finding redemption in an unlikely place. Tickets On Sale Now!



OFFICIAL TRAILER





FINISHED SEASONS

Nicki Koziarz, Proverbs31 Ministries

EXCLUSIVE

NICKI KOZIARZ

Nicki Koziarz is a wife and mom to three girls plus a few barnyard babies. She lives just outside of Charlotte, NC. A best-selling author and inspirational Bible teacher with Proverbs 31 Ministries, Nicki is a woman focused on communicating the gospel effectively and powerfully.

Across the country Nicki speaks at retreats, conferences, leadership forums and online events. Her teachings inspire you to know God's word more and to live life with a deeper trust and hope in God.

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WWW.NICKIKOZIARZ.COM



There's a valid question a lot of people find themselves asking: "When this season of my life ends, what am I supposed to do next?"

In the present, as my three daughters continue to grow up, my role as parent has shifted, and I find myself tossing that question around in my mind.

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



finished seasons

Aln the past, when a job I held for five years was coming to an end, I felt like I asked that question every day.

And when I look into the future and see other various roles that could be ending soon, the question lingers over my calendar.

Seasons come and go. But sometimes we struggle to know just how long we should hold on to a season because we can't see what's ahead.

Life is a constant ebb
and flow of learning
to let go of what's
done and seek what is
still yet to be.

NICKI KOZIARZ

Letting go of a season is challenging, especially if it's something we really love doing or being a part of. It's even harder if our identity has become attached to that season, and we wonder if we bring value anywhere else.

Here's something I've come to understand about seasons in our lives — as hard as it can be, there's always a way to finish a season well.

Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes 7:8, knew that the human heart tends to romanticize the past.

finished seasons



Often, as things in our current season of life begin to change when we don't want them to, we will hold on to all of the best things about that season. Which isn't always bad ... but sometimes it can keep us from seeing the potential of the future.

“Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.” (Ecclesiastes 7:8)

Solomon gives us wisdom about patience and surrendering to God's pace and plan for seasons in our lives. Every beginning starts with the ending of something else, and finishing seasons well is something we should take time to consider.

Just like when seasons on earth transition from one to the next — like summer to fall — there is evidence of change. In some parts of the world, the leaves change colors, or the temperature fluctuates, and even the amount of daylight goes from more to less. There will be signs your season is changing too.

.You may feel like you are out of ideas, like you've done all you can do. Or you may get a sense from the Lord that it's time to move on to what is next. Sometimes when people hold on to seasons for too long, those people can become easily frustrated or even angry.

Once we realize a season is changing, how do we finish that season well? The second half of today's key verse has some insight for us:

“... and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit” (Ecclesiastes 7:8).

finished seasons

Often pride holds us back from an honest conversation with God about the direction of our life. Pride can also convince us that who and where we've been could never match what God has planned ahead for us.

When we have a patient and humble heart, we can ask God for His help in learning to let go of what needs to be let go. To get our hopes up about what is still to come. And we can confidently ask Him, "What's next?" – trusting He hears that question and will answer it in His timing.

These are some signs of finishing a season well.

We don't live in yesterday; we live in today. God was there, and God is here. Life is a constant ebb and flow of learning to let go of what's done and seek what is still yet to be.

I don't have all the answers to what's ahead in my life, and there are things I am struggling to let go of – like the good things each of my seasons has held.

And you may feel this tension in your soul too..



But I know that, with God, we can finish these seasons well and hold on to hope for what God has planned for us next.

God, thank You for our seasons of life. Help us to know when it's time to finish and how to finish well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

FOR DEEPER STUDY

Ecclesiastes 7:1, "A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of birth." (ESV)
Proverbs 14:29, "Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly." (ESV)
What is an example of a season in your life that you finished well? Is there a season you sense is finished in your life today?

finished seasons



In the space between no longer and not yet, you still belong somewhere.

It catches most of us by surprise. Life is going along until suddenly we find ourselves at the crossroads of what was and what is yet to be. This in-between space of transition often keeps us awake at night, asking questions like What am I supposed to do now? and Why do I feel so lost and alone? If a new direction doesn't come, it can feel like you're stuck in a cycle of purposeless days.

Bestselling author and Bible teacher Nicki Koziarz asked those same questions. Changes were coming in multiple areas of her life, and she struggled to navigate through them. But Nicki discovered how to find direction for today by understanding the types of seasons a transition can bring.

In [Your New Now](#), readers will study Moses's life through the perspective of four transition seasons he experienced: development, separation, cultivation, and finished. With practical advice, relatable stories, and biblical wisdom, this book will help you:

- Discern which transition season you're in and learn how to overcome its challenges
- Stop feeling lost in life by discovering where you belong on the road between what was and what will be
- Protect your future by learning to utilize Scripture to fight fears of the unknown

Transitions start with something ending, and waiting for a new beginning can be agonizing. But you can learn to be confident and optimistic, even when life feels like it's paused in an unfamiliar now.

Download and print your own coloring bookmarks



Tiffany Johnson

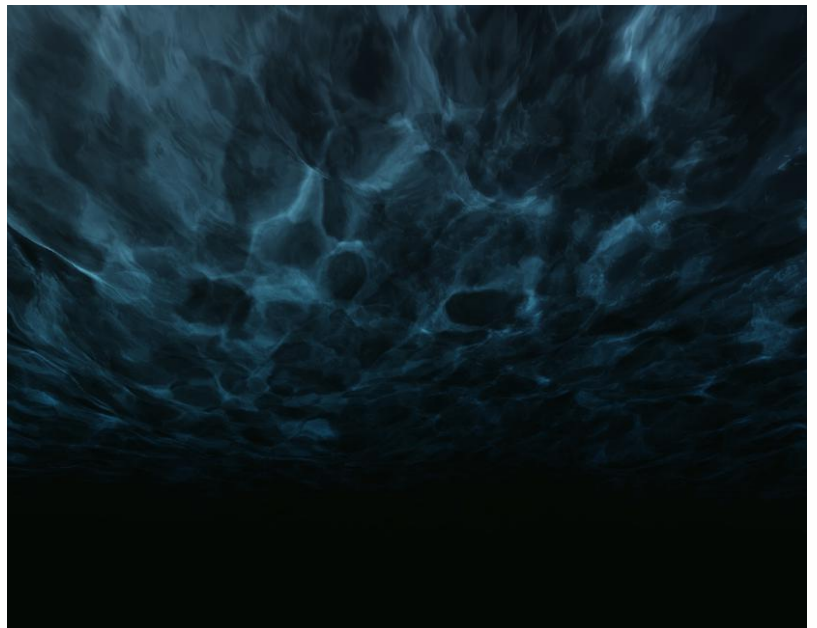


What You Put In
Comes Out

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.

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Thoughts of fear came and
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TIFFANY JOHNSON

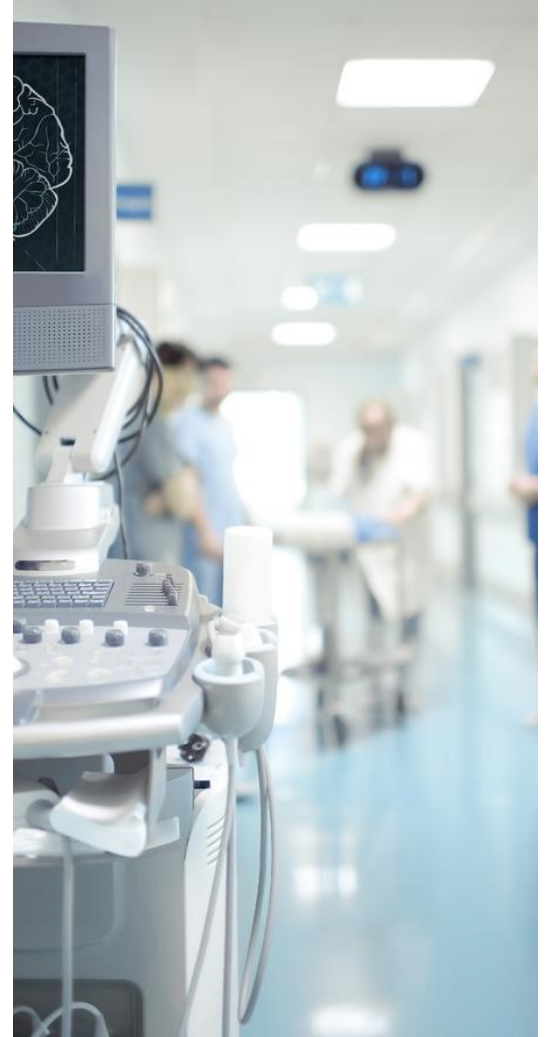
Tiffany Johnson is a gifted speaker, author, and singer who shares her message of hope and restoration with audiences worldwide.

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.



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[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.



A dynamic splash of clear blue water against a white background, with droplets and bubbles scattered throughout. The splash originates from the bottom right and moves towards the top left, creating a sense of movement and energy.

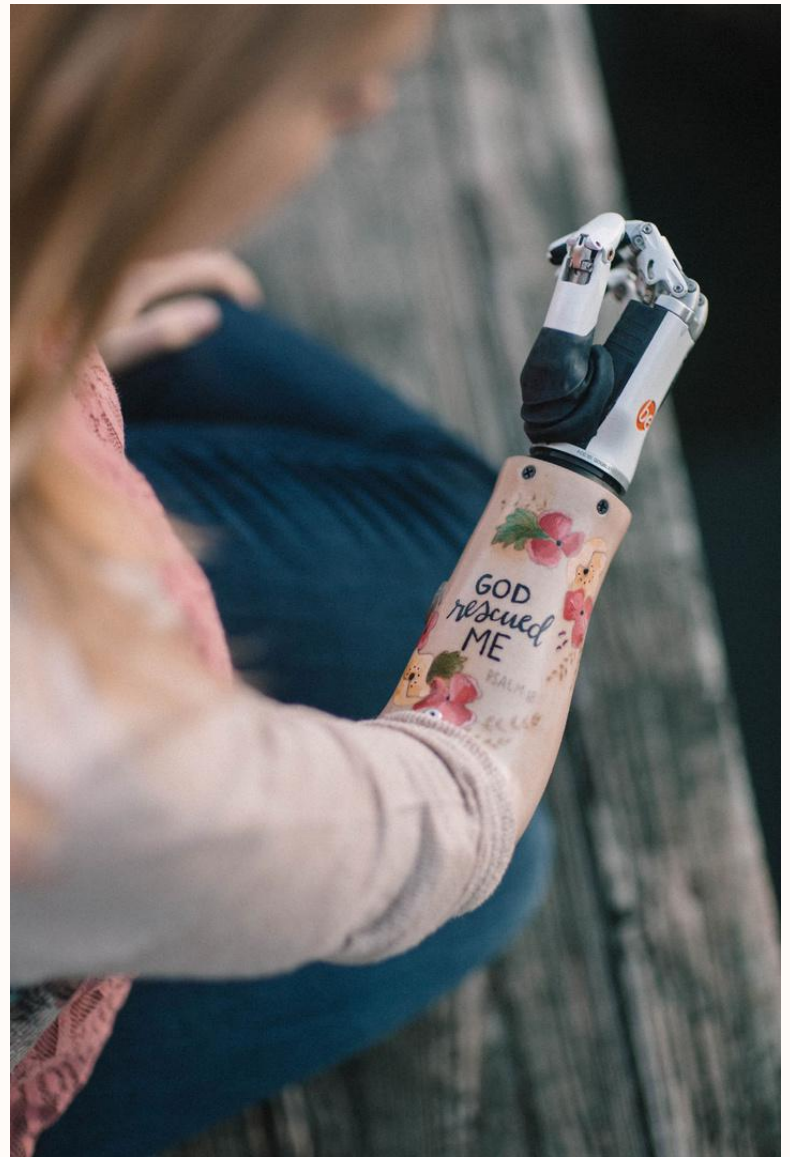
God Equips Us

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.





5-Minute Dark Chocolate Cereal Bars

Running short on time from a busy schedule shouldn't mean skipping out on your favorite desserts. In fact, it should be all the more reason to enjoy a sweet treat as a reward for all that hard work.

When you're due for a bite into dark chocolate goodness, all it takes is a few minutes out of your day to make 5-Minute Dark Chocolate Cereal Bars. This quick and simple dessert makes it easy to celebrate the day's accomplishments without added stress.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 10 ounces marshmallows
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 6 cups cereal
- 4 ounces milk chocolate, melted
- 4 ounces dark chocolate, melted

DIRECTIONS

Heat saucepan over low heat. Add butter, marshmallows and peanut butter; stir to combine. Add cereal; mix until coated.

Line 9-by-13-inch pan with parchment paper. Add cereal mixture to pan.

In bowl, mix milk chocolate and dark chocolate. Drizzle chocolate over cereal mixture; spread evenly then allow to cool.

Cut into bars and serve.

Rooted

SEPTEMBER
9-9-23



GRATEFUL GIRL GATHERING

SEPT 9, 2023
9 am

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31 Cross Street

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upon
closer
inspection

tara
lorencen

If Jesus came passing by our lives, would our outward appearance match our inward affections? Or upon closer inspection, would we be found lacking?

GRATEFUL GIRL

tara lorencen



Upon Closer Inspection

Fruit. The Bible speaks of it often. Sometimes it speaks of fruit regarding the ripening, sweet produce of a tree or plant, but most often it speaks of fruit regarding the outward manifestation of a Christian's faith. The Bible assumes that this kind of fruit will be produced. Jesus himself seems to expect it. So, as we examine our lives, we must ask ourselves, "Is it there?" Are we living lives so firmly rooted in the truth and love of Christ that fruit abounds, or do our lives look more like barren wastelands desperate for the living water that only comes from the True Vine?

In Mark chapter 11, Jesus is beginning the very last week of his earthly life. On that Sunday, he has triumphantly entered Jerusalem. The people heralded his arrival, welcoming Him as both Savior and King. Little did they know, in just a few short days, many people, in likely that same crowd, would instead be shouting, "Crucify Him!"

“

Little did they know, in just a few short days, many people, in likely that same crowd, would instead be shouting, “Crucify Him!”

They didn't see this change of events coming, but Jesus did.



Talk about a whirlwind of events... The crowd didn't expect it. They didn't see this change of events coming, but Jesus did. He knew the outward display of their affection did not match the inward posture of their hearts.

Jesus, then traveled to the temple. The site reserved for the most holy worship. The site reserved for the actual presence of God. But scripture tells us once Jesus gets to this long-awaited place of worship, He looks around and simply leaves. Later, we find out their beloved temple had been turned into a greedy marketplace by the religious leaders charged with guarding its sanctity.

The next morning, Jesus and the disciples head back to the temple. But on the way there we have what seems to be one of the oddest accounts in the Gospels and perhaps the most controversial of Jesus' miracles. Mark 11 tells us that Jesus becomes hungry. He sees a fig tree in the distance with leaves on it, so He walks over to it. But upon closer inspection, Jesus sees that there are not any figs on the tree. So, what does our Lord do? He curses the tree! He says, "May no one ever eat from you again! (v.14)"

Huh. That seems a bit out of character, right? Critics have used this account in the gospels to assert that clearly Jesus was not who He claimed to be. The Son of God would not have thrown this sort of "tantrum." The long, awaited Messiah wouldn't have been angered by an innocent tree. This story has been used as "evidence" by many that Jesus was not the perfect Savior to which His followers profess allegiance.

upon closer inspection



Do those accusations have any merit? Was Jesus just getting “hangry” and throwing a little temper tantrum like perhaps many of us have been known to do a time or two. Of course, not.

Undoubtedly, Jesus being the greatest teacher of all time took the opportunity to provide those disciples and us with an object lesson, an acted out parable. Why? Because fruit is important to Jesus. Although that fig tree looked promising, although it had leaves which were usually indicative of fruit, it was barren. Fruitless. Much like the people who had heralded his arrival, and much like the temple that the religious leaders had turned into a den of thieves. The outward did not match the inward. And when the tree was found lacking, the consequences were great and even eternal. The tree was to never produce fruit ever again.

What about us? If Jesus came passing by our lives, would our outward appearance match our inward affections? Would our church attendance, tithing, and acts of service prove to be cultivated from hearts that are desperately consumed with love for our Savior? Or upon closer inspection, would we be found lacking?

At times, we may be able to fool our families and friends into thinking that we are fully committed disciples of Jesus by what they see from a distance, but 1 Samuel 16:7 clearly states, “People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart (NIV).” Jesus desires for our hearts to become so firmly rooted in the soil of His truth and His love that we cannot help but produce fruit. It doesn’t work the other way around. Sustainable fruit can only be produced from the inside out. Without hearts firmly rooted in love for Jesus, our displays of obedience will begin to feel to heavy. The disconnect will cause us to tire of keeping up the appearance of being something that we truly are not. That is a burden Jesus does not want us to bear.

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (v.24).”

“As we continue reading in Mark 11, the next day, the disciples and Jesus again pass by that same fig tree, and the disciples seem surprised that it is indeed “withered to its roots” (vs.20). Jesus responds to their astonishment, by telling them to have faith in God. He tells them that if they have faith, they can tell a mountain to move and be thrown into the sea, and it will be so! On the surface, this seems like an odd response, but what Jesus is explaining is that genuine fruit will always be the result of genuine faith. And if there is anything in our hearts obstructing the production of fruit, we can tell it to move in faith, and it will be so!

Today you may look at your life and wonder if you would be found lacking upon closer inspection. If that’s you, take heart. There is still time to get your roots more firmly planted in the truth and love of Jesus. He greatly desires to cultivate within you the capacity to bear more fruit than you ever thought possible. He just wants you to have enough faith to ask Him to do it. That is probably why His concluding remark to his disciples was “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (v.24).” So, go ahead, ask Him. Just ask him. Then, nourish your soul in the continual supply of His Word. Bask in the light of His never-ending love for you. And as you begin to ripen with praise for the work that He is doing within you, you can be sure that outward fruit is on the way.



Tara is a women’s ministry leader in Johnson City, TN and regional speaker. Her passion is teaching God’s Word and encouraging women in their relationship with Jesus. She testifies to the life changing power of studying the Bible.

Tara is a seminary graduate with a Master’s degree in Church Ministries. She and her husband have two little girls and are currently fostering a precious one year old little boy.



2 (or 3) Ingredient Pumpkin Bread

Truly. Just two ingredients (or 3 if you want to jazz it up with chocolate chips) and you have yummy pumpkin bread! Save this recipe! You are going to want to use it again and again!

INGREDIENTS

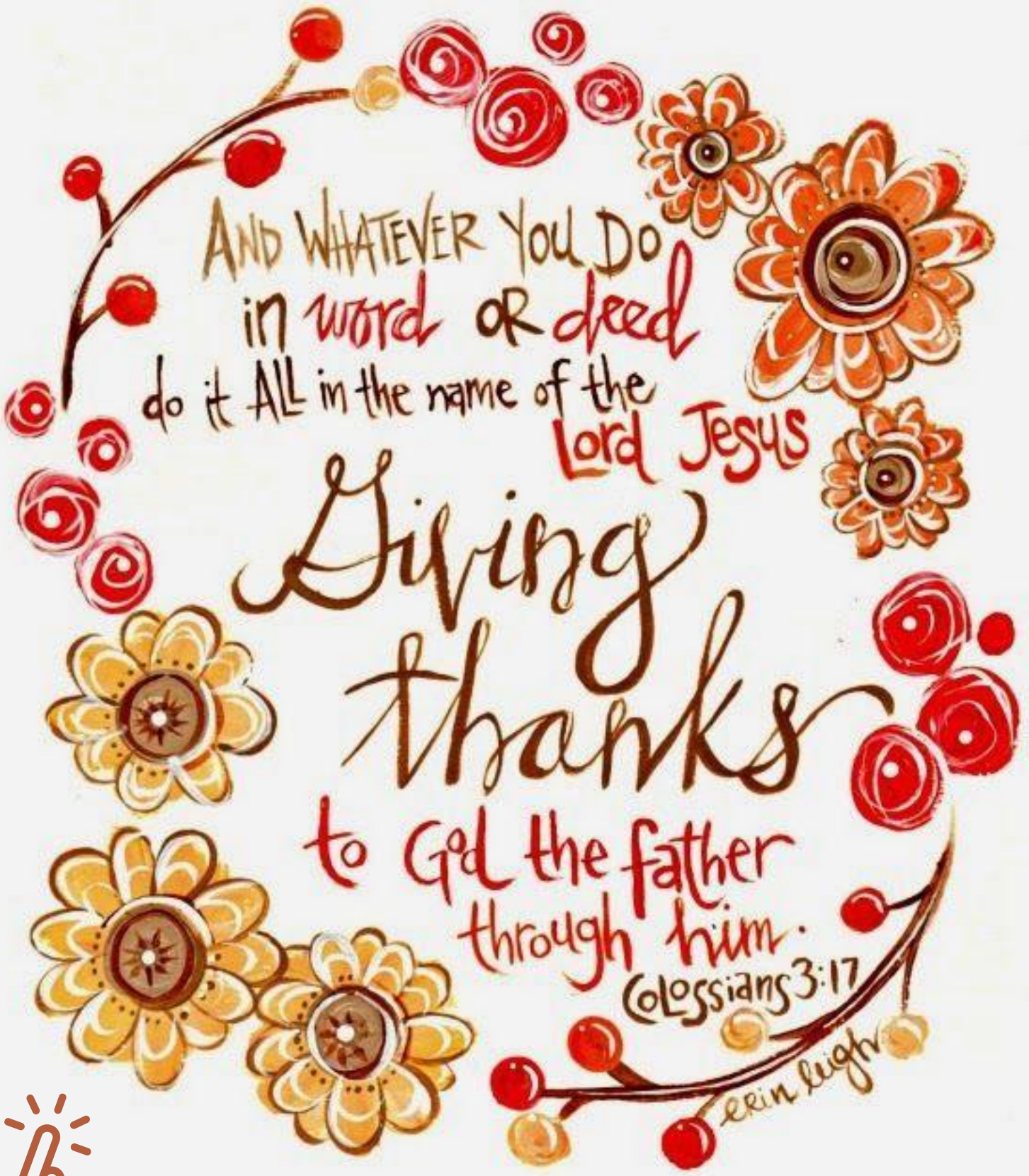
- 1 1 box Spice Cake mix
- 1 15 ounce can pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie mix)
- 1-2 cups of chocolate chips (I used White Choc chips) (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease loaf pan
- Thoroughly mix cake mix and pumpkin puree
- Add 1-2 cups of chocolate chips (optional) and stir to combine
- Pour batter into your loaf pan and bake for 50-60 minutes. (My oven came over on the Mayflower so I check mine at 40 minutes and it was done)
- Enjoy!



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AND WHATEVER YOU DO
in word OR deed
do it ALL in the name of the
Lord Jesus

Giving
thanks

to God the father
through him.

Colossians 3:17

erin leigh



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LET'S JUST TALK ABOUT IT

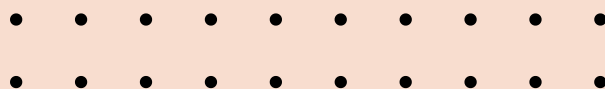


Laela Dasher is a college student, songwriter, aspiring producer and a member of the LO (Live Original) Worship team.

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Hello friends! My name is Laela Dasher and I am writing to you today from the walls of my little dorm room in Nashville, Tennessee. However, I need to be honest with you all, I have written this article over again probably fifteen different times. I have typed and deleted and second guessed almost everything that has come to mind. The truth is, I struggle with crippling perfectionism that bleeds into every aspect of my creativity.





“all or nothing mindset”

My heart often tells me that if it's not the most profound thing I've ever created, then it's not worth it. But the reality is that most conviction is found in the mundane or simple things. If the songs that I write are strictly for me glorifying the Father's name in my closet, then how beautiful that I have a song to sing with. If my advice to a hurting friend is simply that of sweet encouragement, then it is needed and not discounted as shallow. The effects of perfectionism on things like creativity are obvious. However it's the effects of perfectionism on another aspect that is often not discussed within the church or within Christian circles. This is the effect of perfectionism in regard to sin.

Because of this perfectionism, I often struggle with what I call the “all or nothing mindset.” For example, because I couldn't conjure the “perfect” article to share with you all, I avoided it altogether for several months. Another example is songwriting. Because I have not written the most incredible song on the planet, I have chosen not to share it.



“TRUST ME GIRLS, I GET IT”

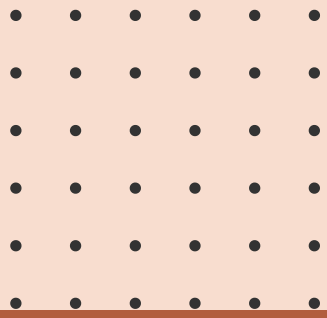
While this “all or nothing mindset” may seem insignificant when talking about things like a blog post or a song, it actually becomes the thing that keeps us in patterns of sexual sin in relationships, gossip, friendship mistreatment, pornography, drug or alcohol addiction, or any sin. You name it.

I believe there is a misconception about what perfectionism is. It doesn't always look like spotless rooms and perfect grades. My room is a hot mess right now, but I have been battling perfectionism for years!! Perfectionism is the discontentment of being a broken human; but instead of running to the Father for grace and forgiveness, it is tirelessly striving with our OWN strength to be that perfect human that we feel is expected of us.

Trust me girls, I get it. You've been dating the guy for years and purity is extremely difficult. I'm currently walking through a season of a long-term relationship and one of the hardest things to do is exercise self-control over long periods of time—especially when you deeply love and care for somebody. And so, you've messed up. Maybe you've given parts of yourself that you never thought you would give. Maybe you've done something on a Saturday night and showed up to church on that next Sunday morning with a smile on your face, hiding the shame and guilt that are internally tearing you apart.



“perfection is not the goal, the goal is communion with God”



Here's where the perfectionism comes in. Let's say that you messed up with your boyfriend. You love the Lord, but you allowed Satan to tempt you in a moment and now that your on the other side of your sin, you cannot bring yourself to the arms of the Father. So, you run as far as you possibly can from His people, His places, and His presence. You "take a break" from Sunday service because you just can't fake it anymore. You distance yourself from your friends because you can't keep up the image of the "good girl." You put your Bible on the shelf because you feel unworthy to even open it. You hide in all the wrong places.



Does this sound familiar to any of you? And not just because maybe you've lived it. Does it sound like a story that you may have heard before? You guessed it. This is a modern example of what Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden. They believed a lie and partook of the forbidden fruit to be like God, and instead of running to the only One who could hold them in their brokenness, they allowed their shame to drive them into hiding, covered in fig leaves. They allowed their idol of perfection to come between the God of perfection.

My friends, I am here to tell you that fig leaves have never made a substantial covering. Hiding will never heal the shame you feel inside. We serve a God who wants us to run to Him in our shame. You see, perfection is not the goal- the goal is communion with God. God knows that we will walk through this life with many errors and faults along the way, but that's why he sent His Son to die for us.





THE GOD OF GRACE WANTS TO MAKE YOU NEW AGAIN

Perfectionism is what drives us away from the only One who is able to make us new. Without the blood of Jesus and the transformative power of the gospel, we are left to “try” to be as good as we possibly can be, and if you are a human, you know this only leads us back to the same sin every time.

I want to leave you with this scripture because I believe that it captures the essence of what running to the Father looks like. This is a prayer that David prayed after he committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband- two big no-no sins within the church. To the grateful girl that may be struggling with a battle of perfectionism, take this passage to heart, memorize it, live by it, and when you fall, know that the God of grace wants to make you new again.



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1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

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Give thanks
to him and
praise his
name.

PSALM 100:4

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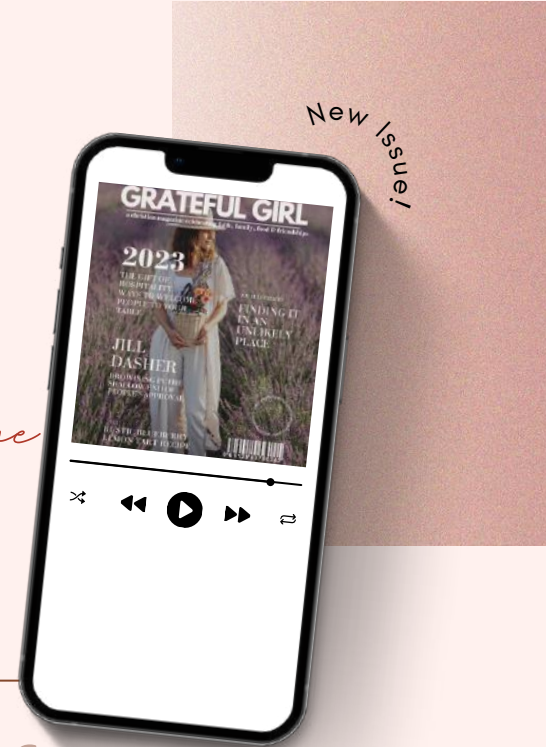
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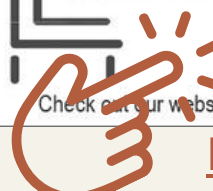
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forever.**

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address 31 Cross Street, Spruce Pine, NC 287

Phone (828)-765-4633

Service Times Sunday 9:30 Small Group Service 10:30 am

Website www.westerncarolinachurch.com

about us

Western Carolina Church's motto is Loving God
Loving People.



BAKERSVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

address S. Mitchell Avenue Bakersville

Phone (828)688-4817

Service Times Sunday Service 11:00 am

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GRATEFUL GIRL GATHERING

Date September 9, 2023
address 31 Cross Street Spruce Pine
Phone
Contact Grateful Girl Gathering Website



BLACK MTN CHILDRENS HOME WILLIE & KORE I SHANE AND SHANE

Date October 14 3 pm
address 80 Lake Eden Road Black Mountain, NC 28778
Website [Event Info](#)



FAITHFEST

Date September 16, 2023
address Wilkesboro, NC
Website [Faith Fest](#)

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