

True Girl Daily Devos



DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR

JANUARY &
FEBRUARY
2021

BY DANNAH GRESH,
THE TRUE GIRL TEAM, AND OTHERS WE LOVE!



As you read these devos, you'll see that we've written them for **Y-O-U** if you're a tween girl! But you may need your mom sometimes. Why? Well, the honest answer is that sometimes when you're first learning to do something, it's good to have help from someone with more experience! This might be your first or second or third year having devotions on your own. But it's probably your mom's tenth or twentieth year of learning how to read the Bible, writing about what she learns, and praying to the Lord. So, she's gonna come in handy from time to time. Every now and then, one of the writers will encourage you to ask your mom for help. (So, Mom, if you're reading this... we hope you are on standby every day. When your girl comes to you for advice or help, try to be available even if it cannot be at that very moment.) If it is helpful, you could decide you want to start by reading these together but we sure are hoping you will grow in your ability to read the Bible and understand it on your own. After all, someday you may be the mom who is helping a girl learn to do the very same thing!

I love you and Jesus loves you.


Dannah Gresh,
Founder of True Girl



* Use the Light

*Your word is a lamp to guide my feet
and a light for my path.*

{ Psalm 119:105 }



For Christmas a few years ago, Farmer Bob (my husband) made me a path in the woods to ride my horses and to walk my dog and my goats. (Yes, I take my goats for walks!)

I was walking on it during the early evening one January day, when it began to grow very dark. The goats got closer and closer to me. Even my dog, Moose, stopped running ahead of us. We all felt a little afraid.


Then, I remembered: my phone has a light on it! That little flashlight didn't brighten up the entire woods, but it did give me enough light to know where my next step should be. Using the light, I felt more confident and the animals seemed to relax. Moose started running ahead of us excitedly and Cindy Lou Who—all my goats are named after Dr. Seuss characters—even jumped on a log for a little climb.

What a difference a little light makes!

God's Word—or the Bible—is called a “lamp for my feet” and a “light for my path.” How much light does a “lamp” or “light for a path” give you? Just enough for the next few steps! One step at a time, God's Word will guide you through life.

But you have to use it!

If you open your Bible each day, it'll help you take the steps you need with confidence.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you using your light? Make a commitment to read your Bible every day this month and see how God uses it to help guide you through your day.

DANNAH GRESH is the founder of True Girl and loves to see girls learn to love their Bibles. She lives on a hobby farm with 20 animals. mytruegirl.com.



✧ God's Story

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

{ Genesis 1:1 }



Imagine picking up a book and instead of starting at the beginning, you skip right to the middle and start reading! You would be so confused! You wouldn't know who the characters were or what was happening. It might even make you not want to finish the book—even if it's a great book—because you didn't start at the beginning where you were supposed to.

Did you know that the Bible is *actually* a story?

Yes, the Bible is unique in that it's one book, divided into two "testaments", which are made up of 66 books. *But the Bible actually tells one big story!*

From the very beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, God's telling the story of His love for us. The whole Bible tells history of how sin broke our relationship with God and ruined His perfect creation. Yet, even in the beginning, God had a plan to restore our relationship and make a way for our sins to be forgiven, so that one day, we can be with Him again.

Get to know God's story! Read through the pages of scripture and see just how much the Father loves you and wants to be with you. *This story's best when you start at the beginning.*

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Start reading God's story. Read Genesis 1-3 and learn how sin entered the world and what God planned to do about it. (Hint: Focus on Genesis 3:15.)

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JANUARY 2






* When Life Is Hard

*Each time He said, "My grace is all you need.
My power works best in weakness."*

{ 2 Corinthians 12:9 }



I woke up with my body in terrible pain. To be honest, all I wanted to do was roll over and go back to bed!


Then I remembered that God wants us to call out to Him with our fears, struggles, and needs (rather than stuffing them inside). I sat up and prayed, "Jesus, please bring comfort and healing to my body." My body didn't feel any better!

"Didn't God hear me? Doesn't He care that my body hurts?"

The Holy Spirit then reminded me of 2 Corinthians 12:9. The apostle Paul prayed three times that God would remove the thorn in his flesh. We don't know if his "thorn in the flesh" was a sickness, pain, or struggle, but we do know that he wanted it gone!

Even though God could've taken away Paul's "thorn in the flesh," He chose not to. Instead, He told Paul that He would give him the strength to endure it and that others would see Jesus' power shine through his weakness.

God's Word reminded me that, although God *sometimes* takes our pain away, He doesn't always. Not because He doesn't care or love us, but because He has something better to give—the strength of Jesus.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you hurting or worried about something today? Remember what Jesus told Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9. Use your diary to write about an area where you need some strength from God. Maybe with your health or your math grades. Anything bothering you can be something you write about.

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JANUARY 3



* Your Forever Field Guide

*The grass withers and the flowers fade,
but the Word of our God stands forever.*

{ Isaiah 40:8 }




Hadley is my oldest daughter. Just about every day this summer, she picked a bouquet of fresh wildflowers. She gathered goldenrod, black-eyed Susans, wild violets, and ferns and carefully pressed each leaf and petal between crinkly newspapers and stacks of heavy books. Within a few days, the dried blossoms were ready to be preserved in her New England field guide (aka: flower journal).

All too quickly, summer faded to fall, and we found ourselves anticipating another long winter in New Hampshire. As the days got shorter and cooler, we collected colorful leaves (instead of wildflowers) to preserve in Hadley's field guide.

Her book of pressed flowers reminds us of seasons past and seasons to come. But, even with all of her careful preservation, we know that Hadley's field guide won't last forever. Just like the wildflowers dried out and the leaves fell from the trees, it'll get ruined or lost one day.

But we have access to one field guide that will last forever and ever: God's Word! The Bible isn't just a bunch of old stories about a God who used to be alive and active. This holy book preserves the Truth about our God who's concerned for us right now!

What would it look like to study God's Word and ask Him to press and preserve its Truth on your heart today?

 **ACTION POINT:** Write a prayer in your diary asking the Holy Spirit to press God's Word onto your heart and to preserve you and keep you by His Word forever.

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JANUARY 4





* A True Treasure Map

You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

{ Psalm 16:11 }




I've always wanted to find a treasure map. You know, the kind with a super fun compass in the top corner, curving lines made of dashes telling me where to go, and a beautiful golden X marking the best part... *where the treasure hides!*

I used to create treasure maps for my brother and sister. I'd pick the oldest box I could find, stuff it full of "valuable" items like change from my pocket, plastic jewelry, and a few pieces of candy. Then, I'd bury it as deep as I could. Next came the best part! I'd grab my notebook and markers and begin creating the map. I'd mark the path clearly, adding landmarks to look for, trees to navigate around, and fences to climb over. I wanted to provide lots of clues and mark any obstacles they'd encounter. It never took them much time to find the treasure, but it was always fun!

While I'm sure there are all kinds of buried treasures around the world, I've never actually found a *real* treasure map. But the Bible is kind of like one.

We want to live the best life we possibly can. We desire to discover the treasure of living well. God's Word helps us do that. Each verse we read is like a dash on our map—guiding us closer and closer to living like Jesus. Along our journey, we're getting in His presence more and more and learning how to reflect His love and character to others.

 **ACTION POINT:** Draw a treasure map in your diary! Place a cross on one end of the page (this will represent living life like Jesus). Think of a few verses that teach us how to live like Jesus. Write each verse on the page with dashes in between. The dashes should take you to the cross.

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* Ask for Help

*For where two or three gather together as
My followers, I am there among them.*

{ Matthew 18:20 }




Do you ever feel overwhelmed and alone when you're reading your Bible or praying?

You look down at your Bible and realize you don't have a clue where to begin! In your rush of excitement, you've forgotten that this book isn't quite like the other books you've read. Starting on page one and reading until the end seems like a daunting task! You flip to a random page and read a few sentences, but struggle to make sense of them. Next, you try praying, but you aren't sure what to say.

If you've felt like that, you're not alone. The Bible can be difficult to read and understand. Praying can feel complicated and insecure. But I have some good news for you. God didn't give us His Word to read and instruct us to pray without giving us something important to make things easier. What He gave us, was each other. He wants us to be in the company of others when we read our Bibles and pray. That must mean He wants us to ask for help when we need it.

Matthew 18:20 tells us that where two or three are gathered, Christ is with them. God wants us to be in community. He wants us praising Him together and He wants us reading the Bible and praying together.

The world likes to tell us the lie that asking for help is a sign of weakness. Yet, some of the strongest people I know are the ones who aren't afraid to reach out for help when they need it!

 **ACTION POINT:** Ask a parent, aunt, grandparent, or an older sibling to help you read a Bible verse and pray about it today. Practice asking for help.

*ERICA PLEAU is an Office Administrator at Pure Freedom
and is passionate about helping girls realize they're
masterpieces created by God. mytruegirl.com.*



JANUARY 6





* Lie Detector

*For the Word of God is alive and powerful...
It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.*

{ Hebrews 4:12 }



Do you ever wish you could have a lie detector? One that would beep when someone is lying to you?

Well, you actually do have one. It's your BIBLE! OK, it might not make a beeping sound, but its accuracy is perfect. Sadly, some people don't really know how to use it. I have some great tips so you'll know how to use it:

- ♥ Read it every day! You can best identify a lie when you're familiar with the Truth.
- ♥ Use a translation that's easy for you to understand. I recommend starting with the New Living Translation.
- ♥ Grab your highlighters and colored pencils. Use them in your Bible to write down what you learn.
- ♥ Use Bible studies written for girls your age. They help you dig deeper.
- ♥ Read it with the right perspective. Always remember that the Bible isn't about YOU! It's not about how we can fit God into our lives; rather, it's about how we fit in HIS perfect story.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** It's time to dust off your lie detector and put it to work. Today, open your Bible to a favorite verse and highlight it. Write why it's special to you in the margin.

LISA YABRA is a teacher on our Spanish True Girl team which is called Chica Verdadera. Two of her favorite things are her Bible and chocolate chip cookies. puralibertad.org.



* A Heart After God

*Let all that I am praise the Lord;
with my whole heart, I will praise His holy name.*

{ Psalm 103:1 }




King David wrote Psalm 103. He's one of my favorite people. God said something about him that's pretty special. David is described as "a man after God's own heart." (1 Samuel 13:14)

I truly believe David was given this amazing title because of how he worshipped. It wasn't conditional on if he liked the song or not. It didn't matter if he was having the best day ever, or a really, really bad day. David worshipped God. End of story!

Reading our Bible is important. Praying and talking to God is important. Loving one another is important. Supporting missions is important. But if you do all those things and don't pause to honor God with your thoughts and words and take time to praise His awesomeness, you're missing out on one of the very things that we were made to do: *worship* God!

Worship isn't reserved just for Sunday mornings. It can happen as you get ready for the day. It can happen out loud in your room or quietly as you sit alone in the lunchroom. Anytime you use your words and thoughts to celebrate what God's done in your life, you're worshipping God. When you tell people about something God's done for you and your family, you're worshipping.

Let's be like David and have a heart after God!

 **ACTION POINT:** Read all of Psalm 103 today. Then, write one thing in your diary that helps you worship God like David did. Share what you wrote with someone in your family.

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JANUARY 8





* Learning to Obey Rules

*Obey My commands and live!
Guard My instructions as you guard your own eyes.
{ Proverbs 7:2 }*



Rules really should be obeyed! But here's an important fact: you have to know the rules to obey them. I learned this when my family was in South Africa.

Bubbling with excitement, we decided to embark upon a little safari. We'd heard that the river near our cabin contained hippopotamuses, so we decided to go on a nighttime hippo hunt. With flashlights in hand, we set out along a marshy area by the river.

And we found them!


It was really exciting, *but it wasn't smart!*

The next day, we found out that hippos are the most dangerous land mammals in Africa, often crushing humans! If only I'd read the Kruger Park wildlife guide! The rule was right in there. (If you get to Africa, don't go hunting hippos in the dark, armed with nothing more than a flashlight.)

There are many dangers to us here on earth. God's given us a guidebook so we can be aware of them, but we often fail to read it.

Proverbs 7:2 reads, "Obey my commands and live." It doesn't get much clearer than that, does it? If we don't read the Bible, we won't know God's commands. *And they really are written down to keep us safe.*

I'm so happy you're taking time to read your Bible and learn how to live well!

 **ACTION POINT:** Can you think of a few of God's commands? (Hint: "Love your neighbor.") Use your diary to write one or two and ask yourself if you're obeying the ones you do know. If you need help, ask your mom.

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* Love with Your Brain

There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.

{ Luke 10:42 }



When I was growing up, I was told I couldn't hold a certain job—simply because I was a girl. Can you imagine that? I hope you're saying, "No!"

As crazy as that is, it's not the only thing girls were told they couldn't do. There was also a time when girls couldn't go to certain schools and couldn't vote—yes, even in our country!

But that's also what the world was like when Jesus walked the earth.

One day, Jesus went to the home of His friends Mary and Martha. Mary sat down on the floor to listen to learn from Jesus. This was usually something only men would do. Women were expected to just stay busy in the kitchen, like Martha. Jesus taught the men who wanted to learn from Him, and on this day, Jesus also taught Mary. When Martha complained that Mary wasn't helping her in the kitchen, Jesus told her this: *"There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."*

In other words, *"Martha! Come and learn from me. What I teach you'll have forever."* Jesus wants women to learn. Jesus wants you to learn, too. He wants you to love Him with your brain.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Open your Bible to Luke 10:42. Highlight Mary's name in pink pencil. In the future, when you come to other women in the Bible who are learning from Jesus, highlight their names too! This will be a good reminder that Jesus wants you to be His student.

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JANUARY 10





* Be Imitators

*Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do,
because you are His dear children.*

{ Ephesians 5:1 }




Who do you want to be like? When I was around 9 or 10, I watched a movie about a girl who was a spy. Of course, I then decided that I, too, wanted to be a spy. So, just like the character in the movie, I grabbed a notebook and a pen and started spying. One time, I even hid near the neighbor's house and took notes on what they were doing all day!

Thankfully, I grew out of my spy phase. I put away my notebook and the neighbors are safe from my spying, once again. But for a while there, I wanted to be just like the character in the movie. So, I tried to imitate her—to act like she did.

Have you ever tried to act or look like someone else? Maybe you like the way a person dresses or wears their hair. Maybe you want to sing or dance like someone. As we watch people and learn about them, sometimes we decide that we want to be like them. But, not all of the people we want to be like are good choices to imitate.

There's one person that is a good choice to imitate: God! We're even told to be imitators of Him in Ephesians chapter 5. God is always good, always loving, and always wise. And He's the only one that we should try to be like.

Unless we're spending time with Him, reading His Word, and talking to Him in prayer, we won't know how to act like Him, make choices that honor Him, or make Him happy.

 **ACTION POINT:** Open your Bible to Ephesians 1. Read it until you discover one thing new about God. Write it in your diary. How can you imitate that characteristic of Him in your own life?

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* Earth's Song

*Everything on earth will worship You; they will sing
Your praises, shouting Your name in glorious songs.*

{ Psalm 66:4 }




Elephants are the planet's largest land animal, weighing in at up to 14,000 pounds. They seem to be gentle giants who don't have much to say, but they communicate a whole lot more than you might imagine.

In recent years, a researcher was observing a "silent" pair of elephants who were separated by a wall in a zoo. All of a sudden, she had the same sensation in her body that she got when the magnificent pipe organ in her church played. So, she investigated. What she discovered was really amazing.

Turns out, she was feeling subsonic communication between two of the elephants. Subsonic means that the frequency at which the sound is passing is too low for us to hear. Their communication can travel through the ground over long distances and is so low that human ears can't detect it by listening. (But apparently you can sometimes feel the vibrations.) And here's the coolest thing of all! They don't seem to be talking...but singing!

As I considered this, Psalm 66:4 came to mind. *"Everything on the earth will worship You, they will sing Your praises."* I wonder what other animals and living plants are singing praise to God?

When you read a verse in the Bible, you can be sure that it's true. You might not understand it now but will learn to as you study the Word and observe our world. Even when it seems hard to believe.

 **ACTION POINT:** Sing a song of praise to God. When you do, think about the fact that other creatures are also praising Him with their song.

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JANUARY 12






* Shield Yourself

Every word of God proves true. He is a shield to all who come to Him for protection.

{ Proverbs 30:5 }




There's a theme park in Georgia that has an epic Log Ride. At the end of the ride, there's a massive splash that gets everyone wet. It's one of my favorite rides! I *love* to watch the people on the "splash deck"—where daring and crazy souls go to get soaked from the big wave of water the ride makes when a log passes by.

One day, I decided to be one of those daring and crazy souls. (That was a tad unfortunate for the cousin I forced to come with me!) Standing on that splash deck, I watched the giant wall of water coming at me and, unlike those around me, I didn't duck but stood facing it head on...and was promptly knocked over.

You may not have survived a splash deck, but you've probably lived through times that felt like one. I'm talking about those weeks when it feels like bad days just won't stop coming. Emotions like grief and loneliness and fear come at you like that wall of water. You might be scared that it'll knock you down.

But I have some great news for you. Proverbs 30:5 says you have a shield that's always protecting you. His name is Jesus. The way to activate His protection is by digging into the Bible. Every word in it will prove to be true. When you fill yourself with God's Word, your shield will be so strong that even the biggest of waves won't be able to knock you down.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you strengthening your shield? Use your diary to write down some of the ways God protects His children. How has He protected you? (Hint: having trouble thinking of ways? Ask your mom how He's protected her!)

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* The Best Deliciousness

*Taste and see that the LORD is good.
Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in Him!*

{ Psalm 34:8 }



My family loves my spaghetti and meatballs—the same ones I've made for the past 25 years! I've made meatballs so many times, I even know what my family will do when I'm cooking them. My children will stand over the pot with forks and eat them (even when I ask them to wait for dinner).

Everything I learned about making spaghetti and meatballs is good. And all the deliciousness is goodness to my family.

Does your mom have a favorite recipe she makes for you? Maybe she doesn't like to cook so she buys a box to help her. When you have a bad day, it doesn't matter whether she makes something like my family's favorite meatballs, or she opens a box of your favorite macaroni and cheese. When moms cook, especially on a bad day, it's even more delicious. It's good.

All of this talk about good food reminds me of a special promise Jesus made. He promised that if we "tasted," we would see that He is good. I think we "taste" Jesus when we read our Bibles.

For thousands of years, God's people have been "tasting" God in their Bibles, sort of like my children stand around the pot and taste my meatballs. And now, it's your turn. I hope you see that it's good.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Help your mom make a favorite recipe today or sometime soon. As you taste it, talk about what it means to "taste and see that the Lord is good."

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JANUARY 14



* Oh Deer, God!

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for You, O God.

{ Psalm 42:1 }




Many years ago, I laid outside of my little cabin at a camp in northern California. The snow was melting rapidly, causing a tremendous flow of raging, cold, crystal-clear water to rush into the little creek next to me.

My Bible reading that morning was Psalm 42. It begins, “As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God.” I laid my head down to pray about that and to think about what it means to be thirsty. I knew what it meant to be *thirsty for water*, but I didn’t really understand what it meant to be *thirsty for God*. So, I just said, “God, I don’t understand this verse. What does it look like to be thirsty for You?”

As I was thinking about this, I wondered to myself if any deer ever wandered into this campground for this little creek. I opened my eyes, and there, 10 feet in front of me, was a young doe. She looked frightened but was bravely stepping toward the creek. Wow! Even though she saw me, she kept moving towards the water.

Just like that little deer came into an unfamiliar place to drink, we must be brave as we try to experience more of God. We need to be unconcerned about what others think when we live our lives to search for more of God.

I’m praying you’ll experience sweet memories as you dig into your devotions each day. I hope you’ll see His wonder as He brings you a deer...or a friend with godly advice...or a new moment of understanding about the Bible.

 **ACTION POINT:** Think about what it means to be thirsty for God. Try to write down how it feels to be physically thirsty. Then, write down what it might look like in your life to pursue God the same way you would a glass of refreshing water.

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JANUARY 16





* Better Than Spaghetti!

Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty."

{ John 6:35 }



I'd just come off the basketball court after playing two games and, boy, was I hungry! I'm talking about that kind of hunger where your stomach is talking to you—yelling your name and demanding that you put a slice of pizza or something in it NOW!

The second I got home, a wondrous smell hit my nose. Spaghetti! My favorite. I washed my hands and headed straight for the kitchen. After eating that spaghetti, I felt fueled and ready to carry on with my day.


But some hunger can't be cured by food.

Before we accept Jesus into our heart, our spirit feels empty. It's hard to describe what that feels like, but Jesus used the word "hunger" to help us understand it. With Him, we are hungering deeply for something that gives us strength and satisfies us.

When the Holy Spirit shows us that Jesus is what we're missing—that He's what we need—and we believe that and accept Him into our hearts, we discover that we're finally full. Our souls are satisfied.

That spaghetti filled my empty stomach, but it didn't last forever. Jesus, as the spiritual food for our souls, promises that once we have Him, we'll never be empty again.

He is enough today, tomorrow, and forever.

 **ACTION POINT:** Do you feel like you've been satisfied by Jesus? If not, why? What do you need to do in response to what Jesus said in John 6:35. Write about it in your diary.

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* The Perfect Book for Me

*The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul.
The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*

{ Psalm 19:7 }



I've always liked stories—especially if they're about real life. I remember sitting in the dining room of my grandmother's kitchen as a little girl, listening to her tell the best true stories. Every time she finished one, I'd beg for another. I couldn't get enough! My grandmother always read to me from the same book. But that was okay, because every chapter offered something new. New characters, new battles, new love, and new lessons to learn. My grandmother loved to read that book early in the morning, in the afternoon, and at night before going to bed. She said it was our life manual.

The book I'm talking about is the Bible, of course. (Had you already guessed?)

God stored many Truths in the Bible and it's helped guide my life. Reading examples of ordinary men and women being chosen by God for great things taught me that even ordinary people are used for great things. Of course, the thing that spoke to me the most was the love of Jesus.

What I love most about the Bible is that it never goes out of style. Although years go by, its Truth remains useful and can be applied to our lives.

I've found the perfect book for me. It's my prayer that it will also be yours.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** What's your favorite Bible story? Open your Bible and re-read it! If you don't have a favorite Bible story, ask your mom and read hers!

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JANUARY 18



The Best Solution for Bad Days

*You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You,
all whose thoughts are fixed on You!*

{ Isaiah 26:3 }



Do you ever have one of those really hard days when you have too much homework and stress is eating you up? Or maybe you and a friend can't agree on something really important, so you feel sad and a little lonely?

I've discovered that there's *one* thing that never fails to bring me peace on those difficult days. Do you want to know what it is? "Fixing" my thoughts on God.

The dictionary defines "fixing" as "the action of fastening something in place." You might "fix" a painting to the wall by using a hammer and a nail. You might "fix" a special photo into your diary with some glue. What are you doing? *You're putting it in the place where it belongs.*

When it comes to your thoughts, they belong on—or attached to—God. The promise of Isaiah 26:3 is that when you "fix" your thoughts on God, He gives you peace.

Today when I felt bad, I chose to take control of those thoughts and "fix" them on God. I began by looking at the sky and saying, "God that's your sky. Those are your clouds. And You sure did make a beautiful sunset. Thank you." I kept my thoughts on God by praying. I said, "God, that's your girl. You made her. She's a good friend. You'll help us work out our problem. Thank you, God."

Pretty soon, my stress and sadness gave way to peace and hope. It really does work. Give it a try!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** "Fix" your thoughts on Jesus today. Think about a problem in your life that's making you feel bad. Now, use your diary to write some sentences that direct your thoughts on that subject to God.

DANNAH GRESH is the founder of True Girl and loves to see girls learn to love their Bibles. She lives on a hobby farm with 20 animals. mytruegirl.com.



* The Sweetest Fruit

Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser.
Let those with understanding receive guidance.

{ Proverbs 1:5 }




A few months ago, I went apple picking with some friends. When we got to the orchard, I was so impressed by the trees that I failed to notice one tiny, but important, detail—they were almost all empty! The woman at the farm stand told us that if we walked a mile up the hill, we'd find a few of the last full apple trees.

We hiked up the loooooong hill and when we arrived I saw my first apple! *It was beautiful.*

But there was a problem. It was at the very top of the tree, *way* higher than I could ever dream of reaching on my own. That's when my friend showed me a tool she uses to reach into the tree and pull the apples down. With a little extra work, we left with a big bag of apples!

Sometimes, reading our Bibles can feel a little like that trip to the orchard. We open up to a passage expecting a quick word of encouragement. But what we find instead is a lesson that's hard to understand. That's when we need tools. You might have a study Bible with notes in the margins. Or you could ask your parents to help you find a Bible commentary on the Internet. At times it can be as easy as asking your mom or dad to explain a verse to you. Sometimes you have to use tools to understand and receive guidance from God's Word.

Remember: the sweetest fruit is harder to reach, but it's well worth the extra work.

 **ACTION POINT:** Read Proverbs 1:1-7. Pick one part of it that's hard to understand. Then, use a tool to "reach it." If you need help, ask your mom.

AUBREY BRUSH is the Brand Manager at True Girl and loves reading the freedom stories from girls who participate in our livestream Bible studies! mytruegirl.com/onlinebiblestudies.



JANUARY 20





* Train Your Spirit

*“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”
This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it.
{ 1 Timothy 4:8-9 }*



I love being active. Pushing my body to the limits. Seeing how fast I can run or how high I can jump. It's good to train ourselves physically.

Physical strength is good, but *spiritual strength* is better. In the same way riding our bikes or playing sports makes our bodies strong, reading the Word makes our spirits, hearts, and minds strong—and those three things are far more important.

1 Timothy 4:8-9 tells us why. While physical strength allows us to do fun things with our bodies and helps us stay healthy, spiritual strength allows us to be kind, wise, brave, and many more things. And spiritual strength is what brings us closer to Jesus and helps us be more like Him. (Sign me up for that!)

I know it can be hard to trade what's fun for the thing that seems like more work. But fear not! There's a way to work your physical strength while getting spiritually strong as well!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** You'll need your mom's help for this one! Pack a bag with snacks, water, a pen, your diary and Bible. Find a trail to hike or a place to bike! Halfway through, stop and have a snack. Pull out your diary, your pen, and your Bible. Look up 1 Timothy 4:8-9 and write it. Then, you and your mom can write a list of what physical strength gives you and a separate list of what spiritual strength gives you.

ERICA PLEAU is an Office Administrator at Pure Freedom and is passionate about helping girls realize they're masterpieces created by God. mytruegirl.com.



* Bible Glasses

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope He has given to those He called— His holy people who are His rich and glorious inheritance.

{ Ephesians 1:18 }



Once, I was at an amusement park with my daughters. All three girls really wanted to ride one of the new rides at the park. The only problem: the ride was new and super popular. (Translation: there was a ginormous line!) After waiting for more time than I want to admit, our family was ushered into a small room with a screen and about 10 motorcycle-shaped objects that didn't have wheels or a steering wheel. We were given funny glasses and told to sit down and strap ourselves in.

Suddenly, the room went dark and the screen in front of me turned bright blue. I put on my glasses and everything changed; it felt like I was flying through the air! A few times during the ride I took my glasses off to peek at my daughters. It was actually quite funny. They were strapped into ordinary seats, not high off the ground at all, but their faces were breathless with wonder and their arms were holding on for dear life!

Without the glasses, the experience would've been dull; they allowed us to see what was on the screen with clarity and to make the absolute most out of the experience.

This is what the Bible does for us. We can use our human eyes and see the physical world around us, but we need daily time in God's Word to have spiritual eyes to see the world around us *as God made it*. Many things come into focus when we've spent time in God's Word.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Use your diary to write a note of thanks to God for your Bible. Ask Him to help you study it every day so you can always have your Bible glasses on!

BETH FRANK loves Jesus, her hubs, three girls, and thinking creatively. Beth is a co-founder of KidzMatter and, along with her husband Ryan, publishes KidzMatter Magazine. kidzmatter.com.




JANUARY 22





* Knowing God's Voice

*My sheep listen to My voice;
I know them, and they follow Me.*
{ John 10:27 }




I have four Mini Silkie Fainting Goats. They all seem to love me and come running when I call for them. And, since they're goats, they call back to me with a clumsy chorus of bleating! If I'm honest, they mostly come for the treats I bring them. They enjoy mini carrots, licorice flavored goat treats, and apple slices. They munch on the snacks and nuzzle my face with their noses to say, "thank you." Then, they run off.

That is, everyone except Boo Who.

He tends to stay for cuddles. After I rub his chest or belly, he takes a turn rubbing his head against me. (This usually knocks me over because he pushes so hard!) My little Boo Who seems to be genuinely interested in me, not just the food.

One night, I was outside, and it was very dark. I called out to all my farm babies and to my great surprise, Boo Who called back! I knew it was him because I recognized the sound of his voice. But I also realized this: he knew mine! How was this possible? Because we've spent time "talking."

In John 10:27, Jesus said we can know His voice. How? By spending time with Him. How can we do that if He is in heaven? By reading our Bibles and praying. As we do those two things, we become more familiar with His voice!

 **ACTION POINT:** Talk to God and ask Him to help you begin to recognize His voice as you continue reading devos each day. You will slowly grow to recognize His voice more and more.

DANNAH GRESH is the founder of True Girl and loves to see girls learn to love their Bibles. She lives on a hobby farm with 20 animals. mytruegirl.com.



* Hiding God's Word in Our Hearts

*I have hidden Your Word in my heart,
that I might not sin against You.*

{ Psalm 119:11 }



One morning, my husband and I were startled awake by the screaming of my little daughter, Amery. We threw off the blankets and rushed into her room.

“MOM! DAD! There’s a mean butterfly in here!” she said.

We looked to the area she was pointing and saw a moth flying frantically from one side of the room to the other. It was bouncing off the walls, speeding into the ceiling light, and crashing into objects.

Amery is an avid student of butterflies. She knows they softly flutter when they fly, have colorful wings, and they’re gentle when they land on flowers and plants outside. She knew this moth with dusty grey-colored wings was something different.

The Bible teaches us that it’s important to know the Truth and to store it in our hearts. When we study God’s Word, we can tell the difference between Truths and lies. Knowing Truth protects us, sustains us, and helps us identify things that aren’t genuine—that is, things that aren’t what they claim to be.

Sometimes, lies can look like Truth (just like that “mean butterfly”). But if we know the real Truth, we’ll be watchful and alert. And we won’t be deceived by the lie.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** How are you hiding God’s Word in your heart? Memorizing scripture is a great way to store up Truth in our hearts so we can spot lies. If you haven’t begun to yet, use your True Girl Bible memory verse cards to “hide” the Truth in your heart.

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JANUARY 24






* True or False?

*And you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free.*

{ John 8:32 }



When a cashier at the bank is being trained, do you know how they learn to recognize a counterfeit or fake hundred-dollar bill? They study and learn what the real bill looks like. That way when a fake one shows up, it doesn't look familiar to them.

The same is true if we want to recognize lies or “false truths” that are swirling around us. The only way to recognize what's false is to know what's true. We have to study and know the Truth—we find that in the Bible. And when we become familiar with it, a little alarm goes off in our minds anytime we hear or see something different than what God says is true.

For example, if someone says that I'm not pretty because I don't look a certain way, it's easy to start believing their words. But, if I'm reading the Bible and memorizing what God tells me is true, I'll be prepared. When someone tells me that I'm not pretty if I don't have a certain quality, I know that isn't true. How? God tells me in Psalm 139:14 that I'm fearfully and wonderfully made—and He loves me just as I am.

There are so many lies being told to us every single day. But, if we take a little time each day to read God's Word and store it in our heart, we'll quickly spot what isn't true because we're familiar with the Truth.

 **ACTION POINT:** Look up Psalm 139:14 in your Bible. Write it in your diary. For the rest of this week, see if you can spot any lies that go against that Truth.

SARAH WALTON is the author of Hope When It Hurts and Together Through the Storms and loves helping others know and trust Jesus, even in the difficult things of life. Sarah's a mom of four young children and lives in Colorado Springs. setapart.net.



* Read the Word

*In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God, and the Word was God.
{ John 1:1 }*



One summer, I read every book I could find about United States Presidents. Another summer, I read every biography I could find about Christian women. I loved reading.

But I wish I had chosen to read my Bible. I didn't know God's Word well. That means I wasn't taking time to get to know God Himself.

Thousands of years ago, Jesus' friend, John, wrote *The Gospel According to John*. The people he wrote to also loved books and words. And they were looking for knowledge so they could be wise, save themselves, and find happiness. John wrote to tell them that Jesus was the One who created true knowledge, He was the only One who could save them and bring them true happiness deep inside. Jesus was—and is—the true Word.

John 1:1 tells me that the Word—or Bible—was around before it was written at the beginning of Creation. In fact, it's always been around. Why? Because the words in the Bible are God's thoughts and He has been around forever. That makes His knowledge the best ever!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** There are lots of good people to meet in the Bible. Your copy should have an introduction to the fourth book of the New Testament called, *The Gospel According to John*. How did John know Jesus? Did he write any other books in the New Testament? Talk to your mom about what the Bible says about Jesus' friend John.

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JANUARY 26






* Fruitful Living

It is the same with My Word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

{ Isaiah 55:11 }




There's nothing like a Florida orange! The freshness, the sweetness! Oh man! I could go on and on! I visited a grove once on vacation. (That's what you call the place where oranges are grown.) I'd never seen anything like it. There were rows and rows of trees full of bright and beautiful oranges.

We were each given a basket and allowed to walk the grove and pick a few. While I walked, I examined the trees. The way the oranges hung from the branch, the way the branches connected to the tree, and the way the trunk held it all was breath-taking. Those trees were magnificent, and they produced so much fruit! The seeds that were planted to create that tree had done their job. They'd served their purpose and there were hundreds of oranges to prove it.

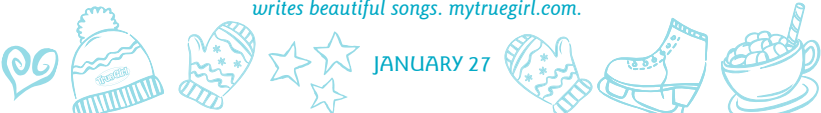
God's Word is also fruitful. It was created to grow good things in us. When we read and meditate on God's Word, He promises that we'll begin to see growth within each part of us—our thoughts, personality, and behaviors begin to produce fruit like patience, kindness, gentleness, helpfulness, and love.

Reading the Bible allows God to plant seeds of Truth within our hearts. This allows us to be used by Him and to live fruitful lives. God promises that the Truth we read in His Word will accomplish its purpose.

 **ACTION POINT:** Use your diary to write down the fruit and evidence that you see in your life of God's Word changing your heart. Maybe you've been extra kind to friends lately or maybe you've been really joyful. Reflect on how reading His Word has grown good things inside of you.

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JANUARY 27



* God-Breathed Words

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.

{ 2 Timothy 3:16 }




Every day you say a lot of words. Have you ever thought about how? Your body has vocal cords—stretchy flaps of skin in your throat. When you talk, your breath and air moves past these vocal cords, making them vibrate. (It kind of works like letting air out of a balloon. When you do that, the air makes the opening flap and make noise.) Muscles in your tongue and lips and throat work to change the way the sound comes out. But make no mistake. It takes breath!

Some versions of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 say that Scripture (or the words in the Bible) are “God-breathed.” This verse is clearly communicating to us that God Himself used His breath to speak the words we read in the Bible. He spoke the words of the Bible to different writers through thousands of years and across many periods of time.

Why? Because God wanted to teach us Truth. He wanted to help us realize what’s wrong in our lives and help us make corrections. God wanted to teach us to do what’s right. This makes the Bible very useful to us. It can help us live well!

As you read your Bible, remember that these aren’t just some old books written by men. Every word was first spoken by God. You can trust each sentence to be true!

 **ACTION POINT:** Hold your hand to your throat and hum. Can you feel the air moving around in there? Now, speak. As the breath moves across your vocal cords, you make words. God spoke the words of the Bible. It might not work exactly like that since He’s God, but this helps us understand and believe that God spoke the words of the Bible.

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JANUARY 28





Fight Back with God's Word

...and take the sword of the Spirit,
which is the Word of God.

{ Ephesians 6:17 }



I love movies! One classic film I love is *Mulan*. I sure would hate to spoil the movie by giving you all the details, so let's just say that she's a tough girl—a fighter! Even more, this girl really knows how to use her sword. As I watched scenes from the movie, I was wowed at Mulan's ability to wield her sword. Then I remembered that Mulan wasn't always the best swordsman. She had to be trained to use her sword.

Did you know that the Word of God is your weapon? Ephesians 6:17 actually calls it a sword. And did you know that it can be used to fight against the tricks of Satan and the evil in the world?

As with any weapon, it's vital that we learn how to use it properly and safely. The Word of God is not to be taken lightly. It's a precious gift to us and the primary way that God equips us to fight against the lies of Satan and the world. Most importantly, God gives each believer His Word so we can share it with others and equip them for battle, too!

Right now, you may feel like you don't really understand God's Word. Maybe you're thinking that you could never really learn the Scriptures. Well, just like Mulan, I encourage you to keep training! Keep reading and studying your Bible faithfully. With time, you'll get better and better, too.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Are you ready for battle? Are you a fighter against Satan and the evil in this world? Open your Bible and read Ephesians 6:10-17. In your diary, draw a picture of all your armor as a girl being trained to use the sword of God's Word. Pray and ask God to teach you how to use it.

PORTIA COLLINS is a Bible teacher, writer, podcast host and the founder of She Shall Be Called, where sisters in Christ come together to learn God's Word. Portia and her husband, Mikhail, live in the Mississippi Delta with their daughter, Emerie. sheshallbecalled.com.



JANUARY 29

* God's Word and My Crooked Legs

*Accept the way God does things,
for who can straighten what He has made crooked?*
{ Ecclesiastes 7:13 }



I longed for straight legs. Normal legs with knees that met in the middle. Instead, mine curved out like two crescent moons, kissing at their tips.

Other kids noticed my legs. One day on the elementary playground, someone shouted, “Paula runs like a duck!” Those words repeated in my mind from that moment on; I lived in nearly constant insecurity about my crooked legs.

That’s why my heart sank the day I read Ecclesiastes 7:13. Based on that verse, there appeared to be no hope for my legs. But then, I stumbled across Luke 3:5, and my heart leapt. Maybe there was hope! It reads: “Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways” (emphasis added, ESV).

Years later I realized these verses had nothing to do with my legs. I needed to examine the verses that came before and after to understand them. Turns out, Luke 3:5 was about John the Baptist preparing a straight way for Jesus, our Savior, to enter history—not to straighten my crooked legs—but to save the crooked hearts of all who would repent and believe in Him for the forgiveness of their sins.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Remember to look for the accurate meaning of a verse when you read it. This often requires you to read verses around it. (To learn more about this ask your mom to help you visit PaulaWrites.com and search for an article titled “Beware This Mistake Reading the Bible.”)

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JANUARY 30






* When God Forgets

But God remembered Noah.

{ Genesis 8:1a }



Remembered. That's a strange word to use about God. When I say I remembered something, it always means that I forgot about it for a while. Is that true of God? Can God forget me?


The word "remember" carries with it the idea of action. When you remember something, that means you're about to act. So, when the Bible says "God remembered" someone, it means God's about to do something for that person.

When God remembered Noah, flood waters began to dry up. When God remembered His people, He set Israel free from Egyptian slavery. When God remembered Rachel, she got pregnant with a baby she'd been praying to receive.

The Bible also tells us there's something God does *not* remember. Hebrews 8:12 tells us that God said, "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins."

Let's think about this: if *to remember* means *to act*, then *to not remember* means *to not act*. In other words, God will not act towards us based on our sins. When we come to Jesus and ask for forgiveness, we are completely and totally forgiven. There may still be consequences and discipline but there's no more separation from God. I'm clean. And so, dear girl, are you. No matter what the sin is. No matter how long you did it or how bad it made you feel. You are completely and totally forgiven. You are clean. Always and forever.

God will never forget you.

 **ACTION POINT:** Take some time to praise God for remembering you. If you feel comfortable, turn on a praise song and sing to God. He loves to hear His daughters sing.

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* The Meaning of Love

For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

{ John 3:16 }




We love the word *love*. We force it to mean a lot of things. We love our parents. We love Animal Planet. And we love a cute little orphaned baby we meet on a mission trip. We might even love Fluffernutter sandwiches. We stretch one word to express all the kinds of love we experience.

But other languages are more complex and precise. They often include different words to describe love for a family than the ones used to describe love for friends. (And there's probably not a word for loving Fluffernutters!)

The Bible was originally written in a precise kind of language. John 3:16 says that God loved us. The word used is *agape*. It's a specific kind of love which means to sacrifice yourself for the one you love. So, the rest of the verse just explains how the sacrifice was made. Jesus died for us. This word *agape* is the kind of love Jesus wants you and me to show to others. Our love should be expressed in sacrifice. We don't have to die for anyone, but we do need to put their needs ahead of our own. So, we sacrifice by not getting the seat we want on the bus or not playing the game we prefer. Or we help our little sister with homework instead of getting some time on Playstation.

The kind of love that God wants you and me to express in our relationships is the kind He showed us: *agape*.

How can you put someone else's need ahead of your own today?

 **ACTION POINT:** Take some time and think about how you can express sacrificial love in just one of your relationships today. Maybe you have a sibling who needs help with homework or perhaps you can play a game your friend prefers. Practice *agape* love today.

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FEBRUARY 1






A Smelly Boy and a Loving Father

So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him.

{ Luke 15:20 }



Have you ever been to a pig farm? I have. It reeked. Now, imagine you're not the owner but a hired hand who lives with the pigs and cares for them. I bet you'd begin to smell, too.

Let's add the idea there's not enough food around and you're getting hungry. In fact, so hungry that you'd gladly eat what the pigs eat!

I'm betting you don't have another change of clothes either...


So, you've been wearing the same outfit for several weeks.

Suddenly, you realize your father's house has food. Plenty and more to spare!! You left after telling your dad to drop dead, and now you just want to go home smelly, hungry, and extremely embarrassed. You have no choice. You're starving!

You're walking home, head down, feet shuffling, one in the front of the other, when you hear a noise and look up. Your dad's running down the road towards you. Tears streaming down his face. You're shocked! You've never seen your dad run in your whole life.

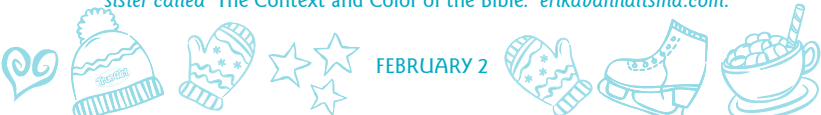
He grabs you in his arms and just holds you. You both cry as you tell him how sorry you are, and he lets you know he forgives and loves you. He's just glad you're back home.

This, my dear girl, is how God our Father in heaven reacts when we truly repent. We come to Him, stinking of sin, looking horrible, and feeling ashamed. But, like the father in Luke 15:20, our Father in heaven loves us anyway. And He forgives us.

 **ACTION POINT:** Use your diary to write a prayer to God. Tell Him how thankful you are for His love and ask forgiveness for any sins you've been hiding.

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# \* True Love is a Gift

*God showed how much He loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him.*

{ 1 John 4:9 }



Let's talk about love stories. We all know how it goes: girl meets guy. Guy sweeps the girl off her feet. Guy asks the girl to marry him. And they both live happily ever after. Seems perfect, right? Well, as much as I enjoy stories like this one, it isn't the best I've ever heard.

The best love story is found right in the Bible.

No one loves me the way God loves me. Yes, there are many people who love me: my husband, my daughter, my mom, my siblings. But their love could never match the love of God. His love toward us is the very foundation for the love that we show one another. Without Him, we wouldn't know how to love the right way.

God's love is like a compass. Without a compass or directions, we'd probably get lost. The same is true about God's love. *Without His love, we'd be lost forever.*

1 John 4:9 tells us that God loved us so much He sent His one and only Son into the world to save us from sin and eternal death. There's no bigger kind of lost than to be unsure of how to get out of your own sinful habits. But God's rescued us! That's a lot of love, and it's the kind of love we need to give to each other.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Write about God's love in your diary today. Consider how you can show the same kind of love to others by putting their needs ahead of your own. Then, do something simple that God brings to your mind like helping your mom clean the house or giving your little sibling some math help!

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FEBRUARY 3





## \* Look Me in the Eyes

*Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God.*

{ Hebrews 12:15a }



**W**hen my husband, James, and I were dating, he looked deeply in my eyes one day and asked, “Do you know what I see when I look in your eyes?”

“What?” I asked dreamily.

“AV. I see the letters AV. Your contact lenses say AV!”


Later that day, I popped out my lenses and, indeed, they had the letters AV on them. I couldn’t believe James could see that! It proved that he was paying attention to me and looking into my eyes often. I was the focus of his attention because he loved me.

Hebrews 12:15 is about taking care of each other, but it mentions “looking”. When we love others, we look at them. We gather clues from their body language, smiles and sighs, appearance, and attitude.

Do you know why?

It’s because those clues help us know how those around us are feeling. Which allows us to love and care for them better. But sometimes, we become so focused on other things—like our phones, computers, or TVs—that we don’t take the time to look at our loved ones. *We’re missing chances to love because we’re failing to notice.*

It’s time to look away from our devices and look after each other, instead. Not only will looking at your loved ones’ body language help you decipher how they’re doing, but your attention to them will help them see that you care about them. They’ll feel loved.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you giving your loved ones plenty of eye contact throughout the day? Make a habit of looking away from your computer screens and looking up when someone enters the room.

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FEBRUARY 4

## \* Love Well

*Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.*

{ Ephesians 4:2 }




**S**iblings can be tough to live with. Some are messy, while some are clean. I was one of the messy ones. My older sister would ask me time and time again to get my clothes out of the bathroom after I was done showering. She'd go in after me and shout "you did it again!!" I'd then run back to the bathroom to collect my mess.

Somehow, her shouting was never mean. Although it made me feel guilty, it also made me desire to do better. Eventually, I was able to put a system in place to help me remember to get my clothes after showering. She was overjoyed. My sister's intention wasn't to make me feel guilty. She was dealing with me the way Ephesians 4:2 says we ought to deal with each other: *patiently*. And she was so patient with me that it eventually stirred me to change.

This is an example of how God desires for us to interact with each other. Living as a follower of Jesus should result in us being patient and forgiving with one another. It should look like us humbling ourselves in every situation, seeking what's best for others, and trusting that God will take care of our needs.

That's exactly what happened with my sister and me. She sought to be kind and patient with me by not yelling or getting angry, and God took care of her and the situation by working in my heart to meet her wishes. *Obedying God always results in blessing.*

Seek to be patient and humble in every relationship. Love others well.

 **ACTION POINT:** Ask God to show you a situation or relationship where you could be more patient. Write down a few behaviors you can change to actively humble yourself and love the other person well.

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FEBRUARY 5



# The Power of Positive Thinking

*Thank You for making me so wonderfully complex!  
Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.*

{ Psalm 139:14 }

 **S**elf care are two words that seem to be all the rage these days, especially for girls! It means just what it says: take care of yourself. The idea that we should take a spa day, buy some chocolate, or binge watch a favorite TV show because we're worth it is everywhere. One of the trends is practicing daily affirmations. Supposedly, these help train our brains to think more positively about ourselves and our lives.

It works something like this: Write a list of what you don't like about yourself, or things in your life you're discouraged about. Now, write a list of positive things that fight the negative thoughts on your list. Say these positive things to yourself every day.

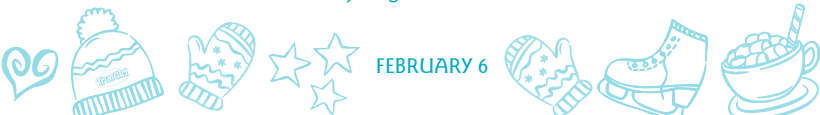
I want to warn you about this trend because, when you come up with a positive statement you don't truly believe, it could put you in a worse mood! Thinking positively is powerful, but wouldn't it be great if we were sure these positive affirmations were true? That's why we need God's words—not our own—to be the source of our affirmation list!

God's Word is *full* of encouragement that helps us fight the lies we believe. And we can be sure that they're true because they're coming straight from the Source of Truth: The Bible! Instead of just saying "I am beautiful," try saying Psalm 139:14 out loud.

Let your affirmations come from the Bible and you'll be more successful in changing the way you feel.

 **ACTION POINT:** Write Psalm 139:14 in your diary. Speak it out loud and ask God to help you believe it!

*AUBREY BRUSH is the Brand Manager at True Girl and loves reading the freedom stories from girls who participate in our livestream Bible studies! [mytruegirl.com/onlinebiblestudies](http://mytruegirl.com/onlinebiblestudies).*



## \* Love is Forgetful

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.*

{ 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 }



**O**ur family just adopted a Pomeranian puppy. Chanel is three months old now and is black all over except for some small patches of white fur. No matter what, she seems to be wagging her tail. Even if we accidentally step on her or need to discipline her, she seems to quickly forget it and return to loving us. Do you have a pet like that?

This actually reminds of how Jesus loves us!

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 teaches us what love looks like. It is patient, kind. It's not jealous or rude or irritable, and it doesn't demand its own way. And—are you ready for it—it doesn't keep a record of wrongs. In other words, true love doesn't remember that your friend hurt your feelings causing you to stop talking to her. Instead, it forgives someone who hurts you and keeps right on loving. (Just like Chanel.)

Jesus loves you SO much. He's always forgiving...no matter what you do! The Old Testament says that if we do something to offend Him, he throws it into a sea of forgetfulness. (Micah 7:19)

Forgetting someone's sin against us is one way we can love others like Jesus loves us.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Has someone you love hurt you recently? It's OK to acknowledge the hurt. This verse doesn't say you don't realize it, but you then forget it. Use your diary to write about someone who has hurt you. Then, write a few sentences that demonstrate your forgiveness.

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FEBRUARY 7








## \* Pass the Bubble Wrap

*And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.*

{ Romans 8:38 }



**H**ave you ever received a present in the mail? Sometimes, when packages are filled with something special or breakable, the items themselves will be wrapped in bubble wrap. When that kind of packaging finds its way to my house in a delivery, it's more sought after than the item that was sent. My girls love running and jumping on the bubbles to see who can pop the most!

Sometimes life on this earth can be hard. Even as God's girls we face fear, hurt feelings, and major disappointments. There are times when it can feel that the world is against us. Our friend can say something hurtful during recess, maybe our BFF's family moves out of state, or your dad just loses his job. I don't know what you're facing, but I do know that when my struggles with everyday life have my heart bruised and hurting, I just want to curl up and protect myself. Pass the bubble wrap please!

Do you know that we have spiritual bubble wrap? Seriously, Romans 8:38 tells us that we're wrapped in God's love and nothing in this world can destroy us. We still might be bumped and bruised, but we have the confidence of knowing we're walking through this life wrapped in God's amazing love. LOVE!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Write out Romans 8:38 on a notecard and post it somewhere you will see it everyday. Make it a point to remember that you're never without God's love, no matter what you're facing.

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# \* Wings of Love

*He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings.  
His faithful promises are your armor and protection.*

{ Psalm 91:4 }



I sure loved my white peahen, Roxie. She would often sit outside my window peering in at me. Sometimes, she tried to sneak inside when the door was left open.

One day, I couldn't find her anywhere. I looked and looked. The days turned into weeks. Roxie seemed to be gone.

One day, I was standing outside surveying my farm. *Is that? Could it be?* I saw a white speck sitting on a fence post nearly a half mile away!

My faithful dog, Stormie, and I went to check it out. The horses noticed too. They got there before I did. When I arrived, my 1,500-pound horse was nudging Roxie with his nose. She wouldn't move! Stormie began to bark and jump up at her. But Roxie didn't budge.

I decided to carry her to the barn to see what was wrong. It was a long walk back with a wriggling peahen in my arms! What could explain her odd behavior?

In the barn, I placed her on a stack of hay and that's when it happened: she lifted her right wing and out plopped a baby peacock. Then, she lifted her left wing and out plopped another!

Roxie had been hiding a nest somewhere! And now that she had babies, nothing was going to get to them. Not a horse. Not a dog. And not me!

I thought of Psalm 91:4 that day. Right there in the barn, I began to understand just how stubborn God will be if anything tries to get to me...or you...when we're tucked under His feathers!

 **ACTION POINT:** Draw a picture in your diary that helps you remember that God has you tightly held under His "wings".

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FEBRUARY 9






## \* Loving Enemies

*But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies!  
Do good to those who hate you.*

{ Luke 6:27 }



**W**hen I was in middle school, some of my classmates called me *freaka*. (Apparently, the bullies at my school thought it was a hilarious play off my name, Erica!) It hurt to be called that. To be honest, I wanted to come up with my own mean names to hurt them back! That's not how God tells us to respond.

Luke 6:27 records these words from Jesus: "Love your enemies." Hard as it may be, it is possible. Loving others can seem like a fairly easy task, but loving your enemies? And it's super hard when your enemies are friends or family who didn't mean to hurt you. Or a bully or mean girl you have to see day after day!

How? By demonstrating self-control and kindness. When a mean girl talks to you in an unkind way, you can love her by refusing to say unkind words back. It takes a lot of self-control to do that. If there's someone in your class that picks on you, instead of gossiping about them, consider talking to your mom about how much that person hurt you. (It's really important to tell someone when you get bullied.) When you choose self-control and kindness, you're operating in God's love. And trust me, you'll need *His* love when it comes to your "enemies."

You may not have control over other people's actions, but you do have control over your own. And sometimes, when we respond with love...it does end up changing the way they act!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Is there someone at school who's being unkind to you? Go talk to your mom about the person you're struggling with. See if the two of you can come up with some respectful ways for you to respond in love.

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## \* off-Stage Love

*Don't look out only for your own interests,  
but take an interest in others, too.*

{ Philippians 2:4 }



If you've been a True Girl for a while, chances are you've attended our live events. We do these awesome, fun shows all around the United State and Canada and we live on a tour bus.

Now, I'm getting ready to let you in on some inside information. Are you ready? Here it is: *living on a tour bus with ten people is hard!!!!*

Living in such small quarters requires patience and selflessness. You have to be willing to quiet down when someone goes to sleep right after a show, and you want to party. You have to surrender the back lounge so someone else has a chance to watch a movie when you just want to have a quiet spot. And the hardest thing of all is that you have to wait *forever* for the bathroom in the morning to brush your teeth!

God tells us in Philippians 2:4 that He desires that we would live selflessly. He calls us to live a sacrificial life that shifts our focus from ourselves to the needs of others. That's never easy, but it's a lot harder when you're at home or in a tour bus!

But I'm so grateful for my time of touring. It gave me an opportunity to love others well. You see, God called me to love people from on-stage which is sometimes easy. But He also called me to love my teammates on the tour bus, which is tough sometimes. Kind of like God calls you to love your friends at school, but also your little siblings at home!

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Where do you live "off stage?" Are there places where you need to be patient and selfless to show love to others? Write about it in your dairy.

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FEBRUARY 11






## \* Mind Your Own Business

*Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before.*

{ 1 Thessalonians 4:11 }




**A**bout a hundred years ago, women would try creative ways to make extra money for their families. They would sell pies or grow vegetables. They would do other women's laundry, or sell extra eggs.

Women who had nicer egg stands or signs would sell more eggs and make more money. Or so they thought. What *really* happened is other women would start talking about who had the nicer egg stand or sign and stop paying attention to their own businesses. Causing them to not do as well as the other women who were paying attention to their own business. It wasn't about the sign or the egg stand, it was about *minding your own business*.

Have you found yourself in the middle of a mess because you started paying attention to another girl's business? The stuff she has, the clothes she wears, or where she goes on vacation.

None of this is what God intends for you. His Word's full of wisdom teaching us how to live our lives. 1 Thessalonians 4:11 says it best. *"Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before."*

Minding our own business truly is one practical way for us to love others.

 **ACTION POINT:** Use your diary to write down three ways you can mind on your own business. Here are three examples: I will mind my own business by cleaning my room. I will keep my opinions to myself unless I feel God or an adult wants me to share them. I will mind my own business by not criticizing the work of others unless I'm asked for advice.

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# \* A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

*Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!*

{ Psalm 42:11 }




**T**he other day I was looking through my baby photos, and I noticed that they weren't all super cute like I expected. In some, I was crying my little heart out. Others featured a sleep-deprived relative holding me. I was confused.

I called my mom to ask why some photos weren't so happy. She said, "Well, if there were only happy pictures, that wouldn't be an honest representation! Sometimes there were tears, exhausted parents, and messy babies. The album reflects reality. The reality didn't make me love you any less!"

That statement struck me and made me think of my relationship with God. So often when I come to Him, I want to bring a picture-perfect version of reality. But if my mom loved me even when I was crying my eyes out, how could God feel any differently? Why would I bother bringing a less honest version of myself to Him?

One person who was really good at coming to God honestly was King David. In Psalm 42:11, he expressed what he was truly feeling to God. When he was joyful, he praised God! When he was scared, discouraged, or sad, he let God know what was going on inside his heart.

But here's one important lesson to learn from King David: in those moments of fear, anger, or complaining, he didn't stop there. He always ended by praising God once again.

 **ACTION POINT:** Take a look back at your diary. Do you tend to self-edit, or let it fly? Spend some time writing honestly to God. Bringing Him the good, the bad, and the ugly. Then, finish up by praising Him!

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FEBRUARY 13






# \* Share the Good Things

*Let us think of ways to motivate one another  
to acts of love and good works.*

{ Hebrews 10:24 }




**A** couple of weeks ago, I was at the beach with some friends. As we sat down to eat lunch, my friend Ari was telling all sorts of fun stories. She's the kind of person who would make a trip to the grocery store sound like the perfect adventure. I sat there admiring her energy and enthusiasm. As she talked, I thought about how much I enjoyed her company. But suddenly, she got quiet and said: "I'm sorry, I've been talking so much! I must be boring you."

*Where did that come from?* I thought.

Later that same day, I felt led to say things I loved about each of my friends. I started with Ari. I told her how much I enjoyed her presence and how much she made me laugh with her stories. Turning to my friends, I told them how the Lord had shown me that when we think good things about others, we rarely say it out loud.

Hebrews 10:24 is a verse about doing good things and encouraging other believers to do good things so that they can see Jesus in our lives. A simple way to practice living it out is to encourage your friends with the gifts they bring to your friendship. From there, you can grow in who you encourage and how you do it.

 **ACTION POINT:** Do you have a friend who has a special gift of making everyone laugh? Or perhaps one who always listens well? Or another who makes everyone feel included? Write that friend a note and deliver it today. When you do that, you're living out a little bit of Hebrews 10:24.

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# \* Peanut Butter Love

For the whole law can be summed up in this one command:  
"Love your neighbor as yourself."  
{ Galatians 5:14 }



Once, when I was in Africa, I saw God do something miraculous. It was lunchtime and our little team was in a very, very poor place called "the compound." Houses there are made of mud and might be the size of your bathroom—if it's a small one. We'd put in a hard morning of fixing the mud wall of one woman's home and it was time to eat.

Only, our team had no appetite. One of the teenagers asked me if she could give her peanut butter and jelly to one of the starving children. Soon, everyone wanted to take their food out of the bus to share. But there were hundreds of kids outside. And we only had about 20 sandwiches and a few pieces of fruit.

"Everyone eat one half of your peanut butter sandwich," said one of my friends. "Then, we'll pray over the other half and distribute them."

I'll never forget the scene of all those friends standing over patient, wide-eyed, sweet children with sandwiches. Somehow, *everyone* had left-over peanut butter and jelly on their chins and cheeks.

God multiplied those sandwiches. I'm sure of it.

The Bible says that when we show love to someone who is hungry or homeless or needs clothing, we're really showing love to God. I think, that day, we lived out Galatians 5:14 and our little team fed Jesus! *We hugged Jesus!*

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Love someone today. Help your brother study for his spelling test. Fold laundry for your mom. Sweep your dad's garage out. Write a note to a neighbor. When you do, you'll be loving Jesus, too!

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Today's encouragement is an excerpt from *The One Year Mother/Daughter Devo* by DANNAH GRESH and JANET MYLIN, published by Tyndale House. Get a copy at [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com).



FEBRUARY 15







## \* With Love

*And do everything with love.*

{ 1 Corinthians 16:14 }



It was finally Saturday and I was determined to make it the best day ever. I had one of my favorite shows queued, a fabulous snack in hand, and was ready to totally chill out.

Then, my friend called me.

I began to see my day of relaxation flash before my very eyes. She'd made plans to move into her new apartment that day and, apparently, the moving crew had just fallen through. She needed my help. I agreed to head over.

Together, we moved boxes, clothes, shoes, you name it. We finished late that night. But on my drive home, I couldn't help but feel bad about the attitude I'd had while helping her. I wasn't as friendly as usual. I'm sure she could tell I was kind of annoyed. Although I'd helped her accomplish the goal, I hadn't done it from my heart. My bad attitude had kind of stolen the good deed.

As followers of Christ, 1 Corinthians 16:14 calls us to do everything with love. Everything. Whether it's helping a friend move, helping with the dishes, or telling someone a tough Truth, we must make sure we have the right heart when we do it. We've got to do it with love.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Think through the last few days. Have your conversations and actions been filled with love? If not, pray and ask God to show you how to act in love more often.

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## \* He Knows You by Name

Listen to the Lord who created you. ...The One who formed you says, "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are Mine."

— Isaiah 43:1



One day, my friend and I were having lunch when I was feeling far away from God because of sin. She played a song to remind me of God's love.

"Isn't that awesome?" she asked me, after it played. "He made the stars and He *still* knows you by name."

When it finally hit, all I could mutter in response was a soft, "yeah." I was so filled with awe and wonder.

The One who made the earth and holds each and every star in place, cares about me and loves me so much, *He knows my name*.

What my friend was really sharing with me was the Truth of Isaiah 43:1—God knows me. He loves me. And He's always with me. But Isaiah 43:1 also says that the Lord tells us to not be afraid, that He has ransomed us.

To ransom something means to pay a price so it can be free. The price to set us free was a hefty one. God had to sacrifice His Son, Jesus. When the verse says, "for I have ransomed you," He is reminding us that our sins have been forgiven, and we don't need to be afraid; we won't be forgotten or turned away by God.

Never forget, God knows your name. And He will always love you.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Pick a worship song you like. Soak in it. That is to say, just sit quietly and listen to it. Let the words really mean something to you. Write about what you experience in your diary.

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FEBRUARY 17





## \* Your Whole Heart

*Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important:*

*"Love your neighbor as yourself."*

{ Matthew 22:37-39 }




I used to be a basketball player and a cheerleader. I loved both! But there came a time when I had to decide which one I would choose because I could only participate in one. It was really hard for me to decide. In the end, I chose basketball and cheered on my teammates while I played. So, I sort of found a way to do both, but basketball came first.

Matthew 22 instructs us to love God with ALL of our heart. Not half of our heart or 1/4 of our heart, ... but with 100% of our heart. This doesn't mean you can't love activities, movies, friends and your family. But it does mean HE wants to come first in your life.

This isn't easy to figure out. Here is one practical thing I do that helps me make sure God is first in my life: I invite Him to be a part of *everything* I do. As I enjoy time with my daughters, I talk about Jesus and invite them to talk about Him, too. When I help girls in Ghana who don't have families to love them, I pray for God to lead me as I make decisions. See how it works?

No matter what things in life give you pleasure, you can still love God with all your heart!

 **ACTION POINT:** Draw a picture of a heart and write all the things that fill your heart. (Hint: Think of things you enjoy doing or people you love.) Look at the things you wrote down. How can God be glorified in these things? Ask God to help you love Him more than anything or anyone.

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FEBRUARY 18

## \* Love's Superpower

*Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love.*

{ 1 John 4:18 }




remember a time when I was feeling very afraid and didn't know how to make some important decisions. My heart was broken, and I just wanted to hide in my bedroom and eat ice cream for the rest of my life! (Do you ever feel like hiding in your bedroom when you're sad or afraid?)

Well, I didn't get to stay in my bedroom because there was a special community event I had to go to with my family. When I got there, I saw my dad helping set up the event. He knew that I was having a very bad day. He walked over to me and gave me a great big, long hug. He didn't say anything, but I could feel the power of his love.

You know what? *I wasn't afraid anymore.* In fact, I felt strong enough to make the hard decision. And I even enjoyed that big community event a little bit more.

Did you know that God's love is a superpower even greater than that? It's not like Spiderman's ability to climb walls or Wonder Woman's superhuman strength. Those, of course, aren't real. They're the stuff good comic books and movies are made of.

But God's love is a superpower that's useful every day! When you experience it, 1 John 4:18 says fear doesn't have a chance of surviving his hug!

 **ACTION POINT:** Do you have any fears? Maybe you're afraid of the dark or of spiders. Maybe you're afraid of being alone or speaking in front of others. Ask God to show you His love and help you overcome your fear.

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FEBRUARY 19






## \* A Dash of Sweetness

*Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

{ 1 John 4:7-8 }




Compliments are like candy. Not a necessity, but they certainly add a good dash of sweetness to life. You can give some to others or you can give some to yourself. There are people who won't give any out, others who refuse to give any to themselves, people who don't get enough, and some people who refuse to accept any from others.

The Bible doesn't have any commandments to give out candy or compliments. Yet, we're instructed over and over again to give out a lot of love. But where do you get that love? You buy candy in a candy store or grocery story. You get compliments from growing in awareness of what people need to hear. But where do you get love?

1 John 4:7-8 teaches us that it comes from God! We love because God loved us first. As we spend time in the Bible, praying, and talking to others about God's love, we grow in our ability to understand it and give it to others.

The more you grow in it, the more ways you'll find to give God's love to others—even strangers. When you first start it can seem hard and scary. It doesn't have to be, though. Handing out God's love can be as easy as handing out candy and compliments! You see, when you say hello and smile at a stranger or help someone with their homework, you're giving them God's love—which is even sweeter than candy!

 **ACTION POINT:** Give a dash of sweetness to someone today! Do you have any candy or something sweet at home? If so, grab one to share with someone else. Find a person you love very much, give them a compliment, tell them you love them, then, hand them a piece of candy.

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# \* Wake to Love

*Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you.  
Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you.*

{ Psalm 143:8 }




**W**hen I was younger, my mom would take me to school in the mornings. After we said our morning prayer and asked God to watch over us and prepare us for the day, I'd curl up in my seat and doze off until we arrived.

Once we arrived, I'd go to get out of the car and head into school, but my mom always stopped me. She'd say "I love you." I'd go "I love you more." She'd win by saying "I loved you first." It always helped start my day anchored and surrounded by love.

I didn't know it then, but my mom was teaching me how to live in love. To wake up to it as Psalm 143:8 talks about. She wasn't just showing me how to live in *her* love. More importantly, she was showing me how to start each day in *God's* love for me.

Although my mom doesn't drive me to work each morning, I still start my day with God's love. I remind myself that He loves me, that I trust Him, and then I surrender my day to Him.

Waking to the Truth of God's love allows us to feel it all day long. When different situations arise and we find ourselves becoming fearful or anxious or sad, we'll be able to think back to the important Truth that we are loved.

 **ACTION POINT:** Start each day with prayer. Tell God you believe that He loves you, thank Him for that love, and surrender the day to Him. Maybe even do it in the car on your way to school with your mom or dad!

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FEBRUARY 21






# Words That Love You Back

*Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us.  
And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we  
wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.*

{ Romans 15:4 }




I've received three love letters that are very, very special to me. One of those letters is from my husband. The second and third love letters I received were from my two daughters. In their letters, they told me how much they love me and how I'm the best mommy in the world. I felt so good! (They may have asked for a new puppy in those letters, too!) These three letters are dear to my heart. Why? They encourage me and give me hope on hard days.

Did you know there's an even greater love letter that's been written to you?! That's right! God says that the Bible is a love letter that's been written to us. You might be thinking, *How's the Bible a love letter? That seems weird.* But it's true!

Romans 15:4 says, "The Scriptures give us hope and encouragement." God loves you so much that He's given you His Word to help you every day. I don't know about you, but that makes me want to read the Bible a lot if it can help me with whatever I'm thinking, going through, looking forward to, or maybe even afraid of.

Whenever I need to feel loved by my family, I read one of my love letters. When I need to be reminded that God loves me so much, He sent His one and only son to die for me, I read my Bible—God's special love letter to me.

 **ACTION POINT:** Grab a pen and a piece of paper—this is going to be fun! Think about how much God loves you. Take a few minutes and write a love letter to God, thanking Him for how much He loves you. Use your diary.

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*COURTNEY BELLE BULLARD is the founder of The Pearl House and wants all girls, wherever they live, to be excited about reading their Bible. She loves puppies and watching the show Kids Baking Championship with her daughters. [thepearlhouse.org](http://thepearlhouse.org).*

FEBRUARY 22



# \* God Loves You All the Time

*But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

{ Romans 5:8 }



**A** lot of girls believe that God doesn't love them when they sin. Have you ever believed that?

I think most of us have at some point. Sin makes it difficult to feel God's love—even though it's always there. Trying to feel connected to God after we sin can be like trying to download a song or listen to an episode of *Adventures in Odyssey* when you don't have good Wi-Fi. The connection's there, but something's interfering with it.

God isn't surprised by your sin. He knows EVERYTHING. No matter what you've done or how much you've messed up, God still loves you and will forgive you.

I understood this better after I became a mother. Once, when my son was little, he asked for water. He then promised he had not played with the lit candle in the other room. That seemed like a funny thing to say! (And, by that time, I could smell smoke.) Thankfully, only the edge of a blanket had caught on fire and I was able to put it out quickly. You know what? Even as I rescued him from his own mistake, I didn't love him any less. In fact, I put that fire out *because of love*. I wanted to keep him safe.

How much more does God, in all His perfection, love you? He loves you when you behave well and when you behave badly.

So much that, as Romans 5:8 points out, He sent Christ to die for us *while we were still sinners*.

➔ **ACTION POINT:** Did you sin today? I mean, were you mean to someone or did you lie about something? God loves you. Confess your sin to Him and ask Him to help you understand that He loves you all the time, no matter what.

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Today's encouragement is an excerpt from *Lies Girls Believe* by DANNAH GRESH published by Moody Publishers. Get a copy at mytruegirl.com.




FEBRUARY 23





* Seek and Find

*I love all who love Me.
Those who search will surely find Me.*
{ Proverbs 8:17 }




How do you know that you have a house? (I know that seems like a silly question but hang with me!) The answer, of course, is because you can see it. It's pretty big and it's easy to find. If you needed a friend to find it, you could send them directions.

But, how do you know there's wind? That's harder, right? You cannot see the wind itself. But you can see the effect it has on the things it touches. When the wind blows, trees dance, papers fly through the air, and hair gets blown all around. Some things are much harder to "find" but it can be done.

Searching for God is a bit like both of these things combined. You can't physically see God. But you *can* see the Word He's left behind for us to study, and you can see His impact on people and circumstances around you.

Proverbs 8 gives us an awesome promise for when we look for God. He's not going to hide from you! He likes to be found. We're promised that when we search for Him, we'll find Him.

The best way to seek God is by reading His words in the Bible. When we do this, God reveals Himself to us and we become familiar with Him. When we start to know Him better, it's more obvious to us when we see His impact on the lives of people around us and on circumstances.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you searching for God by reading your Bible regularly? Have you seen His impact on someone's life? Or on your own? Use your diary to write about something you've observed about God recently!

ERICA PLEAU is an Office Administrator at Pure Freedom and is passionate about helping girls realize they're masterpieces created by God. mytruegirl.com.



* Searching Wholeheartedly

If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.

{ Jeremiah 29:13 }



A few years ago, my mom gave me the greatest gift any girl could receive—a brand new pair of jeans! You might be rolling your eyes right now, but these weren't just any jeans. They were the perfect shade of blue, had the cutest pockets with pink stitching, and the buttons were amazing! They were the Best. Jeans. Ever.


I was doing laundry one day when I realized I should check and make sure my jeans were in the hamper. I needed them to be clean for the next day. I began frantically digging through my basket and made it to the bottom, only to find that my jeans weren't there! I looked around my room and dug through the basket again, but still no jeans.

That's when I decided it was time to look more carefully. I moved my dresser, looked behind it, and then went through every drawer. I was ready to give up when it hit me. I ran over to my bed, dropped down to the floor, and there they were!

All I had to do was commit to searching. Just like Jeremiah 29:13 says.

When we truly love something, we're willing to put in the work to find it.

Our relationship with God is the same. If we love God fully, we'll be committed to seeking Him daily through scripture, prayer, and one-on-one time.

 **ACTION POINT:** Are you seeking God with your whole heart? Choose a time each day to spend with just you and God. Pull out your diary and draw or write about Jeremiah 29:13. What's the first thing that you think of?

STACI RUDOLPH is a Lead Teacher for True Girl and loves to see girls grow in their personal relationship with Christ. Find out more at mytruegirl.com.



FEBRUARY 25






* “Put On” Love

*Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds us all together in perfect harmony.*

{ Colossians 3:14 }




How do you love others? It’s as easy as getting dressed in the morning. Every day you wake up and put on clothes, right? Maybe you have a favorite sweatshirt you feel so cozy in, you wear it every day. Well, love is kind of like that. You have to put it on *every day*.

Lots of Bible verses tell us to “put on” things like humility, righteousness, and Truth. These things are spiritual characteristics that can be worn just like a pair of your favorite jeans or a team jersey! (You can’t touch them or feel them, but you can kind of “see” when someone wears those things!)

Sure, you don’t actually put your arms through spiritual characteristics and put them on your body, but maybe you think to yourself: *“I’m going to put on love today and wear it! I’m going to decide to put others ahead of me and see the needs of my friends and family.”*

The reason the Bible tells us to put it on is probably because it’s not that natural to let others go first in a line or give up what we want when someone we care about wants something different. We aren’t that good at it...unless we pause in the morning, think about it, and make a decision.

The way I “put on love” is by reading my Bible. I’m a much kinder and more loving person when I take just a little bit of time to “put on” all the good things I find in God’s Word, just like Colossians 3:14 tells me to.

 **ACTION POINT:** What’s something practical you can do to “put on” God’s love today? Perhaps you can pray and ask for His help or talk to your mom about what she thinks would be helpful.

DANNAH GRESH is the founder of True Girl and loves to see girls learn to love their Bibles. She lives on a hobby farm with 20 animals. mytruegirl.com.



* Obedient Love

I have loved you even as the Father has loved Me. Remain in My love. When you obey My commandments, you remain in My love, just as I obey My Father's commandments and remain in His love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with My joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!
— John 15:9-11




Have you ever struggled with obeying God? Or your parents? Or a teacher? It can be hard sometimes, when we're told to do one thing, but we want to do another.

Let me tell you a secret. *It's okay to not always want to do what you're told.* Did you know that Jesus had a moment when He didn't want to do what He was told?

That's right! Before He died on the cross, Jesus took a walk through a garden. As He did, He became so overwhelmed at the task ahead of Him, that He cried out to God, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from Me. Yet I want Your will to be done, not Mine." (Matthew 26:39b) Jesus didn't want to suffer on the cross. But His love for His Father was so big, that He was willing to do so anyways. Jesus said, "*Yet I want Your will to be done, not Mine.*" Jesus trusted that God knew what was best.

When we're told to do something we don't want to do, we get to show love. Or not. When we obey, we're saying we trust and love God and those put in authority over us. And, according to John 15:9-11, we remain in our Father's love.

 **ACTION Point:** Do you struggle to obey God and your parents sometimes? Write about that in your diary. And make a commitment to choose to show love next time you don't want to do what you're told.

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FEBRUARY 27





* Beautifully Unique

“And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.” The second is equally important: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

No other commandment is greater than these.

{ Mark 12:30-31 }




Did you know that there are 17,500 different species of butterflies in the world? 17,500! What’s even more amazing is that no two butterflies are exactly the same.

Butterflies aren’t the only thing that God designed to be unique. He’s expertly designed and formed millions upon millions of people—all with unique personalities, gifts, talents, body shapes, skin, hair, and eye colors. We’re all different from one another; that’s what makes the world a beautiful place.

Sometimes, though, we aren’t amazed by things that make people unique. We look down on those who look, act, or think differently than us. We’re often tempted to think that we’re better than those around us.

Mark 12:31 commands us to *love our neighbor as ourselves*. That “neighbor” might be a sibling, classmate, or even someone from another country and culture! God knew we would have differences and still challenged us to love each other.

Do you know what will give us the love we need for those different than us? Mark 12:30 tells us it’s loving God above all else. When we ask God to give us a love for Him, *His* love will flow out of us to others.

 **ACTION POINT:** *Is there someone in your life that you struggle to love because they’re different than you? Ask God to give you a greater love for Him and a greater love for that person. Write about it in your diary.*

SARAH WALTON is the author of Hope When It Hurts and Together Through the Storms and loves helping others know and trust Jesus, even in the difficult things of life. Sarah’s a mom of four young children and lives in Colorado Springs. setapart.net.

