

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.

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



* 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.

STACI RUDOLPH is a Lead Teacher for True Girl and loves to see girls grow in their personal relationship with Christ. She likes spicy food and writes beautiful songs. mytruegirl.com.



* 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.

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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






* Your Very Life

These instructions are not empty words—they are your life!

{ Deuteronomy 32:47a }



This is no empty Word for you, but your very life!” I heard this phrase a lot from my older and wiser friend, Joyce. She’d say it with her palm planted firmly on the cover of her Bible, speaking with confidence that could only come from a lifetime of walking with Jesus.

It’s been 12 years since I saw Joyce every day, but I’m still learning from the way she loved the Bible. She talked about it all the time. Memorized it. Prayed it. She *really* loved it! And it showed, not only when she shared what she was learning, but in the way she did life and loved the people around her. Have you ever met someone who loves God’s Word like that?

Joyce knew about the tough stuff I was going through, but we didn’t spend all of our time talking about my problems and how to fix them. Instead, we talked about God’s Word, the book that she loved so much. We read it, asked questions, and looked for answers. Joyce taught me that the Bible isn’t just a super long book made up of words on a page... *It’s the only book that has the power to change us!*

When we read it, we get to learn more about God and remember just how much He’s done for us through Jesus. As we know more of *who* God is by reading His Word, we grow in our understanding of *who we are* as His precious children, which changes our hearts and actions to be more like Him. God’s Word is our very life, and by it, we truly and fully live.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Do you treasure God’s Word like my friend does? Ask God to give you a heart that loves the Bible and an older friend who can show you how to live in light of its truths.

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* 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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JANUARY 17

# \* 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 }



**D**o 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.

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# \* 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.

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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.

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## \* 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!

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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.

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# \* 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 }



**W**hen 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.

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# \* Read the Word

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



**O**ne 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 }



**T**here'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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# \* 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 }



**E**very 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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