



# True Girl Daily Devos

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR

JULY &  
AUGUST

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*





# The Buzz On Honey

*My child, eat honey, for it is good,  
and the honeycomb is sweet to the taste.*  
{ Proverbs 24:13 }



**H**oney never spoils! If you keep it in an airtight container, honey will last forever! Okay, we've not tested "forever," but archeologists found some honey in an enclosed Egyptian pharaoh's tomb that was over 3,000 years old—and it was edible!

That's kinda awesome since it's delicious. (It is made of 80% sugar, so it should be!) But it's also very useful. Honey has been proven to soothe sore throats, help wounds heal, and fight bacteria. It's healing to our bodies.

The Bible teaches that when you say something kind, it is to the soul what honey is to the body. It's not only sweet but healing. Saying nice things has a lasting healing impact on someone's soul.

And we can only hope it lasts 1/10th as long as that honey found in Egypt! If it did, the kind things you say could last someone's entire life!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Go get some honey in your kitchen and have a spoonful. Think about all the ways your words could be like honey. Write some of them in your prayer journal.

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*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](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# The Mean Note

*Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

{ Ephesians 4:32 }



**F**ield Day was a big deal at my school. We canceled classes and headed outdoors to compete in running, jumping, and climbing. But the most important event was the relay race.

One week before Field Day, my class wanted to find our fastest runners: two girls and two boys. First, the girls raced. My friend Heather and I won! Next, it was the boys' turn. I cheered for my friends, Ethan and Matt. But I groaned when Ethan and *Jake* won instead. I wrote a note to Matt saying, "I wish you were in our relay instead of Jake. You are so much faster!"

That afternoon, my teacher called me over to her desk. When I got there, my eyes popped open: she had the note in her hand!

She asked, "Why did you write this mean note, Laura?" My heart beat fast, and tears stung my eyes.

I apologized and returned to my desk, where I prayed, "Heavenly Father, I'm sorry for being mean to Jake. Please forgive me." Because Jesus died for my sins, God forgave me! I pulled out my notebook and started a new, kind note: "Dear Jake, welcome to the relay!"

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Have you been unkind to someone? Ask God to forgive you. He will! Then, ask God to help you write a kind note to someone who needs encouragement.

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JULY 2





# Language Lab: What Does The Word “Grace” Mean?

*Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not!*

{ Romans 6:15 }



I want to introduce you to an important word in “Language Lab” today...*grace*. It means “unearned favor.” Those are fancy words for getting something we don’t deserve.

One of my favorite stories is about a girl who was noisy and disrespectful during church. Her mom drove her home and sat her on the porch to wait for her dad.

When he arrived, he told her to get into the car. He drove without saying a word. She was scared. Where was he taking her? To the grocery store! He bought her the biggest package of her favorite candy, Tootsie Rolls.

He drove home silently, sat her on the porch, and shared the candy with her. Then he said, “You deserved punishment, but instead, because I love you, I gave you Tootsie Rolls. That’s what God calls grace. He gives us something we don’t deserve.”

I’ve never forgotten that story. I hope you don’t either. When we sin, God’s grace gives us something much bigger than Tootsie Rolls. He gives us forgiveness. And somehow, when we get a true taste of that...we don’t want to sin anymore.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Ask your mom to share a time when she experienced God’s grace.

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*Today’s encouragement is an excerpt from The One Year Mother Daughter Devo by DANNAH GRESH with help from JANET MYLIN. Get a copy at [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# What Words Get Stuck In Your Head?

*Can't you see that His kindness  
is intended to turn you from your sin?*

{ Romans 2:4 }



**H**ave you ever noticed how the words of certain songs get stuck in your head? Sometimes it's even a melody out of nowhere that you learned when you were five. It's fascinating to me how much songs stick with us. Music is definitely one of the ways I learn best. Maybe that's true for you, too.

When I was young, I loved to belt out my favorite tunes. I'd perform them in my bedroom for my stuffed animals. There was one chorus that was about today's Bible verse from Romans. I bet that song has replayed in my mind thousands of times since I was a kid: "It's your kindness that leads us to repentance, O Lord."

Repentance is when we make a clear choice not just to apologize for the wrong things we think, do, and say. But we also turn away from them and turn toward God. It's pretty amazing to consider that even on our worst days and after our biggest mistakes, God's kindness draws us to Him.

I'm so glad that's what's stuck in my head!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Do the songs you listen to point you to God's kindness? It's important to think about what's getting stuck inside you. Songs and their messages take root and find a home in your thoughts for years to come.

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*YANCY is a songwriter, worship leader, and producer who makes music and videos for church and home. She's passionate about worship and loves making Jesus loud. She lives in Nashville. [YancyNotNancy.com](http://YancyNotNancy.com)*



JULY 4





# I'm Not the Source

*But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit  
in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,  
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

{ Galatians 5:22 – 23 }




It's easy to be kind to people you like. But it's a lot harder when someone has hurt you. When I was fifteen, a drunk driver hit my family's car. People always ask me how I can forgive and show kindness to the driver who caused my brain injury. I smile and say, "Because...I'm not the source."

I don't have to work hard at being kind because kindness doesn't come from me. It comes from the Holy Spirit who lives inside of me. He produces my kind actions. Not me!

Did you know that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you? Even when you don't feel like being kind, you don't have to try harder. You just have to ask the Holy Spirit to produce kindness in you for the person who hurt you. You aren't the source of kindness. God is. And His kindness never runs out. All you have to do is ask for more!

You have an unlimited supply of all the fruits of the Spirit available to you every day. God's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control lives in you.

 **ACTION POINT:** Grab your journal and write a prayer: Holy Spirit, will You please produce kindness in me toward (name the person who hurt you). Watch what He does!

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# How To Pick Good “Fruit”

*The tongue has the power of life and death,  
and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

{ Proverbs 18:21 NIV }



**H**ave you ever helped your mom buy fruit? If you're wise, you don't just grab a bunch of apples and throw them in the cart. You hold each carefully and make sure it's not bruised. Then, you place it gently in your cart. When you eat it, it will be delicious because it's "good fruit."

That's how the Bible says we should handle the selection of the words we use. Proverbs 18:21 says our words carry the power of life. Or death. Even when you are having a difficult conversation with someone, you can use words that bring life.

**"Dannah, your heart is black!"** It's been over thirty years since an older person in my life said that to me. I still remember it. They were spoken in a moment of *uncareful* frustration. And they hurt.

**"Dannah, you're worth my time."** I just heard those words last week, and they were also from an older person in my life. I think I'll remember them as long as I live! They were spoken in a moment of *careful* instruction. And they helped.

The next time you have a difficult conversation, pick your words as your mama taught you to pick apples: carefully.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Ask your mom for some tips on picking your favorite fruit. Then, ask yourself if you're as careful with your words as you will be when you pick that fruit.

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*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 twenty animals. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



JULY 6







# Language Lab: What Does The Word “Hallelujah” Mean?

*“Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: ‘Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready.’”*

{ Revelation 19:6 – 7 NIV }



It's time for another “Language Lab.” Let's figure out what the word *hallelujah* means.

Have you ever been on a roller coaster? Imagine going slowly up the first big hill as your heart starts beating faster and butterflies swirl in your stomach. When you finally reach the top and begin to plunge down the other side, you probably holler something like, “Wa-HOOOOOO!”

Hallelujah is like “Wa-HOOOOOOO!” But you use it to express your excitement and love for God. It's a special word reserved just for telling your Creator how awesome He is. It means “to be bright, to shine.” When light shines on something, it changes it. It helps us see clearly in dark places. That's what God does in and to our lives.

When you live a life of “hallelujah”—a life of praising God—people will see that you're different, and you can tell them about the hope of Jesus in you.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Use the word *hallelujah* today. You might see a beautiful sunset and exclaim, “Hallelujah.” Or if you get a good answer to something you're praying for, you can shout, “Hallelujah!” It's appropriate anytime you want to praise God.

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

JULY 7



# Don't Be a Heart Crusher

*Gentle words are a tree of life;  
a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.*  
{ Proverbs 15:4 }



**D**o you remember how God created the universe? Psalm 33:6 reminds us, “The LORD merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born.”

He created it with His words.

Words are powerful! God created life with them, and so can we! We might not be able to form an elephant or a hamster just by speaking, but we are capable of making a heart feel alive when we express kind words. Or make it feel very broken when we talk harshly.

How are you making hearts feel today?

There was a time in my life where I was speaking harsh words to one of my family members. I challenged myself to only say words of encouragement to this person for a week. The outcome was amazing! Since I was so focused on sharing encouragement, I had no time to use my words in a mean way. Our relationship improved significantly.

That person's heart was not the only one feeling very alive. Mine was too! How we choose to use our words also impacts our hearts.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Write a prayer asking God to show you whose heart you have been crushing with your words. Then, commit to only speak kind words to this person for a week. Watch hearts be transformed, including yours!

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JULY 8





# Language Lab: What Does The Word “Righteousness” Mean?

*Everything He does reveals His glory and majesty.  
His righteousness never fails.*  
{ Psalm 111:3 }



**W**hen one of my daughters was seven, she told me that she'd stolen something! One day at church, she'd taken a stuffed animal home with her.

My little crook wanted to know if God could forgive her. I said yes. We prayed, and at that moment, God made her right with Him. Then, I asked her what we should do. She decided to write an apology letter and mail it with a new stuffed cat to replace the one she'd taken.

That day, she was *righteous*. What's that mean?

Does it mean sinless? Nope. “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Based on our sin, there's no one righteous. Does it mean she was righteous because she bought a new cat? No. That just means she made restitution. But it's not righteousness.

*Righteousness* is being made right through Jesus Christ. We can't do anything to make ourselves like that. Only Jesus' blood can do it. A righteous person isn't one who never sins. It's not one who makes up for her sin with good acts. A righteous person is one who confesses sin and calls on Jesus to make her right with God.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Do you have anything you need to confess? Write about it in your prayer journal and then tell your mom. I promise, she'll be as proud of you as I was of my daughter.

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# The “Restaurant” Hotel

*And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need.  
These are the sacrifices that please God.  
{ Hebrews 13:16 }*



**W**hen I was a kid, my family took a vacation every summer. We'd visit my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. We always felt so welcomed and loved.

But I remember one summer when we decided to go someplace different. I thought nothing would be the same. There wouldn't be anybody waiting for us. Nobody to welcome us and love us.

We left our house early in the morning. When it started to get dark, we looked for a hotel. We drove until one in the morning and still couldn't find one. My dad finally pulled into a restaurant parking lot and asked the owner if he knew someplace we could stay.

The restaurant owner invited us to sleep there! He showed kindness to strangers and shared what he had with us. Just like God says in Hebrews 13:16. Our stay at the “restaurant” hotel helped it turn out to be one of our best vacations ever.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Have you ever been someplace where a stranger showed you kindness? Write a prayer of thanksgiving in your journal for that person.

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JULY 10





# How Can I Help You?



*Worry weighs a person down;  
an encouraging word cheers a person up.*  
{ Proverbs 12:25 }



Usually, I'm a cheerful person. But one day, I was feeling unhappy and stressed. That morning, my computer was acting funny. I had to call technical support, which is never my idea of fun! Then after getting my computer fixed, the link I needed for my work was broken. *Click. Click. CLICK!!!* Nothing happened. Have you ever been frustrated like this? Maybe you've been doing school online, and you can't figure out how to find your homework or turn it in!

As I made dinner, I was still worrying about my work. My daughter Lucy, who's in sixth grade, noticed my unhappy face. "What's wrong, Mom?" she asked kindly.

I told her about my computer troubles. Lucy saw that I was feeling overwhelmed. So she decided to speak to me with kindness, "How can I help you, Mom?" I could tell she really meant it!

Lucy made the salad for dinner, chopped potatoes, set the table, and gave me a big hug. She told me that everything was going to be alright. Just like Proverbs 12:25 says, she saw that worry was weighing me down. She shared a kind, encouraging word that really did cheer me up.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** The next time you see your mom (or someone else in your family) worrying or sad, say something kind. Your encouraging and considerate words will be helpful.

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# Smile and Wave

*When they were discouraged, I smiled at them.  
My look of approval was precious to them.  
{ Job 29:24 }*



**A** full, sweet life comes from glorifying God. One way we can do this is by imitating His kindness. Kindness is a simple yet powerful way we can show Jesus to the world.

We can learn a lot about showing kindness from something the penguin, Skipper, in *Madagascar* liked to exclaim. If you've seen the movie, you may remember him saying, "Just smile and wave, boys. Smile and wave." It's become something I now repeat a lot too. Yes, it's a funny quote, but there's also some truth in there. A smile can leave a huge mark in this world.

As God's children, we can decide to have a smile-and-wave spirit and show it to the world. How do we practice this sort of kindness? It's when we genuinely see people. We ask them how they are and really care about what they have to say. We pray for others.

When we show kindness to the people we come across every day, whether we know them or not, we're imitating God. So, put on a sweet smile and, while you're at it, wave. You never know how such a simple gesture can make a lasting impact.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Next time you notice yourself having a bad day, pick three things you can do to show kindness. Watch how it turns your day around!

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She loves spin and boxing, good food, sugary coffee, and  
trying to keep houseplants alive. [JennieLusko.com](http://JennieLusko.com)*



JULY 12





# Did You Gossip Today?

*The LORD detests evil plans,  
but He delights in pure words.  
{ Proverbs 15:26 }*



**L**ast night I gossiped. Have you heard that word before? By a dictionary definition, it means to say things about someone in an unrestrained way. It is especially considered gossip if what you are saying is not true.

It's not good to gossip. It hurts people. Even the world defines it as something sort of bad. But the Bible takes it up a notch and makes it even harder. Because it says, "Let *everything* you say be good or helpful" (Ephesians 4:29). Everything I said last night was truthful. But not everything was necessary, and it sure wasn't helpful.

According to the Bible, gossip is not only telling lies about someone. It's saying anything you don't really need to say about someone that isn't good or positive. And that sure is difficult! At least for me.

Today, I am asking for God's forgiveness and putting Proverbs 15:26 in front of me. It helps me remember something I heard in a super old movie once: "If ya can't say somethin' nice, don't say nothin' at all!"

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Do you ever gossip? If you do, write a confession to God in your journal. Ask Him to help you only say what is "good" or "helpful." (And ask your mom if she knows which super old movie I quoted!)

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*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 twenty animals. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# Everything You Do and Say

*"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies!  
Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you.  
Pray for those who hurt you. If someone slaps you on one cheek,  
offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat,  
offer your shirt also. Give to anyone who asks; and when  
things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back.  
Do to others as you would like them to do to you."*

{ Luke 6:27 – 31 }



I was on a school trip at "The Happiest Place on Earth"—Walt Disney World. Except I wasn't happy. One of my friends was whining non-stop. She was making everyone miserable with her complaining.

When I tried to go on a different ride with some other friends, she didn't like that! She began yelling at me and even shoved me right there at the Rock 'n' Roller Coaster. She was trying to start a fight!

There was a part of me that wanted to shove her back. I even thought about yelling at her too and telling her how her actions were ruining everyone's trip.

But I didn't. Instead of yelling or shoving her back, I just walked away. I acted with the love of Jesus, even though it was hard.

In everything you do or say, do it with the love of Jesus, even when it's hard. Even if it means you need to just walk away.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Think about your relationships with your friends. Are you speaking to them with the love of Jesus?

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JULY 14







# A Curb, a Mirror, and a Guide

*If Your instructions hadn't sustained me with joy,  
I would have died in my misery. I will never forget  
Your commandments, for by them You give me life.*  
{ Psalm 119:92 – 93 }



**H**ave you heard people call the Bible “the law?” They’re normally talking about the commandments God gives us in the Old Testament. I grew up learning that the law serves three main purposes. It’s a curb, a mirror, and a guide.

As a curb, it creates boundaries. In the movie *Mary Poppins Returns*, Mary and the children take a carriage ride inside an heirloom china bowl. While inside of it, Mary instructs the kids to keep away from the edge. They learn the boundary is there to protect them. In today’s verse, David realizes the law is a delight because God desires to protect him. Without it, he’d perish in his sin. The law gives David life.

It’s also a mirror. The acronym S.O.S. is a simple way to understand it. S.O.S. stands for Shows Our Sins. The law shows us that we are sinners. We can’t be righteous on our own. But S.O.S also means Shows Our Savior and reminds us of Christ’s finished work on the cross.

And when we find joy in the law, as David did, it becomes a guide to us. It helps us learn to love and serve the world around us.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Look in a mirror. Who do you see? At first, see yourself (a sinner in need of a Savior). Now smile and see Jesus in your reflection!

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# Kindness Counts

*If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal... If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. Love is patient and kind.*

{ 1 Corinthians 13:1 – 4 }



In kindergarten, I remember one of my classmates telling me, “You are bossy!” The sting of her words hurt my heart. But she was right. Looking back, I wish I had listened to her and tried to be more loving.

Her words weren't the last time I was reminded to be more kind. In the third grade, I had to memorize 1 Corinthians 13 for school. Even though I could recite it perfectly, the way I acted didn't show that I knew the verse. And, when I became an adult, a friend gave me a devotional on 1 Corinthians 13. But because I was selfish, my kindness score was still low. It wasn't until I was much older that I began to live by these words that taught me: love is patient and kind.

I have no doubt that you're talented, smart, beautiful, and generous. But are you loving too? If you aren't, those other qualities don't matter. Like today's verses say, without loving kindness others have a hard time noticing our good intentions. Kindness counts. So let your attitude and actions speak love loudly!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Ask the Lord to give you one person to be loving and kind to today. Then, thank Him for the opportunity He gave you.

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JULY 16





# Kind Eyes

*Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.*

{ Galatians 6:10 }




**M**any of us enjoy putting makeup on our eyes so they sparkle. You probably don't use shimmery eyeshadow and mascara every day. But you might apply it when playing dress-up, performing in a dance recital, or celebrating a special occasion.

But do you know what glittery eye makeup can't do? It isn't able to make our eyes kind. Kind eyes start in our hearts.

Romans 2:4 in The Message says, "God is kind, but He's not soft. In kindness He takes us firmly by the hand and leads us into a radical life-change." God looks at us with kind eyes that are filled with love. He doesn't respond to the ugly things we do or say with a frown or disappointment.

God wants us to see others with kind eyes too. This starts by first looking to Him and how He loves us. Others will let us down sometimes. But His kindness inspires us to do good to others and show them love and forgiveness.

Some of us find it easy to have kind eyes. Others of us have to work harder at it. That's okay. God's working on us, helping us learn to love others with kind eyes.

 **ACTION POINT:** Do you have kind eyes? Make a commitment to read your Bible every day this month. Also, ask God to show you His kindness toward you, and ask Him to help you have kind eyes toward others.

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*JENNIE LUSKO is a wife, mom, church planter, learner, and dreamer. She loves spin and boxing, good food, sugary coffee, and trying to keep houseplants alive. [JennieLusko.com](http://JennieLusko.com)*



# Mindful of the Memory Part 1

*How can a young person stay pure?*

*By obeying Your Word.*

{ Psalm 119:9 }



**M**y sisters and I used to play a game where one of us said a movie quote. The other two would guess what film it was from. It was amazing how many we knew! I bet you'd do great in that game, too.

But what about the Bible? How many verses do you know?


If memorizing Scripture feels hard, maybe the problem is you aren't sure where to begin. How about Psalm 1? Verse 1 reads:

*Oh, the joys of those who do not  
follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners,  
or join in with mockers.*

This verse says not to listen when bad people tell you to do bad things, or to hang out with people who enjoy disobeying God. People who make fun of everything and everyone usually can't be trusted.

Say those four lines four times. Say them loud and soft. Say them fast and slow. Add hand motions. Point up for "joy," point to yourself for "those," and shake your head no for "wicked, sinners, mockers." Walk, stand, and sit based on what it says.

Say it three more times. Good job! You've got verse 1. Tomorrow we'll work on verse 2.

 **ACTION POINT:** Recite what you've learned to a parent and tell them tomorrow you're going to work on verse 2.

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JULY 18





# Mindful of the Memory Part 2

*I will delight in your decrees  
and not forget Your Word.*

{ Psalm 119:16 }



**R**eady for verse 2 of Psalm 1? Let's say verse 1 together again.

*Oh, the joys of those who do not  
follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners,  
or join in with mockers.*

Now here's verse 2:

*But they delight in the law of the LORD,  
meditating on it day and night.*

This verse tells us that, unlike the person who wants to be like the wicked, the blessed person has joy. This joy comes from knowing God's Word, thinking about God's Word, and obeying God's Word. This person wants to do everything exactly the way God says to do it.

Now, say this verse four times. Fast, slow, loud, soft. Say it with emotion and like a robot. For "delight," point to your heart. On the word "law," make a book with your hands because that's specifically talking about the Bible. For "meditate," point to your head. When you say "day," lift your head up to be awake, and on "night," pretend to put your head down and sleep.

Repeat it three more times. Now say verses 1 and 2 together.

Well done! Tomorrow we'll start on verse 3.



**ACTION POINT:** Recite verses 1 and 2 for someone.

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*ERIKA VANHAITSMA is a homeschool mom who loves to bring the Bible to life through understanding its culture. She has a podcast called The Context and Color of the Bible. [ErikaVanHaitsma.com](http://ErikaVanHaitsma.com)*



# Mindful of the Memory Part 3

*Open my eyes to see  
the wonderful truths in Your instructions.  
{ Psalm 119:18 }*



**L**et's start by repeating Psalm 1:1–2 together.  
*Oh, the joys of those who do not  
follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners,  
or join in with mockers.  
But they delight in the law of the LORD,  
meditating on it day and night.*

Now for verse 3:

*They are like trees planted along the riverbank,  
bearing fruit each season.  
Their leaves never wither,  
and they prosper in all they do.*

The person who knows and obeys God's Word is like a strong and healthy tree. Like the river supplies what the tree needs, God's Word provides what we need for life. People who know God's Word are constantly being fed. They still have struggles and hurts. But they know God is with them.

You know the drill. Say the verse aloud four times. Be creative and make up your own hand motions.

Repeat it three times. Now say all three verses together.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Take the next three days to add one more verse each day. One week and you'll have all of Psalm 1 memorized. And to make sure you don't lose it, recite it out loud every week. You can do it!

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JULY 20





# Come On Show Some Love!



*Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.*

{ 1 John 3:18 }



**D**o you ever find it easy to say I love you but difficult to put that love into action? I think we all find it hard sometimes! There are some days when my daughters tell me “I love you” three or four times. While I cherish hearing it, it’s even more beautiful when they put it into action. I bet your mom or grandma feels the same way!

What do you think they would say if you asked them, “How can I show you that I love you not just in words but in action?” If my girls asked me, I know my answer: Every time you obey, you show that you love me. When you speak with respect, you demonstrate your love. When you share with your sister, I see your love in action.

I’m reminded of Romans 5:8. It says, “But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.” Jesus put love into action by obeying the Father and dying for us.

Let us love with words and actions, whether we’re at home, school, or church. When we do, we show the love of Christ to others.



**ACTION POINT:** Stop right now and ask the Lord to help you show His love. Make a list of things you can do to show the love of Christ to others.

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# Be Known for Love

*Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.*

{ Proverbs 16:24 }



**Y**ou can be known for a variety of things. Maybe you're so good at spelling that you always win the spelling bee! Or you're SUPER athletic. You are always picked first in gym class. Maybe you sing. Solos are your *forte*. Whatever it may be, odds are you're known for something that you're good at!

The Lord is so creative by giving us individual talents and gifts! You should continue to glorify Him in those areas. But something we should ALL be known for is our loving and kind words!

You can be kind to someone in many different ways, but I've found the easiest way is through what we say. Telling someone you like their outfit, hairstyle, or their class presentation they were super nervous about, could change the whole trajectory of their day!

When you're faithfully kind with your words, you become known for your love. Plus, not only will your encouragement build up your friends, but you'll also be displaying Jesus to them!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Are you known for your kindness? What is the last kind thing you did? Find five kind things this week to say to your classmates, friends, or your family!

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JULY 22







# The Tumbleweed or the Tree?

*But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night.  
They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each  
season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.*

{ Psalm 1:2 – 3 }



**D**o you know what tumbleweed is? It's a plant that detaches itself from its own root system and ends up brown and crackly. It's easily smashed and destroyed because it's so brittle. Compare that to a massive tree. It has green leaves, a huge trunk, and there's a constant source of water nearby. Which one would you prefer to be? Which one do you think will last longer? I hope you said the tree.

That tumbleweed is here today and gone tomorrow. It's constantly blown around by the wind until it's broken. But the tree is alive, growing, and beautiful in every season. It's strong and can last for decades because it has a constant source of water.

Remember how you memorized Psalm 1: 2–3? These verses say that people who spend time getting to know God's Word are like that tree. God's Word is our constant source of water. It gives us life and makes us grow. The Bible provides strength, encouragement, and help in good times and in bad. We need God's Word. We can never have too much of it.

I love studying the Bible! If you keep going, I guarantee you will too.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Recite all of Psalm 1. Write a list of differences between the two types of people in it. What makes them different? Share what you've learned with someone.

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# Sugar Lips

*When she speaks, her words are wise,  
and she gives instructions with kindness.*

{ Proverbs 31:26 }



**W**hat's on your lips? I'm not talking about shimmery lip gloss or sugary-tasting Chapstick. I mean the words that come out of your mouth.

Do you speak truth, love, and kindness to others? Or do you just say what you think someone else wants to hear? Do you respond with a soft, kind answer or with harsh words?

Proverbs 31:26 describes how a wise girl speaks to others. It says, "She gives instructions with kindness." It's often said that those of us who follow Jesus should be known more for what we love than what we hate. Jesus even told His followers, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples" (John 13:35).

So think about your words: does love flow to the people you know who need kindness, gentleness, and encouragement spoken over them?

If they don't, it's not too late to start. Make it a goal today to have more good things to say than negative. Let's be known for the real love we have in Jesus and use our words to leave a trail of kindness and sweetness everywhere we go.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Find time this week to say something kind to a sibling, parent, or friend. Think of something you love about them, and let them know!

---

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JULY 24





# Now and Later



*Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.*


{ Colossians 4:5-6 }



**R**ecently, we took our daughter, who loves roller coasters, to an amusement park. She'd been excited about one particular coaster for a while. As we walked through the theme park, there was a bounce in her step. She couldn't wait for the moment when she'd board the ride and take off! But something happened before she could ride. She needed to be measured first. It turns out she was about half an inch too short! We walked away that day with one sad girl.

Does it ever feel like your life is on hold because you aren't grown-up enough yet? When you're young, it's easy to think that your opportunities to serve Jesus will come later. But today's verses tell us to make the most of *every* opportunity. It doesn't matter how old you are!

One way we can do that is by letting our conversations be "gracious and attractive." What does that mean? Right now, you can make the most of the God appointments that He has for you by being kind. A smile, a friendly word, and a considerate attitude all show God's love and make the most of any opportunity, whether you're eight or eighty.

 **ACTION POINT:** Pray and ask God what appointments He has for you today. Ask Him to help you be ready to make the most of every opportunity with kindness and graciousness.

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*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](http://kidzmatter.com)*



# When Words Sting, Check Your Mouth

*Take control of what I say,  
O LORD, and guard my lips.  
{ Psalm 141:3 }*



**H**ave you ever been hurt by other people's words? I sure have! Sometimes words sting!


One day, as I wiped my tears away after a painful conversation, I picked up a devotional lying on my desk. It was by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth. This comment on Psalm 141:3 caught my attention:

*"Notice where the guard is posted. Not at the ear—to protect us from being hurt by words we might hear, or at the heart—to shield us from the wounds that are sometimes caused by what others do. Rather, the Psalmist asked God to post a [guard] at his own mouth knowing that the greatest danger he faced was not what others might do to him, but rather, what he might say that would harm others."*

Woah! Reading that helped me change what I was focusing on. I started thinking about my own words and how they've hurt others.

Have you considered how what you say might wound others? Do your words put others down or build them up? Do they regularly encourage or discourage the people you talk with?

The next time someone's words cut you deep, let the pain remind you to check your own mouth.

 **ACTION POINT:** Ask your family how you're using your words. Then ask God to guard your lips so what you say doesn't sting others.

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JULY 26





# Secret Acts of Kindness

*But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.*


{ Matthew 6:3 – 4 }



**A** simple act of kindness can mean so much! But did you know the heart behind the action is what really matters? In Matthew 6, Jesus confronts the teachers of the law for doing good deeds. Why? They only did them for the rewards. Instead of being kind because they loved God and wanted to obey Him, they were selfish. They wanted everybody to see how amazing they were.

Sometimes it's easy for us to want the same thing. But all of our actions should bring glory and honor to God alone! Jesus goes so far as to say, "Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing!" In other words, treat others with kindness because you love God, not because you want to impress them.

Where is your heart? Do you do nice things for others so that they will like you and think you're awesome? Or are you kind to others because you love God and want them to love Him too?

 **ACTION POINT:** Do an act of kindness today and keep it a secret. Let it be something that only you and God know about. Even though others may not see your good deed, God will. He'll reward you for obeying Him!

---

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# Just Do It

*And let us not grow weary of doing good,  
for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

{ Galatians 6:9 }



In my elementary school, there were two mean girls. If someone wanted to sit by them, they'd say, "This seat is saved." At recess, they'd exclude others who asked to play by walking away.

I couldn't understand why they acted like that. So I told my mom about them. She said to kill them with kindness! What she meant was this: no matter what they did, be nice. Use manners, help them, and try to be their friend. I decided to give it a shot.

When I turned in my papers, I offered to turn theirs in too. In gym class, I put their jump ropes away. I brought extra fruit snacks to lunch and shared with them. For several months, I looked for ways every day to be kind.

Then it happened! One of the girls asked me to swing next to her. Little by little, I noticed them being nicer to me. They never apologized for being mean, but I didn't need them to. I was just glad they were being kind.

Maybe there's someone you know who's unkind. Try to reach out and be loving to them. Think of small things you can do to show kindness. And just maybe, you will see them change.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Write down the names of people who have been unkind to you. Pray for them. Also, ask God to help you forgive them. If you're being unkind to someone, write down your name and ask God to change you.

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JULY 28





# Your Kindness is Huge



*"There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish.  
But what good is that with this huge crowd?"*

{ John 6:9 }



**W**hen my kids were tweens, they watched short videos about kids who raised money for big causes. Some of these kids collected funds to plant trees or help homeless people. Other kids got people to donate money to provide wells to places that needed clean water.

After watching these stories, my tweens felt horrible. Instead of being inspired, they felt like failures. Why? Because there wasn't a video about a cause they championed. So we talked about it.

While big causes can make a difference, God doesn't ask us to bring Him a three-minute video that millions of people watch. Just like the boy in today's verse, He wants us to offer Him our small, everyday acts of kindness. I doubt the boy felt like he was giving Jesus a lot with his lunch. But do you remember what Jesus did with it? He fed more than 5,000 people!

Jesus can take the small choices you make and multiply them into something huge for His glory. Today, smile or thank others. Take time to compliment someone or share with them. Can you do that and trust Jesus to bless others because of your one small act of kindness?

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Put thirty goldfish crackers in a container. Find another container and move one goldfish to it each time you make a small choice to show kindness. I bet your small choices will give you a huge feeling of happiness inside.

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# Help Them Heal

*Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.*

{ James 1:19 }



**H**ave you ever tried to cheer up someone who's unhappy? I used to have a job helping people who were so sad, they needed medical help. It was important for me to be kind to them so they could heal and find joy. But, sometimes, it was hard to be loving. Many of them expressed their sadness as anger towards me and the other helpers.

James 1:19 tells us that we must be slow to speak and slow to get angry. When one of the people I was helping got upset, following this guideline helped me. It reminded me to stop and take a few deep breaths before responding. And, breathing deeply caused me to slow down and keep in mind that the person was hurting. They needed me to show them kindness, grace, and the love of Jesus.

Do you have trouble being kind when people are angry? It's wise to stand up for yourself and let people know the way they're treating you is hurtful. But you can do that with kindness and the understanding that the other person may be very sad or hurting.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Let's practice taking deep breaths! Sit down and hold your hands open on your lap. Breathe in for a count of three Mississippi's and out for three. The next time you or someone around you is angry, do this exercise!

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JULY 30







# Three Easy Ways to Encourage Others

*So encourage each other and build each other up,  
just as you are already doing.*

{ 1 Thessalonians 5:11 }



**H**e walked past my table, pushing a yellow cart. “Thanks for cleaning,” I said. The next thing I knew, he was standing next to me, smiling. “In fifteen years of cleaning this store,” he shared, “no one has ever thanked me.” My grateful words had made his day!

You can make someone’s day too. Here are three easy ways to use your words to encourage others:

**1. Say thanks.** If something looks nice or tastes good, it’s because someone worked hard. Instead of taking things like this for granted, go out of your way to say thanks.

**2. Share the nice thoughts you have about others.** One day, I told a friend, “You are one of those women who gets more beautiful with age.” It turns out she was having a bad day, and my words encouraged her. Instead of keeping kind words to yourself, share them.

**3. Pass encouragement on.** Once a girl told me her relative hated her. But later, I heard that same relative say she loved this girl. I made sure to pass that comment on. It encouraged the girl’s heart! You can do this too by sharing the nice things you hear about others with them.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Intentionally encourage someone with your words today.

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*PAULA MARSTELLER lives with her sweet hubby and their two blue-eyed boys. She authored Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl: On Her Journey from Neediness to Freedom. [PaulaWrites.com](http://PaulaWrites.com)*



# A Summer Sabbath

*So there is a special rest still  
waiting for the people of God.  
{ Hebrews 4:9 }*




**A**ugust means sunflowers, hot summer days, and cool evenings where I live. We enjoy life at a restful pace since school isn't in session yet. If your summer has been busy, this is your last chance to get in a summer Sabbath.

What's a Sabbath? This idea comes from the Ten Commandments God gave to His people. These were *the* most important rules He wanted them to obey. Number four was: "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (Exodus 20:8). This was an instruction to take a day off from work.

We're still supposed to obey that rule. Hebrews 4:9 basically says, "There's still this special day of rest waiting for you to enjoy!" Modern Christians typically use Sunday for worship and rest. But if we're honest, few of us do it well or faithfully.

Here's the thing: God commands us to rest regularly. He created us to rest regularly. Did you do that this summer? If not, jump into a hammock and swing. Pull out a book and read on a beach towel in the backyard. Sleep in. Lay in the grass and stare at the clouds. Do something truly restful for an entire day.

 **ACTION POINT:** Talk to your mom about Sabbath rest and ask her to help you plan a summer Sabbath day.

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AUGUST 1





# Let's Be Different



*"But my servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to me, so I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will possess their full share of that land."*

{ Numbers 14:24 }



**T**he beginning of the school year is always full of promise and potential. But, with time, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. There are hard projects and homework assignments that don't make sense. Sometimes the classes that seemed fun overload our brains with too many facts and figures.

How can we face the difficulties a new school year brings? With a different attitude!

Today's verse is from the book of Numbers. Do you remember the 12 spies who had a sneak peek at the Promised Land? Even though a dozen men went in, only two of them shared encouraging news. Caleb was one of them. He saw the same giants the other spies saw, but his attitude was different. Instead of being discouraged, Caleb followed God and trusted Him with the details.

When school becomes challenging and that beginning-of-the-year excitement fades, let's stop and look at it differently. Instead of allowing your feelings to take over, hold on to Jesus and trust Him completely. Let's be girls with a different attitude!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Ask God to make you more like Caleb. Invite Him to show you how your attitude toward school could honor Him more. Then, journal about what He's showing you and the changes He's asking you to make.

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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](http://kidzmatter.com)



# Celebrity Homework

*Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.*

{ Colossians 3:23 }




Imagine your favorite celebrity just called. They have a free backstage pass for you to spend the day with them tomorrow. The only thing you have to do first is to finish your homework. How quickly do you think that work would get done?

Let's face it. Anything we have to do every day tends to get boring at times. It's easy to start with good intentions. But, it's just as easy to slip into the habit of giving less than our best, especially when it comes to school.

The Bible encourages us to work hard at everything we do as if we are working for God. Forget your favorite celebrity. How would you tackle your homework if God Himself was standing right beside you? Oh wait, He is! He is always with you and cheering you on. Plus, He can give you the desire to want to do your very best.

If you feel anxious or overwhelmed by the work you have, take a deep breath. God sees you, and He is waiting to help you. All you have to do is ask Him.

 **ACTION POINT:** In your journal, write a letter to God asking Him to fill you with His strength and excitement to do your best at school. Then write Colossians 3:23 on a brightly colored sticky note and hang it in your bedroom.

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AUGUST 3





# This Day

*This is the day the LORD has made.  
We will rejoice and be glad in it.  
{ Psalm 118:24 }*



**W**hen I was in first grade, I entered a national poetry contest and won!

*The woodpecker makes his nest in a tree  
He pecks all day  
No matter what we say  
So I better go away  
Little tree*

That...was officially the first published writing of Dannah Gresh! My mom was so proud that she had a professional watercolor artist paint a picture of a woodpecker on a tree and write my poem beside her art. It hung in our family room for decades! My mom was rejoicing in something I created, even if it was kind of a silly poem. It made my heart happy every time I passed it. And it made my mom feel good, too.

Do you know who is a better artist than that watercolor artist and me combined? God! And He made this day. Sunny or rainy. Cool or hot. Breezy or stormy. Beautiful sunset or cloudy ending. God decided what today should look like.

What would happen if we celebrated God's artistry? I think it would make Him happy. And, I think it would change how we feel too. Let's rejoice and be glad in *this* day. God made it!

 **ACTION POINT:** Find a special way to rejoice and be glad in *this* day. Write about it in your journal or talk about it with your family.

---

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# Time to Study

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

{ Psalm 119:11 }



**D**id you know that when Jesus was a boy the first book of the Bible Jewish kids memorized was Leviticus? They had to memorize the whole thing. And they started at the age of five. After that, they'd go back to Genesis and begin memorizing the rest of the Old Testament.

That's how important the Bible was to them. They spent hours every single day studying, memorizing, discussing, arguing, learning, teaching, praying, and trying to understand God's Word.

What about you? How much time do you spend reading the Bible and praying? Now, think about how often you watch TV, play video games, or talk to friends. Where do you spend more time?

If you're like me, it's way easier to turn on the TV then open my Bible. But you know what I've found? The more I study God's Word, the more interesting and exciting it becomes. And now, I think studying Scripture is more addicting than video games or movies! It's incredible.

Do you want to know God's Word better? Then start now. Read it and memorize it. Ask God to help you. Grab a friend and start a study group. You'll never be sorry.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Pick a passage of Scripture to memorize. Share it with an adult and recite it to them when you've finished. Then review it once a week to make sure you never lose it. Pick a new passage and begin again.

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AUGUST 5





# How to Get an A+



*Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature  
and in favor with God and all the people.*

{ Luke 2:52 }



**W**hat's the trick to earning an A+? Let's check out this story about Jesus to find out!

The Bible doesn't say much about Jesus' tween years. But it does tell us that when He was 12 years old, He **WOWED** the synagogue Bible teachers with His understanding of the Scriptures. Imagine that! He must have studied hard. We also know that Jesus obeyed His parents, took care of His body, and grew in His relationships with God and people. Jesus earned an A+ for the way He lived His tween years!

When we put our trust in Jesus, God applies Jesus' perfect righteousness to us. That means God sees Jesus' hard-earned A+, and He gives it to us. True Girl, there's no "trick to earning an A+." We just need to receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

Then, God helps us to imitate Jesus as we study and grow. Think about it this way: imagine showing up for your first day of school. Your teacher says, "You already have an A+ in this class. Don't worry. I'll teach you how to learn and grow like the A+ student you are." Well, that's what God says to us!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Breathe a sigh of relief that Jesus lived the perfect tween years for you. Thank Him for the generous gift of His A+. Ask Him for grace to imitate Him as you work at home and school.

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*LAURA BOOZ is a wife, mom, writer, and teacher. As a tween, Laura swam on swim team, roller skated, and loved learning things. Listen to her podcast, Expect Something Beautiful. [LauraBooz.com](http://LauraBooz.com)*



# My Wacky Donkey

*You make springs pour water into the ravines, so streams gush down from the mountains. They provide water for all the animals, and the wild donkeys quench their thirst.*

{ Psalm 104:10 – 11 }



I have a donkey. She isn't wild, but she's whacky. Her name's Cassie, which is short for Casserole, and it looks like she ate one too many! She's fat. And sassy. Every day in the winter—when she doesn't have green grass to munch on—she announces my morning arrival to water and feed my farm animals. When donkeys vocalize, it's called *braying*. It sounds like a loud, goofy laugh, but also like a horn honking. When I point the hose at her drinking trough, she sort of prances in front of it, waiting for it to fill. She's so excited at the flow of water gushing out that she "thanks" me.

Think about this: God does that every day, all day for His wild donkeys. And foxes. And deer. And bunnies. He provides water for the animals. He cares for them.

But here's what I really want you to think about today. Try to be like Cassie when you see God's water sources. Oceans, rivers, streams, waterfalls, and springs are all there for you and for me too! Let's be grateful and praise God the next time we see one. (You can even bray if you think of it!)

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Take a walk to a spring, creek or lake if you live near one. If not, grab your journal and draw one. And then, tell God "thank you."

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AUGUST 7







# The Spelling Bee



*So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*


{ 1 Corinthians 10:31 }



It was the final round of our spelling bee. There were only three of us left. I couldn't believe I'd made it to the final round! I had studied every night after school so I'd be ready. Kathy and Harry were each given their word, and neither one of them could spell it correctly. The next one was for me. Was I really ready? The word was *government*. All of my studying worked. I won the spelling bee!

I wish I could say I was rewarded with a good grade every time I studied that hard. But that didn't always happen. Sometimes I didn't pass the test. And, when I failed, I felt like I wasn't a good student.

But being a good student isn't just about grades. It's not always about the A, B, or even C on our report cards. It's about giving our best so that God can be honored. That includes listening and respecting our teachers, doing our homework, and trying our best on every test. It's about giving our best. When we do these things, that's what glorifies and honors God.

 **ACTION POINT:** Use your prayer diary to write about something you could do as a student to honor God. Set some goals as you begin this year.

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# Watering Camels

*When she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels, too, until they have had enough to drink."*

{ Genesis 24:19 }



**D**id you know camels and schoolwork have something in common?

In today's Bible verse from Genesis, a woman named Rebekah offers a thirsty traveler a drink of water. That was common courtesy. But she didn't stop with a glass of water. She offered to draw a drink for not just one, but 10 camels too. That would take a long time and require a lot of sweat and hard work. After all, camels drink more than one bottle of water!

Rebekah was diligent, which means she wasn't afraid of hard work, effort, or serving others. She just sprang into action and got the job done. Who knows, maybe she was a camel lover! Her hard work revealed her good character, and she actually ended up meeting her husband Isaac as a result of her diligence.

I'm guessing you don't have any camels to water, but you can be like Rebekah. You can look for ways to do more than the minimum. You can turn your homework in on time and make sure it's written neatly. You can offer to help someone in your class who's struggling. You can do more than what is expected at school and home.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** What's something a little extra you can do today to be excellent at school? What is something you can do to help out around the house?

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AUGUST 9





# The Recipe for Success

*If you need wisdom, ask our generous God,  
and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.*  
{ James 1:5 }



**D**o you love to watch cooking competitions? I sure do! After a few episodes, we start catching on to what the judges are really looking for in a successful chef. So, when I saw one contestant argue with the head judge after receiving some helpful advice, I cringed and said, “Oh no! He’s definitely going home this week!”

Sure enough, he was put into the elimination challenge. His dish looked and tasted almost identical to his competitor. But one thing sent him home. The judges said, “To win this competition, we need an incredible pupil. And you weren’t it.”

He wasn’t *teachable*. This contestant wasn’t willing to take wise advice from people who were much smarter than him! Do you ever find yourself in the same position?

Being teachable is part of the recipe for success in life. In fact, there are over 90 verses in the Bible that reference wisdom or taking wise advice! One of my favorites is our key verse for today. Can you believe that God is generous enough to give His wisdom to you? All you have to do is become teachable and ask Him!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Today, as you write in your prayer journal, ask yourself some questions. Are you teachable? How can you adjust your attitude to become more teachable? Then, ask God for His wisdom.

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



# Honor Your Parents

*Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long,  
full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.*

{ Exodus 20:12 }



**D**id you know that honoring your mom and dad isn't just doing what you're told? It's much more!

To honor means to think highly of and to treat with respect. There are many ways you can do that. You can say truthful, kind things about them to others. You can ask their advice when you're making a decision. Or maybe try putting away the dishes or making your bed before they even ask you to. Just think how honored your parents will feel!

I know that some of you may not live with your parents. But, whatever your relationship with them looks like, there are still ways to honor them. You can pray for their well-being and ask God to help you live in a way that would please them.

Whatever your situation is, ask God to help you honor your father and mother the best you can.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** In your prayer diary, write today's Bible verse and three ways you can honor your parents. Commit to doing these three things for at least the next month.

*ERICA PLEAU is a friend of Pure Freedom and is passionate about helping girls realize they're masterpieces created by God. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



AUGUST 11





# Sunflower Theology

*Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow Me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."*

{ John 8:12 }



**D**id you plant your sunflowers this year? I sure hope they bloomed for you. In fact, they may be blooming right now. Take a look outside and check something out. Which way are the heads of the flowers leaning?

Have you ever noticed how this plant turns its huge flowering head towards the sun? The "sunflower" teaches us something important. We need to look to the light. The sun is a source of both visibility and heat. We need it to live. Vitamin D, which we get from the sun, helps our brains think happy thoughts and our bodies fight sickness. To be happy and safe in a difficult world, we need the warmth of the sun.

But there is a Light that is greater than the sun, which we need to point our lives towards: Jesus. When He was on earth, He said, "I am the light of the world." When we look to Him every day, just like the sunflower looks to the sun, we bloom and flourish.

Every day, when you open this book and your Bible, you are "looking" to Jesus. And I want you to know that I am praying for you!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Draw a picture of your sunflowers in your prayer journal. Then, write a prayer asking for help to always "look to the Light."

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*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 twenty animals. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# Seek Jesus First

*Seek the kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.*

{ Matthew 6:33 }



**G**oing back to school is always an exciting time! You get to see friends you haven't seen all summer. Many of the school activities you're involved in are starting back up again. Life just seems to be filled with more fun things to do!

But with school also comes a busy schedule. In the summer, you had church and lots of time with family. Now you're adding homework, after-school activities, time with friends, and more to your calendar! All of these things can quickly take control of your attention. When life gets hectic, it's so easy to forget about spending time with Jesus.

What we often forget is that Jesus should be the most important person in our lives! Your relationship with Him is meant to come before anything else you do daily. He's a higher priority than your friends, your homework, and even your family! If you're going to live a life that brings God glory, you need to seek His kingdom first.

So how do you make Jesus first in your life? By spending time with Him every day, no matter how busy you may be. When you read your Bible and pray every day, you're seeking Him first!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Make Jesus the first thought you have when you wake up and your last thought before falling asleep. In the morning, thank Him for a new day. At bedtime, say a prayer telling Jesus what you're thankful for!

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*KINDRA LAWSON is a Biblical Studies major at Cedarville University and enjoys coffee, reading, and music. [KindraLawson.home.blog](http://KindraLawson.home.blog)*



AUGUST 13





# Watch for the Ants



*Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones.  
Learn from their ways and become wise!*  
{ Proverbs 6:6 }



**H**omeschooling my two daughters has been an adventure of ups and downs! I remember a “down” day when we were studying a difficult concept. One of my girls began to complain. She wanted to give up and stop working!

That’s when we decided to learn about ants. Did you know that the Bible talks about these tiny insects? They work hard. When it comes to carrying food and working together, ants bring their best effort. They don’t give up!

As God’s girls, He calls us to work hard like the ants. He wants us to learn from their ways so we can grow in wisdom. Sometimes it’s tough for us to understand our schoolwork or a responsibility our parents or teachers give us. But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t try our best to achieve it. In those moments, when we need God the most, He’s ready to help us do our best.

After our ant lesson, my daughter and I prayed together. We asked the Lord to give us the courage and strength we needed to bring our all to everything we do. Whether at school or home, we wanted to work from our hearts to glorify Him.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** In your prayer diary, write one thing you can work hard at this week. It could be a school assignment, helping someone in your family, or simply listening to others’ advice and putting it into practice.

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# Back-To-School Tummy

*"This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."*


{ Joshua 1:9 }



**D**o you get nervous about the first day of school? I always did. From kindergarten to my last year of college, I greeted the school year with a good case of an upset tummy. It usually lasted a day or two, and then I was okay.

The book of Joshua starts with the death of Moses, who was a great leader for God's people. He led them out of Egyptian slavery and towards a land that would be their own. Guess who would be the next leader and had the task of leading them into "the Promised Land?" Joshua. And he was afraid. God's instruction to Joshua was "be strong and courageous!" and God's comfort was "I will be with you!"

We don't have to give in to our fears. It's okay to be afraid, but it's not good to let it stop you from doing what God wants you to do. And He wants you to start (and complete) another school year! Whether you're jumping on a school bus each morning or making the long commute to homeschool at your kitchen table, God's going with you. Each step of the way, He'll help you to be strong and courageous!

 **ACTION POINT:** Write in your prayer journal about how you feel about starting school. If it does not make you nervous, you might write about something that does. Ask God to make you strong and courageous.

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*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 twenty animals. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



AUGUST 15







# Kitchen Table Nights

*No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful!  
But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right  
living for those who are trained in this way.*

{ Hebrews 12:11 }



**O**h, man! I sure do remember some long nights I spent with my parents at our kitchen table. They sat next to me as I tried to finish a homework assignment or a project I'd put off doing. Papers were spread all over. Books were wide open. Usually, there was a calculator there somewhere too. Tears would stream down my face as I struggled to understand a challenging math problem.

The truth is, those late nights were hard. But, as I continued school, the memory of those nights reminded me to get my work done.

I soon became thankful for those kitchen table nights. I felt grateful for the extra hours my parents spent helping me instead of letting me fail. And look at me now! I graduated high school! Not only did I finish, but during my last year, I was able to relax and enjoy it. And it was all because of the hard work I had put in the years before!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Are you having trouble working hard and completing the tasks you need to finish? Remember the discipline in today's verse. Training always pays off whether it's now or in 20 years when you get your dream job!

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at the Pure Freedom offices and loves seeing girls  
desire to know the heart of God. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# First-Day Friends

*Love each other with genuine affection,  
and take delight in honoring each other.*

{ Romans 12:10 }



**E**very year on the first day of school, my mom had a mission for me: Imagine if you were the new kid in class, how would you feel?

As a Christian, she was reminding me that I needed to be a friend to everyone and show them love, especially the new kids in class. Being a newcomer or not having friends on the first day of school is hard. No one likes that feeling. None of us want to feel alone.

Today's verse encourages us to love everyone, including the new kids. And we're not supposed to love others in just a shallow sort of way. God wants us to do it with "genuine affection" or real kindness. We're to find joy in seeing, spending time with, and celebrating them.

What does this look like on the first day of school? It means being kind and welcoming to the kid who is different, the kid that we have nothing in common with, and even the kid that might smell a little funny. Jesus doesn't tell us to pick and choose who to show His love to. He asks us to be kind to everyone, even the new kids.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Make a commitment to be a friend to everyone, not just on the first day of school, but all year long. And if you have new kids in your class, be the first one to welcome them with a smile!

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*AMBER PIKE is the editor of KidzMatter magazine, an author, a children's minister, and a momma whose passion is seeing kids love the Word of God and walk with Him! [AmberPike.org](http://AmberPike.org)*



AUGUST 17





# Don't Worry ... Be Praying!



*Do not worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all that He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand.*

{ Philippians 4:6 – 7 }



If you had to make a list of things that worry you about school, I'm sure you'd be able to write a long one. I know I could! My list would include homework, tests, friend drama, public speaking, and difficult teachers. But did you know there's something we can do instead of feeling anxious? Philippians 4:6–7 reminds us to replace our worry with prayer: "Do not worry about anything; instead, pray about everything."

God loves you. Tell Him what you need. He's ready and willing to help. Remember also to thank Him for what He's done for you already. Gratitude in prayer reminds us how God has come through for us before. We can feel peace knowing that He hears and answers our prayers.

If we pray, does that mean we don't need to study or do our homework? Of course, not! God gives us the ability and strength to do our part too. Hard work helps us learn. But sometimes challenging situations feel like more than we can handle—and that's when we might worry. So that's when we also pray! God has strength and understanding way beyond our own. We can trust Him to help us.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** The next time you're worried, stop and pray. Write a list of how God has answered your prayers in the past. Maybe even start a gratitude journal for when you're worried and need reminders of how God's helped you before.

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*JULIE HARNER is a wife to Gary and mother of three school-aged children. She enjoys reading, writing, baking, traveling, and spending time outdoors with her family and dog, Teddy.*



# Plan For Success

*Work brings profit,  
but mere talk leads to poverty!*  
{ Proverbs 14:23 }




I'm a dreamer. Each day I come up with at least two new inventions, five new vacation plans, and what could be the plot of the next best-selling novel. Thinking and using my imagination has always jazzed me up.

The next best thing after thinking through my dreams is sharing them with my friends and family. I can talk through every exciting possibility for hours on end.

The problem comes when it's time to buckle down, make a plan, and put those ideas into action. That's when things get tougher. But the truth is that no dream, idea, or vision becomes a reality unless we put in some much-needed planning and hard work.

In this verse, King Solomon reminds us of the importance of hard work. We can talk about a cool idea all day long. But, until we commit to taking the necessary steps to set it in motion, we'll never see the success of it. If we want to create the ultimate science project, make the winning shot at a basketball game, or start a lemonade stand business for the summer, we have to put in the effort to make the progress we want to see.

 **ACTION POINT:** Think of a dream you have. Write a list of things you can do to help achieve it. Ask God for help in seeing them through. Share it with your mom or a trusted adult so they can encourage you.

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*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](http://mytruegirl.com)*



AUGUST 19





# Cross-Eyed and Cross-Eared for Jesus!

*So faith comes from hearing, that is,  
hearing the Good News about Christ.*

{ Romans 10:17 }



It's okay to be a little "cross-eyed" or "cross-eared" for Jesus! Get it? CROSS-eyed? CROSS-eared? (Sorry, not sorry. Mom joke.)

It's okay to acknowledge the difficulty of reading the Bible or admit you don't understand. But God has great news for you. He gave you this amazing, supernatural promise: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

Did you catch that promise? Faith doesn't come from your pursuit of knowledge. Faith doesn't come by your hours of work. It doesn't even come by your own understanding.

Faith comes by hearing through the Word of Christ. The words of Jesus will enter into your eyes and your ears and plant a gift of faith inside of you.

You might not understand what you're reading yet, but keep studying. Faith will give you a desire to want more and to understand more. Trust God to give you this lasting gift of faith as you study His word.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Next time you read something you don't understand, circle it and put a date by it. Ask God for wisdom. Explore your Bible for answers. When you finally understand it, put a new date to celebrate the gift of faith!

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# Training for Life

*Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave,  
there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.*

{ Ecclesiastes 9:10 }




**A**fter I graduated from college, I started teaching sixth-grade English and Bible at a Christian school. I was so excited to have my own classroom and to get to know my students.

Many students told me they didn't like English because they hated writing. Others said they loved reading but disliked grammar. And some of them enjoyed everything about English class, which sounded like me in the sixth grade.

I told all of my students that school was their job. It wasn't just about getting the highest grade. School was more about learning new things and good habits. So they needed to do their best. They understood this because their parents had careers and worked hard at what they did.

Not everyone likes school, but it's training for life. And, just like school, life can be tough sometimes. If you aren't a fan of school, remember that God gave you teachers, parents, grandparents, and siblings to help you when things are difficult. He didn't intend for you to do everything on your own. So work diligently and do your best every day. But, when things are challenging, ask someone for help.

 **ACTION POINT:** Talk to your mom or dad today about your schoolwork. Be honest if it is too hard or too easy. Spend time talking about goals and praying together about this school year.

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AUGUST 21





# Let Your Good Deeds Shine ✨

*"...let your good deeds shine out for all to see,  
so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."*

{ Matthew 5:16b }



**H**ave you ever heard about an image or video that's gone "viral" online? Something about it is extra funny or inspiring and captures people's attention. They just can't help but share it with others. Before long, everyone's seen it and is talking about it!

Of course, the fame and popularity only lasts for a few days...until the next viral video comes along.

What if our good deeds were extra special and noticed by others to the point where they went "viral"? What if people were so impressed that they even decided to copy our actions? I'm sure the attention would be exciting and overwhelming. We would feel pretty good about ourselves, right?

But Matthew 5:16 reminds us that the purpose of our good deeds isn't meant to bring us fame, popularity, or attention. Instead, they're intended to direct the praise and glory to God. It's an amazing opportunity to have a role in helping make God famous!

So let's shine our lights by doing extra special good deeds and bringing glory to God instead of to ourselves. When we do, it will have a more lasting impact than being a momentary internet sensation.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Look for an opportunity to do a good deed that will bring attention and glory to God. Sometimes, it's best to do it secretly. It could be for a friend, the new kid, a teacher, or even your bus driver!

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*JULIE HARNER is a wife to Gary and mother of three school-aged children. She enjoys reading, writing, baking, traveling, and spending time outdoors with her family and dog, Teddy.*



# Be Diligent in the Little Things

*The master said, "Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!"*

{ Matthew 25:23 }



**A**fter you've been in school for a few months, do you ever feel like if you have to do one more assignment, you'll explode? I remember how much I longed for summer the day after, well...the first day of school!

It can be frustrating to be diligent in your studies when you'd rather be a missionary somewhere in Africa, a recognized artist, or a professional athlete. I feel you, girl! Doing schoolwork isn't the most fun thing to do in your day. Yet, did you know how you handle your assignments has a spiritual impact on your life and even your future?

In Matthew 25:23, Jesus gave a secret on how God chooses who He will use to accomplish amazing and BIG things. Here's the secret: He promised that if you're diligent in the little and ordinary things, God will trust you with BIG things!

Don't minimize the daily responsibilities God's given you. He's waiting to see how well you handle the things you have now so He can bless you according to your effort. Let Him know He can trust you with much tomorrow!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Write a prayer asking God to help you be diligent in the daily things that seem ordinary and unimportant. And remember, extraordinary moments are composed of ordinary moments where you decide to give your best!

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AUGUST 23







# Not a Checklist Bubble



*Take delight in the LORD, and He will  
give you your heart's desires.*  
{ Psalm 37:4 }



I don't know about you, but I'm a checklist type of girl. I love getting things done and marking them off. Sometimes, though, my check-listing habits can go too far. I write one of my "to do's" down and forget why I'm doing it.

A few weeks ago, I was in a Bible study, and it felt like something was missing. I did all the homework but wasn't getting anything out of it. During that time, God reminded me it wasn't about rules or marking Bible study off my list. It was about spending time with Him.

So often, I make my time with God a meaningless thing on a checklist. Instead, it needs to be the most important part of my day. Psalm 37:4 says we need to delight in the Lord. We need to *fellowship*, which is just a fancy word for spending time with our Creator, because we enjoy being with Him.

It takes lots of discipline to do this. But spending time with your Heavenly Father, for the sake of simply getting to know Him, is one of the most important habits you can create. And, I promise you, this one simple practice will change you more than any other!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Think of three ways you can spend time fellowshiping with God this week. It could be singing a worship song, writing in your prayer diary, or going on a prayer walk. Whatever they are, do them to enjoy spending time with your Savior!

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REBECCA BARKER is a high schooler. If described in three words, it would be Disney, skating, and theater. She loves reading her Bible and finding the treasures it contains. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)



# Discipline Makes Us Better


*I discipline my body like an athlete,  
training it to do what it should.*  
{ 1 Corinthians 9:27 }



**D**iscipline. It's a word that many of us don't like, right? To be disciplined means to practice self-control. Think of it this way: if you want to become a great basketball player, you practice, exercise, and eat healthy to stay in good physical shape. These things can be hard, but the benefits far outweigh the temporary displeasure. Disciplining yourself makes you a better athlete!

This is exactly what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, "I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should." Paul exercised discipline and self-control in ministry so that he could effectively share the gospel with people everywhere.

As you head back to school, remember the importance of discipline, specifically in your studies. There will be moments when things are challenging and uncomfortable, but keep pushing. Commit to practicing self-control and training yourself to be a good student both academically and biblically. Study hard, so you're ready to use all that you learn for God's glory.

 **ACTION POINT:** Create a schedule for schoolwork and Bible study. Hang it in your room and stick to it! Some days you won't feel like practicing discipline, but it's good for you. Remember God's with you, helping you live a self-controlled life.

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*PORTIA COLLINS is a Christian Bible teacher, writer, podcast host, and the founder of She Shall Be Called. Portia and her husband live in the Mississippi Delta with their daughter. sheshallbecalled.com*



AUGUST 25





# Practice Isn't a Bad Thing ✨

*The LORD directs the steps of the godly.  
He delights in every detail of their lives.  
{ Psalm 37:23 }*



**H**ave you ever needed to practice something, and it felt like a chore? You might take music lessons or play a sport that requires you to put in time at home. We've all had moments where we don't *want* to practice. We don't *feel* like doing that thing again and again.

Maybe you've dreamed about what you want to be when you grow up. More importantly, perhaps you've asked God to show you His plans for you. I knew from the time I was young that God had put me on earth to make music. One of the things my dad shared is, "The dream dictated I needed to practice." So spending time at my piano wasn't just something my music teacher said needed to happen. It was something my dreams dictated. My desires determined the actions I needed to take. Does that shift your perspective about practice?

I have no doubt there are things you have on your heart to do in this world. They may be artistic. They could be a sport or have to do with sewing or business. The way you get good at doing something is by repeating it. So remember, practice isn't a bad thing!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** Based on what you know God is asking you to do, what are the things you need to practice? How can you change your mindset towards the steps you need to take and the work it may require?

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*YANCY is a songwriter, worship leader, and producer who makes music and videos for church and home. She's passionate about worship and loves making Jesus loud. She lives in Nashville. [YancyNotNancy.com](http://YancyNotNancy.com)*



# Stay On Course!

*Then we will no longer be immature like children.  
We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind  
of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people  
try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.*

{ Ephesians 4:14 }



**T**he Suez Canal is a man-made waterway that sits between Africa and Asia. Its main purpose is to help speed up international trade and get shipping containers to their next destination. Recently, a ship called the Ever Given got stuck in the middle of the canal and blocked it for six days. It disrupted hundreds of ships and cost over 54 BILLION dollars!

You might be wondering how it got stuck there. All it took to blow the ship off-course was a 40-mile-per-hour wind coming from Egypt. Wind caused the ship to get stuck.

The Apostle Paul understood how powerful wind can be. In Ephesians 4, he talks to Christians about unity and spiritual maturity. Paul knew it would be easy for a new believer to be influenced by people spreading lies about God. He compares false teachings to wind—powerful enough to push new believers away from Truth.

It's not all bad news! He also explains that Jesus equipped apostles, prophets, and pastors to help us grow in our knowledge of God so we can stand firm in our faith. By preparing ourselves with the Truth, there's no room for lies to blow us off course!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** As you go into a new school year, take some time to talk to your mom about new teachings and influences you might face. Discuss how you can prepare yourself with Truth now!

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



AUGUST 27





# Young and Mature



*Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young.  
Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the  
way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.  
{ 1 Timothy 4:12 }*




**S**hanthi was my friend in seventh grade. She was from India, and we hung out in after-school art with a Christian teacher named Faith. Faith led Shanthi to understand that Jesus loved her and wanted her to follow Him. This was a difficult decision for Shanthi. Her parents weren't Christians. They were Hindu, a religion that doesn't follow the One True God and worship Jesus.

We weren't allowed to hang out together after Shanthi became a Christian. And she didn't come to after-school art class anymore. But sometimes, I walked with her through the halls. She always asked me to pray for her family. She was so respectful and kind when she talked about them.

When I read 1 Timothy 4:12, I think of Shanthi. She was mature and wise, even though she was a new Christian. Both Faith and I, who had known Jesus longer, respected her for how she conducted herself. She was an example for us even though she was young in the Christian faith.

I often wonder where she is and how she's doing! I pray that her parents became Christians. Would you pray with me for Shanthi and her parents? God knows how she's doing.

 **ACTION POINT:** Write a prayer in your prayer journal asking God to help you be an example of what it means to be a Christian even though you are young.

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*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 twenty animals. [mytruegirl.com](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# Beware the Hot Sauce

*Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand  
what the Lord wants you to do.*

{ Ephesians 5:17 }



**I** love hot sauce! But not everyone does. Many people find it too spicy. It's not a flavor you want to put in all of your food. One seasoning you can add to everything is salt.

It brings out the flavor of your food and makes it taste better.

Food isn't the only thing we can season with salt. The Bible says to season our words with it too. This means we speak to others in loving and kind ways. When we do, our words—and the actions that go with them—have enough flavor to be good.

If you've ever met someone who doesn't think before they say or do things, you know their carelessness hurts others. They seem to season with hot sauce! And hot-sauce seasoned words and actions can be too spicy. They aren't kind to others and don't glorify God.

It's sometimes hard to season our words and actions correctly, which is where discipline comes in. Ephesians 5:17 says to be disciplined so that our actions reflect the Lord's will for us. Since God's will for us is to glorify Him and love others, it's important to think about whether we're seasoning with salt or hot sauce!

➡ **ACTION POINT:** In your journal, create two columns labeled "salt" and "hot sauce." Think about something hurtful someone said to you. If you responded poorly, write it in the hot sauce column. If you responded well, write it in the salt column.

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AUGUST 29





# Pop Quiz Panic!



*And may the LORD our God show us His approval and make our efforts successful. Yes, make our efforts successful!*

{ Psalm 90:17 }



**N**othing scared me more in class than hearing these two words: pop quiz. I'd get so much anxiety that I'd tap my pencil like crazy, my leg would bounce, and my palms would sweat.

As the teacher passed out the test, tons of questions would run through my mind. Had I paid attention during the previous day's lesson? Did I really learn all I needed from last week's homework packet? I'd get so uptight that it sometimes caused me to do poorly on a test I was actually pretty prepared for.

The problem was I'd placed too much focus on my own efforts and abilities. I'd put them higher than the Truth of God's promise and loving desire to help me in all things.

We often put lots of pressure on ourselves. But we don't need to carry that! As followers of Jesus, we have to remember that God's in control of every situation we encounter. That doesn't mean that the work we put in is wasted, but it does mean that we should trust God to take that work and those efforts and do what's best. We must trust that the outcome will be according to His plan.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** In what areas are you relying on your own efforts? School? Sports? List them in your journal. Ask God to help you believe He's in control of each one. Tell Him you trust that He'll make your hard work successful.

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*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](http://mytruegirl.com)*



# If You Never Fail, You'll Never Succeed

*And let us run with endurance  
the race God has set before us.*  
{ Hebrews 12:1b }



**H**ave you ever failed at something? Good job. You might think I'm being silly or even a bit sarcastic, but I'm not. When you face defeat, it means you tried. And, we can never succeed if we don't take risks.

Do you remember Jesus' disciple Peter? Peter was notorious for taking risks and failing. The Bible tells us story after story of his efforts falling short. Walking on water? The storm terrified him, and he started sinking. Humbly letting Jesus wash his feet? His first response was to tell Jesus no! Not denying Jesus? He did—three times! And those are just a few of Peter's many failures.

But do you know what Peter wasn't known for? Giving up. He never let his unsuccessful attempts stop him from following Jesus and sharing the good news of the gospel. Like today's verse says, he ran with endurance the race God had set before him.

So, this school year, be willing to fail too. If you're afraid to speak in front of your class, give it a try. Or maybe making friends is hard for you. Bravely talk to a classmate. Run the race God has for you with determination and endurance.

➡ **ACTION POINT:** What's one new thing you'd like to try this school year, but you've been afraid of failing at? Ask God to give you the courage to take a risk and the endurance to not give up.

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*ASHLEIGH SLATER is an author and editor whose favorite snack is Pirate's Booty. She loves to spend time with her husband, four daughters, and their two cats. [AshleighSlater.com](http://AshleighSlater.com)*



AUGUST 31







## Live with Kindness!

These True Girl Daily Devos were written to help you practice kindness and prepare you to get back to school this fall! Each day you'll read one verse and some fun thoughts about it. At the end of each, you'll find an action point you can use to live out what you discover!

These devos are written by Dannah Gresh and other writers we want to introduce you to, including: Staci Rudolph, Jennifer Abbatacola, Rebecca Barker, Jen Barrick, Linda Barrick, Laura Booz, Aubrey Brush, Portia Collins, Beth Frank, Noli Garrett, Julie Harner, Amy Harris, Abby Houston, Eileen King, Kindra Lawson, Marlene Luna, Jennie Lusko, Paula Marsteller, Janet Mylin, Arlene Pellicane, Amber Pike, Erica Pleau, Jody Token, Erika VanHaitsma, Lisa Yabra, and Yancy.

*Jesus said to the people who believed in him,  
"You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful  
to my teachings. And you will know the truth,  
and the truth will set you free."*

JOHN 8:31,32

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