

Come Away My Beloved is the collaborative efforts of Cindy Rushton, Felice Gerwitz, Lucia Claborn, Michelle Ruschman, and Kim Huitt.
Complete the questions on the pages ahead to get started, and take notes as you listen, reflecting upon the insights and knowledge from our speakers as they share with you in their respective sessions.

Gome Away My Beloved... Taentity

Identity Theft: Taking Back What the Enemy Has Stolen



With Gindy Rushton

Go ahead...pour yourself a big cup of tea. I want to take a little while to pull aside and really dig deep.

The story behind my workshop for this event is not my most favorite moment. Actually, it was one of my most difficult trials. It was one of those moments that the enemy would hold over my head for several years. Ever had one of those moments? Take a few minutes and share about it...

Mine was after a day that I refer to as my "day of hell on earth." Sound like an exaggeration? It wasn't. It was a day that changed everything.

It began long before that day, but that day tested everything within me. Remember in Scripture where Jesus told Peter that the devil desired to sift him? Yep. This was a day that sifted me. The only thing that could go beyond that day was what God had purified and set apart. Of course, I could not see it at that moment. It would take years before I could look back and see that.

At that moment I felt pressed Pushed Crushed Devastated Broken Hopeless
I was rejected Thrown away like a piece of trash Abandoned Left destitute
Ever had one of those moments? What led up to it?
Why was that moment so difficult for you?
How was the enemy capitalizing on the moment?

What was he telling you?

Well, for me, I was at a point that I truly could not see how I could go on. Everything that meant anything to me was in a mess. My whole life was right before me. I did not have the power to change anything. Or, so I thought.

I was hit with fear on a level that nothing had ever hit me. I had gone through some difficulties through the years, but this one just floored me. I could not imagine how to push on. I could not see any hope of provision. I saw all I had ever done going up in flames. I had no idea how I could get around that mountain. Or, so I thought.

Then, the deluge of lies hit me. I heard that I was unwanted. I heard that I was rejected. I heard that it HAD to be all my fault. I heard that I was not enough. I heard that I was broken and had no hope. I crumbled.

Ever been in that place? What were you thinking? What were you believing?

As all of the lies swirled around, the pressure mounted. I felt an incredible oppression just bombard me. I was almost suffocating from the weight. I felt that I could not go on. Then, the enemy came with the suggestion that took me to the "rock." The "rock" was the place where I would end it all.

The suggestion was that everyone would be better off without me. The enemy did not mince words. He began to press in even more with everything he had been whispering. It became a scream. And, just as I was about to end it all, my precious Lord rushed in. It was a moment that would define my life.

God was not done with me.

He wanted for me to ask HIM what the truth was.

He wanted for me to ask Him who I was.

He wanted for me to ask Him what I was here for.

He wanted to show me what was mine...that no one could take away.

He wanted to show me what He could and would do in and through me.

He wanted to be my Provider.

He wanted to be my Good Husband.

He wanted to take me on a journey to find ME.

He wanted to take me on a journey to know and experience Him on a level that I had never experienced before.

He wanted to take me on a journey to take back everything that the enemy had stolen.

Today, I ask you—where are you?

Who are you? Do you know?

I am not talking about what you do or who you are in a relationship with. I am asking you, "Who are YOU?"
Why are you here on this earth at this time?
What does God want for you and your life?

How can you KNOW?
My friends if you get nothing else out of what I am about to share, I have 7 essentials that you need to know
 You ARE WHO God says you ARE You can DO what God says you can DO You HAVE everything that God says you HAVE He IS Who He says He IS He CAN DO what He says He can DO He WILL DO what He says He WILL DO He WILL DO IT FOR YOU!
Do you believe that?
Is there anything that you are not sure about? Which one(s)?
How do you think those truths can make a difference in your life?
Does that sound dark? Difficult?

Well, I want to share that on the other side, those moments were pivotal. In the days ahead, I went through some of my most trying moments of my life. I lost so much that if I had not had those moments "on the rock"—all of them—I don't know if I could have handled the difficulties that ensued.

Some things had to get very solid.

It is funny. At the time, I thought that everything was so broken that it could never be fixed. I remember thing after thing being broken, down to the core of my being. So much was stolen from me. Everything was "far-play" and it seemed that everything was touched. The few things that I had left were shattered. Brokenness became my reality.

But God was not done!

My dear friend, have you ever gone through a season of loss, grief, brokenness? What did it look like for you?

What was taken from you?

There is a THIEF!

The devil is lurking about looking for WHO he can devour! I haven't made this up. Take a look at 1 Peter 5-11 (The Passion Translation):

Be well balanced and always alert, because your enemy, the devil, roams around incessantly, like a roaring lion looking for its prey to devour. Take a decisive stand against him and resist his every attack with strong, vigorous faith. For you know that your believing brothers and sisters around the world are experiencing the same kinds of troubles you endure. And then, after your brief suffering, the God of all loving grace, who has called you to share in his eternal glory in Christ, will personally and powerfully restore you and make you stronger than ever. Yes, he will set you firmly in place and build you up. And he has all the power needed to do this—forever! Amen.

What is jumping out at you?

What does this tell you about your situation? About your life? About you?

We should not be surprised by this. The Word tells us about the way the devil works. His methods, tactics, and weapons should not surprise us. Jesus gave us a glimpse into the enemy's wiles and ways in John 10:10:

So Jesus went over it again, "I speak to you eternal truth: I am the Gate for the flock.[c] All those who broke in before me are thieves who came to steal,[d] but the sheep never listened to them. I am the Gateway.[e] To enter through me is to experience life, freedom, and satisfaction.[f] 10 A thief has only one thing in mind—he wants to steal, slaughter,[g] and destroy. But I have come to give you everything in abundance, [h] more than you expect[i]—life in its fullness until you overflow! (The Amplified Bible says it this way: The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows].)

I am the Good[j] Shepherd who lays down my life as a sacrifice for the sheep. But the worker who serves only for wages is not a real shepherd. Because he has no heart for the sheep he will run away and abandon them when he sees the wolf coming. And then the wolf mauls the sheep, drags them off, and scatters them.

Soooo....Identity Theft

What the devil did to me is not a fluke. It is not something original. This is his work that he has done through the ages. We see his work in lives of the great men and women all throughout time—Job, Hannah, Elijah, Peter, John, Jesus!

The devil is lurking about looking for WHO he can devour!

He does not want for you to know who you are or WHOSE you are!

He delights in his works--stealing, killing, slaughtering, sacrificing, destroying.

He wants to steal, kill, destroy everything about you!

Everything...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your influence...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your life...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your achievements...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your relationships...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your influence...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your impact...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your story...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your purpose...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy your identity...

He wants to steal, kill, destroy YOU!

Today, take a few minutes to list all of the things you can remember that the enemy has stolen from you...

That is not all! The devil wants to steal who you are and what you are. He tries to make the church/people just like HIM. Think about it...

- depressed
- negative
- afraid
- perverted
- alone-lonely
- angry
- selfish
- destructive

How else do you see him trying to convince you that you are "like him" instead of "like Christ"?

What does the Word say about how you are? Do a scavenger hunt through the Bible to look up what the Bible says you are "in Christ"....

The devil tries to steal our identity

Telling us who we are...

Telling us what we are...

Telling us what we have...

Telling us where we are...

Telling us what we can and cannot do...

Telling us what our story is...

Telling us what our value is...

Telling us that we are defined and destined by circumstances!

What lies has the enemy told you?

How have those lies stolen from you?

Where is your ID—Identification and Identity?

Our "identity" is often lost, falsified, misplaced, or stolen by the enemy. Where	is your ID?
Is it lost? Where is your ID - identity? Where are you getting your identity?	
is it lost? Where is your in identity? Where are you getting your identity?	

Are you trying to use the wrong ID? Don't want to go through the process to "get" yours? How have you settled for the identity that the enemy gives you instead of going through the right "process" to find out what God has given you as your identity?
Trying to pass off a FAKE ID? Are you going by a fake ID?
God does not have allow "Fake ID's!" They will get caught at the door! God will not let you by with a <i>fake ID. He wants REAL, AUTHENTIC, RELEVANT.</i> What is the difference?
God issues real IDs. He tells you what you are, what you have, what you can and cannot do, what is yours, and what you are all about. What is He saying to you?
Have a misplaced ID? Today is the day to see your "ID" for what it is

Where is your identity placed?
In work?
In accomplishments?
In relationships?
In accumulating power, security, control over destiny, reputation, notoriety,
fame?
In possessions and stuff?
In positions?
In fame?
In trying to make a name for yourself?
ORin Christ?

Today...I call an ID Check!

Do you know who you are? Who are you?

Do you know what you have? Just brain-dump what you know that you have?

Beloved, you have EVERYTHING God says you have!
What do you have in your hand? gifts, talents
God uses everythinggifts, talents, bents, strengths, experiences, education, heartbeats, tests, messes, abilities, opportunities, interests! What is unique inside or you?
He uses it all!
He gives us a message!
He gives us a purpose! He gives us meaning!
He gives us ministry!
He gives us satisfaction!
He calls us to serve the world!

You have experienced so many things that will help others. You have wisdom that others need What do you know because of your life experiences? Your education? Your stsory? God has wired you perfect! Even if you do not realize it, your heart is intertwined with His.	What do you know?
You have wisdom that others need What do you know because of your life experiences? Your education? Your stsory? God has wired you perfect! Even if you do not realize it, your heart is intertwined with His.	You know so many things that others need to know.
What do you know because of your life experiences? Your education? Your stsory? God has wired you perfect! Even if you do not realize it, your heart is intertwined with His.	
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	God has wired you perfect! Even if you do not realize it, your heart is intertwined with His.
	Think about itWhat is on your heart?

What is your passionwhat is it that moves and motivates you?
What is your heartbeat, your delight?

What are you going to do with your life that will be remembered 200-400 years?
What will you do this year that will be remembered in 200-400 years? Which things are eternal?
What is your message—the message from your life story?
what is your message—the message nom your me story?
What sets you apart from everyone else?

What do you really want to do—that deep burden, that deep delight?
Where is your pain, that is now your purpose?
Where is your pain—that is now your purpose?
TodayTake back EVERYTHING that the enemy has stolen!
He steals, kills, and destroys Dreams
Passions
Heartbeats Relationships
He puts fear on you
He steals your resources - time, money, talents, abilities, energy, attention

Today! Take back EVERY BIT OF THAT!!

My dear friend, you are who God says you are. You can do what God says you can do. You have everything that God says you have. He is Who He says He is. He can do what He says He can do. He will do what He says He will do. He will do it for you!

You have a mighty purpose. You have a great work to do! You can rebuild after losing it all. Today, dare to take back what the enemy has stolen. Let go of what the enemy has said about you...said about your life...said about God...said about what God will do for you. God gives you your identity. God designed you and knows everything about you. He is ok with that! God has called you into a great work that is yours alone. God has prepared you perfectly for your purpose. God is with you every step of the way.

Today, take back what the enemy has stolen. There is redemption, resurrection (for all of the dead things), and restoration for you and your life—today!

You have purpose. You have meaning. You have identity. Press into the presence of God Grasp on to all that is yours—all that Christ died to give you. Step up to your calling and life purpose for the glory of God!



Gindy Rushton

Writer, speaker, pastor, actress, biz/life coach, entrepreneur, podcaster, empty-nester, Mimi, and most of all, God-crazy!! *Cindy Rushton* dedicates her life to helping others become equipped and empowered to step up and step out to fulfill God's call on their lives.

Cindy has authored more than 150 books, Bible studies, action guides, as well as business and homeschool resources. She hosts online coaching sessions for groups and individuals who need a life or business coach, and she hosts an elite Mastermind group for those who want to take their business or ministry up-level.

As you get to know Cindy, you learn what Godly womanhood means and how you can be empowered to fulfill the call of God on your life. Cindy helps you solidify your vision and gives you hope to fulfill your destiny.

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You Are Greater Than This...

With Felice Gerwitz



I have many expectations, and many are unfulfilled. That doesn't mean I stop and refuse to go on—no I forge ahead. But I have learned lately that I am an oddity. I won't stop while others look at me and say, "How old are you?" or "What? You do what?" When my kids were little and they messed up I'd say, "Hold on now, you are greater than this!"

And I want to say that to all of you – You. Are. Greater. Than. This.

What is "this" to you?

What is that obstacle, that hijacked dream, that person who keeps saying you can't, or you shouldn't, or don't, in your life?

Did you ever hear that when you got to be an adult you could do whatever you want?

They lied.

As an adult we have so many responsibilities that we do not have the time or the inclination to do what we want. Our get-up-and-go-got-up-and-went! Well friends, it is time to go after it! This is a time of no more excuses. It is a time to tackle phase one and phase two in your life —now in quick succession. We do not have time to be mopey-dopey-l-can't-do-it-you-don't-understand. I get it, we all have crosses. but I am sure you do not want mine. And, I am sure I do not want yours. God gives us what we can handle and if YOU can't handle it guess what?

Tell God. He's got you.

Jeremiah 29:12-13 "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

I have friends who identify themselves by their problems or their issues. Nope. Not you. Stop it now. Harsh? That use to be me. "I can't write now I have little kids." So, what did I do? I waited ten years. Did I write that romance, action adventure mystery series that had you at the end of your seat? Nope. I wrote, "Teaching Science and Having Fun." Okay, so that book won some awards and is in the fifth printing – but it was not what I dreamed to write.

When you put off your dreams until that perfect time, guess what? That perfect time never comes.

What have you been putting off for the "perfect" time?

My cousin was engaged to his now wife for seven years. SEVEN years. I was engaged to my husband for eight months. I don't mess around. You serious? You want to marry me – okay,

let's do this thing called life together. Sure, life is messy – but how do you grow and learn and change. There is no perfect time. Maybe you were engaged for seven years and now are the happiest people in the world. Great. I was engaged for eight months there was a bunch of ups and downs and we just hit forty-years last year. Each person is different – and each of our stories are different, but if you have a central theme and are united in love of the Lord, each other and communicate and compromise, and quit looking for perfection things will hopefully go well for you!

Describe Yourself – Be Honest!

When you describe yourself what do you say? I'm so-and so's mom – or I'm married to – or I am a... you describe your job or your skill set. I've heard people say, I have this, or I have that. No. That is not who you are.

So many times we don't know who we are that we can't be who we should be.

We are going to tackle this right now! Describe yourself here – and be honest.

Did you tell me about how amazing you are? If not, go back up there and do it now.

God gave each of us gifts. He did not make junk. I'm not talking about the gift of family or
finances or material things - I'm talking about the Gift that is you! Fill out the lines below and
this is about you – it can be an adjective, but it can also be a feeling or a character trait. Do
not leave it blank!

Now roll up your sleeves we are going deep. What is the thing keep you back what is that obstacle that is too big that you cannot overcome it?

That is what we are looking at in phase one. We are going to tear it apart and come out new on the other side.

Phase One – Recognition. Recognizing your enemy and his lies head on.

- 1. Enemies lie What is a lie? It is an untruth. Maybe there is only one, but I believe if you are quiet in prayer they will start flying up! (See worksheet to add your own.)
 - a. Insecurities
 - i. Who am I to do this?
 - ii. No one wants to hear from me.
 - iii. I'm not certified, etc.
 - iv. I'm no one.
 - b. Fears
 - i. What if I fail?
 - ii. What if people don't like what I want to do?
 - iii. What if ...
 - c. Doubt

- i. Is this any good?
- ii. How do I know if I should move forward?
- iii. There are so many other people more talented.

d. False Pride

- i. I'm not good enough
- ii. I'm not smart enough
- iii. I'm not...

Acknowledge Those Lies

What are the obstacles in your life that are keeping you from moving forward? List them all and be honest!

Addressing the Anger

Sure, you are better than the anger that gets to you each time you identify all those areas that hold you back and confront all those lies of the enemy – but here is a way to combat those angry tendencies!

Anger: When we look at all the ways the enemy has lied to us (and it could even be someone close that we love, it's okay to be angry. However, we need to forgive and more on or we will be in bondage to that person. Anger that makes you stew and goes deep can make you ill!

- A. If you cannot forgive ask God to forgive for you.
 - a. "Dear Lord Jesus, do not feel like forgiving this person but I know that you love everyone unconditionally and I ask you to forgive this person for me and help me to let go and forgive this person."
 - b. It may take years but this prayer and the next one works!
- C. Release that person to the Lord.
 - a. "Dear Lord, help me to release this person to you."
 - b. "Dear Lord help me to forgive this person."
- D. Pray for this person.
 - a. Every time you feel anger ask the Lord to bless them. Believe me the enemy hates this and will not keep tormenting you with memories you try to forget!
 - b. Keep praying blessings upon the person until they are eventually removed from you mind.
- E. Forgive Yourself
 - a. Sometimes you are your biggest critic.
 - b. Did you make a choice or a decision you have not forgiven yourself for? Now is the time.
 - c. Let it go write it down, rip it up, and throw it away!

Phase Two - Plan of Attack.

Take each one of those lies and make a plan to combat them.

#1 Rip UP the page of lies

A. We've identified the lies – we've gotten angry about them, we've forgiven now we are ready to move on. Right? If not repeat those steps above! I've done it ... it works!

#2 Plan your attack

- A. Do you have a plan?
- B. When those negative ideas or thoughts come up what will you say?
- C. How will you move forward? Make a plan for this!

- a. Praise God. Praise dispels anger and negativity.
- b. Play praise music. Sing!
- c. Pray. Take it to the Lord
- d. Journal. Take your thoughts to the Lord
- D. Move forward with a work plan.
 - a. A set time to work. If you have a schedule it helps!
 - b. Know what you are working on? what is your plan?

Work Schedule:

- A. Do you make schedules that you can't keep?
- B. Work in the minutes you have.

One of the speakers at the recent conference I hosted, The <u>Christian Communicators</u> <u>Conference</u> talked about marketing in the minutes you have. Some still have kids at home so you need to look at this and make a plan for this as well.

Circle the time you have:

30 minutes before my kids wake up. Two hours sometime in a day.

30 minutes before meals. Hours split up – when?

30 minutes before I go to bed. 9 am -12 pm.

A one hour in the day. 1 pm - 3 pm.

If you have a set time to work, you will do it! Figure out what works best for you. Do you know when you will work even if it is split up depending on the days you can look at your watch and say – okay, now is my time to work on what I want to work on.

A situation recently made me questions everything! What is my place in this world and what does it look like?
Questions to Help You Move Forward
What is the THIS in your life that is hijacking your dreams?
Did you think that when you were an adult you could do whatever you wanted? Is this true? Why or why not?
When you put off your dreams for that perfect time, what happens?

Describe yourself:
What are your gifts?
What are the lies the enemy tells you - don't think write the first thing that pops into your mind.
How are you going to combat those lies?

Are you angry? How	will you handle this?	
What are your though	nts about forgiveness?	
	Plan an attack:	
1. Mind games - how		
1. Mind games - how		
1. Mind games - how		
1. Mind games - how 2. Plan		

3. Schedule

4. Ways to move forward

"For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." — God, Jeremiah 29:11

Scripture Verses - Add Your Favorites!

The joy of the Lord is my strength!

Nehemiah: 8:10 - Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Felice Gerwitz



A serial entrepreneur who loves Jesus, and her husband, *Felice Gerwitz* is happy to report she survived parenting five children through the years of homeschooling and is now happily "Grandma Felice" to eight adorable grandchildren!

Media Angels® Publishing began in 1994 and she has not looked back! Felice is the author and co-author of over twenty books, a conference speaker, podcaster, and author consultant. As the creator and founder of two podcast networks [the Ultimate Homeschool Podcast Network, the Ultimate Christian Podcast Network] and the Ultimate Christian Communicators Conference 2020, Felice can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for her, next!

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Faith Is Your Rey to Victory With Lucia Glaborn



As born-again children of God, we are the sons and daughters of faithful, Father Abraham. We have all been given a measure or "the" measure of faith we read about in Romans 12:3, New Living Translation.

"Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us."

The Passion Translation reads.

"God has given me grace to speak a warning about pride. I would ask each of you to be emptied of self-promotion and not create a false image of your importance. Instead, honestly assess your worth by using your God-given faith as the standard of measurement, and then you will see your true value with an appropriate self-esteem."

And the last version I want to reference is the New King James Version,

"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

There are two facts that are apparent about the "measure of faith": first, it is the standard by which we correctly appraise ourselves, and, second, it is meted out by God. Because each believer receives his measure of faith by God's allotment, we are prevented from thinking of ourselves "more highly" than we ought.

In evaluating yourself and your faith-walk, where would you rate yourself on a scale of 1-10? Why have your rated yourself at this level?

Would you like to grow your faith so you can walk in a higher level of faith, resulting in walking in a higher level of victory?
How do you think you can grow your faith?
Looking at the broader context of Romans 12:3, we notice there is something else given by God. The grace of God is mentioned as a gift to Paul in the same verse, and that same grace is mentioned as a gift to <i>all</i> believers in verse 6: "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us." So, immediately following his discussion of the measure of faith, Paul speaks of the gifts of the Spirit: prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, and showing mercy.
List your spiritual gifts:
Recognizing that our measure of faith comes from God prevents pride and encourages "sober judgment." Each of us should recognize the limits of his or her own gifts. At the same time, we must acknowledge the gifts that others possess and that each believer is divinely placed into Christ as a vital and functioning part of His spiritual Body according to Romans 12:4-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:27. We should not consider ourselves as superior to another but should instead recognize that God has placed us just where He wants us with the gifts He has chosen for us according to 1 Corinthians 12:11.
God has given each of us a "measure of faith" to use for Him. This "faith" is the gift from which all the other gifts flow. Faith is the first gift we receive for justification, and faith is the gift that brings the other gifts of the Spirit into our lives. When a person is born again, God gives him gifts as a new member of the family of God. We receive the gifts according to the

measure that God has given us, and we exercise the gifts according to the same measure of faith.
What are some examples from your own life where you used your faith to operate in your spiritual gifts?
What are some examples from your own life where you used your faith to make it just make it through your day, week, month?
Was Father God faithful to meet your needs? Your wants? Your desires? How?

Let's look at four examples of different levels of faith that men and women in the book of Mark displayed.

The first level of faith is "Jesus, I believe you can." Mark 9:17-24 in the New Living Translation reads,

"One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, "Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won't let him talk. And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn't do it." Jesus said to them, "You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me." So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. "How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father. He replied, "Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

Give an example from your own life where you believed God could do something, but you weren't sure if He could do it for you. Why did you doubt His faithfulness?

The second level of faith is "Jesus, if you are willing." Mark 1:40-41, New Living Translation, reads,

"A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said. Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!"

From these verses we see the man with leprosy came to Jesus and he knew if Jesus was willing, he could heal him.

Have you ever asked yourself, or Jesus, "if you are willing?" or "if it be your will?" you could do this or that for me? How did that work for you? Did you receive the answer you wanted from your prayers?

The third level of faith is "Jesus, if I can." Let's look at Mark 5:21-34, in the New Living Translation.

Jesus got into the boat again and went back to the other side of the lake. where a large crowd gathered around him on the shore. Then a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, arrived. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet, pleading fervently with him. "My little daughter is dying," he said. "Please come and lay your hands on her; heal her so she can live." Jesus went with him, and all the people followed, crowding around him. A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. For she thought to herself, "If I can just touch his robe. I will be healed." Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition. Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my robe?" His disciples said to him, "Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'" But he kept on looking around to see who had done it. Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him and told him what she had done. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over."

Do you have an example from your life where you knew if you could just get to Jesus and touch him with your praise and thanksgivings, that you would get your answer? Describe that situation.

The fourth level of faith is "Jesus, I can touch you." Mark 10:46-52 in the New Living Translations says,

"Then they reached Jericho, and as Jesus and his disciples left town, a large crowd followed him. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was sitting beside the road. When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was nearby, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" "Be quiet!" many of the people yelled at him. But he only shouted louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" When Jesus heard him, he stopped and said, "Tell him to come here." So they called the blind man. "Cheer up," they said. "Come on, he's calling you!" Bartimaeus threw aside his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "My Rabbi," the blind man said, "I want to see!" And Jesus said to him, "Go, for your faith has healed you." Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus down the road."

Do you have a blind Bartimaeus story in your life? A story of great faith and the results it produced for you?

Now that you have located your faith, are you ready to go to the next level? How do you think you go from one level to the next in your faith?

Second Corinthians 3:18 in The Passion Translation says,

"We can all draw close to him with the veil removed from our faces. And with no veil we all become like mirrors who brightly reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus. We are being transfigured into his very image as we move from one brighter level of glory to another. And this glorious transfiguration comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

How do you think we go from one level of glory, or one level of faith to another level?

Romans 10:17 in the New Living Translation tells us,

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

There are several ways to hear the Word of God. What do you think is the best way to hear the Word?

If you said the best way to hear the Word of God is by you speaking it out, you are absolutely correct!! Your subconscious, or your spirit man, will believe your voice before he believes any other voice!!

So, to build your faith to overcome in every situation or circumstance, find one promise – one scripture verse – to stand on. By "stand on," I mean you read that verse over and over until you know it by heart, inside and out. You know beyond a shadow of doubt that what God says in that verse is true, and it's true for you. It doesn't matter what your situation or circumstance looks like at the moment, it's about to change! You take that verse and go to God in prayer and put him in remembrance of his Word. When you pray the Word of God instead of the problem, you will always see results because Isaiah 55:11 New American Standard Bible says,

"So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it."

It works the same way for you!! When you put God's Word in your mouth and speak it out, it will accomplish what you send it out to do!! This is an example of what I've used in my life in regard to praying over our food, especially when we eat out in a restaurant!! I say. "Father God, I thank you for this food and call it blessed to the nourishment of our bodies. I thank you that nothing we eat, or drink will harm us, and you take sickness away from the midst of us. Amen."

This prayer is taken from Exodus 23:25,

"But you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst."

The Bible is full of promises you can stand on to change defeated situations into victorious situations! If you don't know where to begin to find a promise, you can Google "Bible Verse about 'healing', 'finances', 'overcoming', 'faith', 'freedom', 'peace', 'joy', 'victory', or whatever you need at the moment.

I encourage you to build your faith by muttering the promise from the Word of God to yourself and then once you are totally persuaded, put that Word on Satan. Remind him what the Word says and that he is defeated in your life! When you do this, you will find yourself on the next level of faith!!

And I want to remind you that it's the same faith to believe God for socks as it is to believe God for a new airplane or vehicle. Same Faith! Overcoming Faith!!



Lucia Glaborn

Firmly rooted in the fact that Jesus came to bring life and life more abundantly, *Lucia Claborn* believes the spoken word has power, and God gave us authority to walk in dominion in our life.

Lucia wants to encourage you with the fact that you, too, can walk in victory if you will change your negative words of defeat into positive, faith-filled confessions. Whatever the mountain is your life, you can overcome by the Blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony.

Lucia began writing more than 30 years ago; pursued a journalism career in the military and eventually the civilian market. She has been published in newspapers, magazines and periodicals, and has found her security rests solely on and in Jesus Christ. This is where her true joy and happiness lies.

Jesus is Safe...

With Michelle Ruschman



When I was 4 years old, my friends and I played in an alleyway where we always did, and in that place, a stranger changed the way I would think of myself for decades to come. That encounter hardened a young and tender heart. As a result, my relationships with boys and then men never quite had the chance to develop well. I had very little self-respect, I was always ready to fight, and though I knew laughter, I struggled to feel joy.

I grew up knowing about God, but He felt so distant that I didn't think He cared about me, way down here on Earth. I knew of Jesus but certainly didn't have a relationship with Him. It never occurred to me that it was possible. I had sung about Him at Noah's Ark Nursery School but He eventually became just another name in a book called the Bible, a book I saw only if I opened the drawer in a hotel room.

As I grew up, I would hear, "Jesus loves you," but I didn't feel loveable. People would say, "Jesus saves." Okay ... but this man ... is He safe? I had no inclination to find out. By the time I was 19, I was done with religion and believing God existed only through a belief system, I left Him ... but He never left me.

"Despite your best efforts, I found you"

On January 4, 2009, I felt God speak into my heart, "Despite your best efforts, I found you" and I have followed Him ever since. Perfectly, no, but when I said "yes," all I knew at that moment was that I would show up and try. By this time, I had spent 19 years thinking I had left God behind and all the while He was loving me through my prodigal years and guiding me back.

Getting to know God for the first time in my life meant that I would need to know His son, Jesus. It was a package deal that was unavoidable. I said yes to God still feeling unlovable and wondering if Jesus could love someone as damaged as I was, as wrecked and reckless as I had been. I had been broken for so long I didn't know if I'd find all my original pieces again, the pieces of me that were left in that alleyway.

As I started to read the Bible, I saw how Jesus treated women ... and it began to soften my heart to Him. The Bible is no longer just a book in the drawer of a hotel room. It has become a portal to be with people from my Christian heritage, so alive and well, I can almost feel the

sand on my own sandaled feet. Oh, to read about Jesus and these precious women of the Bible. They have each shown me ... yes, Jesus is safe.

I wonder if any part of my story feels familiar to you.

In this study, we will get to know three women: The Bleeding Woman, The Woman at the Well, and The Adulterous Woman.

Welcome, my sister.

So if we are asking ourselves if Jesus is truly a gentleman, we need to define the word.

gent-le-man /'jen(t)lmən/ a chivalrous, courteous, or honorable man.

In each of these scenarios, we ask ourselves, "Was Jesus a gentleman?" Was he courteous and gallant, especially toward women? Was he polite, respectful, or considerate in manner? Was he honorable in a way that brought honor and was worthy of honor? Did he give special attention and respect to women?

The Bleeding Woman

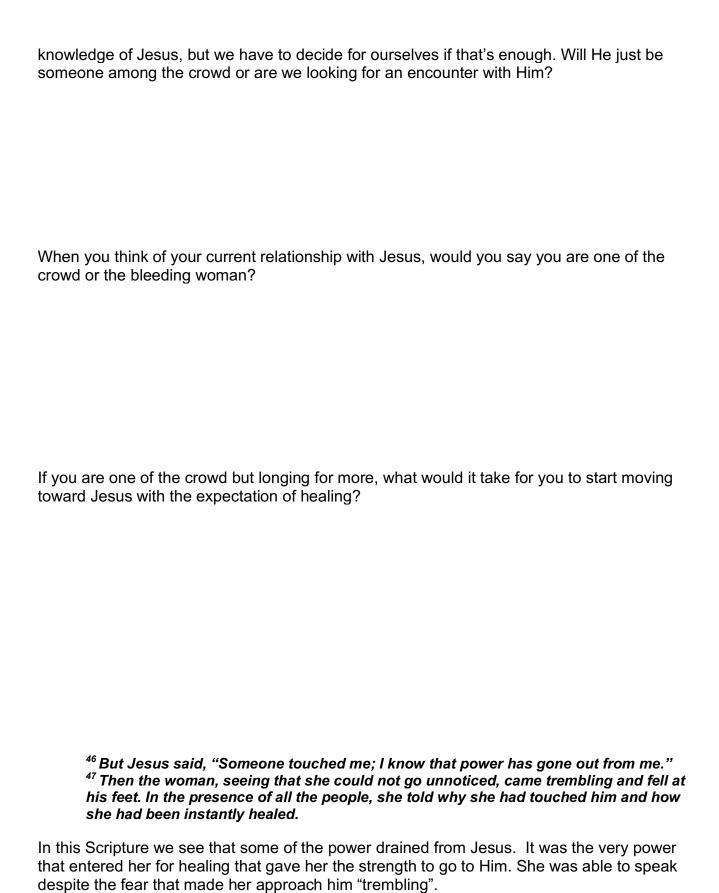
⁴³And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years,¹⁹ but no one could heal her.

During this point in history, a woman bleeding would have been considered "unclean." She would have had to keep herself separated by saying, "Unclean", as she walked through the streets in order to give other people a chance to not touch her. Not only did she have to suffer but she was responsible for other people not being "tainted" by her ailment. That must have been terribly lonely and crushing to her self-worth.

Have you ever felt separated from your family or community by your circumstances? Share about that time...

Did you ever feel you needed to protect them from the knowledge of what you were quietly enduring? Share about it
"She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.
In a later verse we will see that people were pressing in on all sides. This woman would have had to remain silent about being "unclean" in order to get to Jesus. There was no way they would have allowed her to pass among them otherwise. After 12 years of suffering, she was desperate and willing to endure whatever consequence may follow, just to touch Him, and be healed.
She came from behind, not yet confident enough to face him directly but understood that any part of Him would be enough.
What is something that you have suffered with for an extended amount of time? What has it been like?
What have you reached for in order to find healing?

Was it something that helped or hindered your progress? How so?
⁴⁵ "Who touched me?" Jesus asked.
Jesus knew who touched Him, but He wanted to give her the chance to get to the finish line of her own healing. She had already begun the race with her audaciousness to show up among the crowd. She had the tenacity to doggedly push and fight her way to get to Him, and she was laser-focused just to graze the hem of his robe. He knew this determined daughter of God would be courageous before she knew it herself, and He created an opportunity for her live it out.
What is something you are facing now that is going to require your courage?
In what way is God offering you an opportunity to show you how brave you can be?
When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."
So many people were touching Jesus, but in this moment, it was this woman who showed up to be healed by His presence and had the faith the He could do it. Many people have the



In this moment, the bleeding woman has a personal encounter with Jesus. It starts with her fear of Him but she also wants to honor Him by bearing witness to what He's done for her.
What truth are you ready to share with Jesus so you can begin your own healing?
Give an example of a time you weren't sure how Jesus would respond to your needs but has now become part of your testimony?
48
⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace." Luke 8:43-48 NIV
Jesus doesn't say, "I healed you. Go in peace." In front of the crowd, He honors her by lifting her up as an example of why she was healed, that her faith in God made it possible. That's not to say that people who aren't healed don't have enough faith but, in this case, the bleeding woman's circumstance was used deliberately by Jesus as a teachable moment. It wasn't just about Him. It was also about His Father and this beloved daughter. Jesus wanted her to have healing, yes, but He wanted her to leave fully restored, and whole. He released her, not only of her affliction, but of fear, anxiety, and condemnation.

What are you hoping to be freed from in your encounter with Jesus?

The words of a gentleman are spoken with compassion and encouragement. They include women in their power and acknowledge women in theirs. A gentleman brings a woman peace.

Beloved daughter of God, I pray you know wholeness, healing, and peace through your relationship with Jesus.

3 Steps to Healing a Moment...

I trust you are taking a step into a journey of healing. I use these three steps in my own life, and I pray they move in yours as they have in mine. There are moments that can be found in our origin story that echo for years, only to hold us in bondage. These memories can rob us of peace and keep us from being everything we were created to be. As you boldly stand in these moments, and move through these steps, know Jesus will be your companion, lending you His strength. Whether it's a past hurt or a current challenge, I pray you will find the insight and wisdom you need to know peace, freedom and joy.

Note: Not all these questions may apply. They are meant as jumping points to offer insight.

Think about a moment in your history that you need to resolve.

STEP ONE: Insert Jesus

-Where is He in the scene?

-What is He saying? Who is He saying it to?
-Is He holding your hand?
-Who is He looking at?
-Describe His demeanor?

-How do you see His face, His hands?
-Is He moving or being still?
-How close is He to you?
-What or who is He standing between - You and?
-What is He showing you?

STEP TWO: Identify the Enemy
-What is the negative motivation?
-What was the thing/person that was used against you?
\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\
-What is the thing that has echoed into the years after?
-What has negatively impacted your relationships with people? With God?

-What keeps you from receiving from the Holy Spirit?
-What initiates fear, self-loathing, or makes you go against self-preservation?
-What lies are you being told?

-What does not agree with Biblical standards?
-What makes you question, "Did God really say that?"
What are you hair a tarrete d by Q
-What are you being tempted by?

-What beckoned you and then turned against you?
-What was in you that Satan used against you?
-What does Satan use against you now?

-What emotion/memory were/are you plagued with?
STEP THREE: Discover God's Redemption
What was the purpose?

Who was the helper?	
How are you going to help others through this?	
What strength, gift, talent, courage etc came from this moment?	

What ministry has come from this or could come from this?
Where is the provision, the blessing, the favor?
What is His direction now?

God loves you. How do you see yourself through God's eyes?

PRAYER

Father, we ask that You be with us as we pursue healing. Be our companion as we visit pivotal moments in our story to break free of any bondage they may have on us. Holy Spirit, help us see clearly how God is redeeming our pain, our regrets, our loss. Jesus, we know You don't leave us. Thank You for helping to move us through the challenging seasons in a broken world. Lord, we ask for insight, protection, wisdom and supernatural peace, in Jesus' name. Amen.



Michelle Ruschman

Blessed to live in the Florida panhandle with her husband and daughter, *Michelle Ruschman* reassures women through her work as a professional writer, jewelry artisan, and artist that Jesus is safe, and guides them toward a friendship with the gentleman they have been looking for.

In 2009, she felt God speak into her heart, "Despite your best efforts, I found you," and they have had a deepening relationship ever since. Women's and Prayer ministry are her passion and areas of service at her local church. She explores her struggles, observations, and hopes in her blog, The Devotions of a Prodigal Daughter, and in her upcoming book, Jesus and Me, she shares 40 conversations, prayers, and summaries of encouragement. Michelle is also a Stephen Minister and regular contributor to GO! Christian Magazine as a features and devotional writer.

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Facebook: <u>The Devotions of a Prodigal Daughter</u> Facebook: <u>The Prodigal Artist Gallery - Art by Michelle</u>

Ruschman

Instagram: @michelleruschman

Go! Christian Magazine

Walking in Your True Identity

With Rim Huitt



This life-changing topic is one I'm still processing and working through. Actually, I have lived in ways that exemplify how not to walk in your true identity as His beloved. I'm still learning. But I'd love to share with you some of what I have learned so far.

Living in an idyllic place like Alaska can seem romantic. Summer brings all those happy and adventuresome feelings to heart. It's pretty easy to feel good when you have 18+ hours of daylight. But when winter descends and it's cold (-20F) and dark (18+ hours), then I'm singing a different tune. Just like the seasons, when life is bright - the birds are singing, the sky is blue, the appliances are humming along, and the people in my life are smiling, I can feel pretty good. But winter inevitably drops its cold blanket. And I am old enough now to expect the cold blanket of troubles to drop in for a visit. Challenges have come in the form of relational splits, health challenges, financial strains, expectations unfulfilled. A dark cloud rolls in and rains on the pretty watercolor portrait I've crafted of my life.

Are you familiar with these verses:

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry.
 ² He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire.
 He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.
 ³ He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God.
 Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord. Psalm 40:1-3

How many of us when faced with trials and difficulties turn to this verse and say, "Yes! Yes! This is what I desire! To have a new song to sing! That's my life verse! I believe that!"

What verses do you turn to when you're struggling?

Do you turn to the OT? The NT? Psalms? Isaiah?
If you've been spinning around our Sun for a while now you probably have your standard goto verses.
But does this happen to you? We close the Bible and the weight of life situations seem to fill the air again, the tight pressure in our bodies reappears. I do this.
How about you? What is your response?
I read these beautiful Spirit-inspired words and then still feel the churning. Probably because I'd actually like to see it all worked out in MY way and on MY timeline. I'd like to get MYSELF out of the pit, set MY feet on the ground of MY choosing, make up MY own song, and have people say "Wow! Look what Kim has done!"
I think many of us like gold stars, pats on the back, awards. Growing up I had some tenacity to study hard, made good grades, graduated 2 nd in my class (not that I really learned much and it was a very small class), appeared to have my act together, hid any rebellion behind compliance, went to church every time the doors were open, went to AWANA, served in ministry, etc.

BUT!

(And I love to circle the "Buts" in the Bible!)

What was the reality on the inside?

BUT! What was the reality on the inside?

I was conditioned to think that I had to earn a place in God's heart. I believed I was unlikeable but maybe, just maybe, if I was a good girl I could earn God's approval. And since I knew God to be so holy and could see through my act the best I could hope for was people's approval.

I hid behind a persona of confidence but silently I was asking, "Can you fill my heart? Will you accept me? Do you like me?"

So, I fell into the old story of "looking for love in all the wrong places". I hid behind a persona of confidence but silently I was asking, "Can you fill my heart? Will you accept me? Do you like me?" But nothing ever seemed to be enough. (Are you familiar with *The Greatest Showman* and the song "Never Enough?" Such a great movie.)

Relate? What is the reality on the inside?

Well, now I have a son age 16 and two daughters ages 13 and 9 whom I'd love to influence so they can avoid some of life's heartaches. Don't we all want this for our children – save them from pain.

It is in the struggle that we grow.

However, it is in the struggle that we grow. At one moment our struggle can be loneliness. Sometimes the struggle is anger, fear, lying, addiction, laziness. But what I want for us is to always turn to Jesus. Our way out of the muck and mire is always Jesus.

Our way out of the muck and mire is always Jesus.

Turning to friends, routines, books, exercise, etc. may be a temporary emotional patch, but at the end of that road you will be left empty again.

How about you—where do you turn when you are struggling?

Thinking back to your last struggle with loneliness...anger...fear...lying...addiction... laziness... Where did you turn?

Jesus came to give us life and life abundant. When I look inward and sense the churning I know I'm not turning to Jesus. I'm placing my life circumstances as an idol and wanting to fashion it to my liking. When I have moments of complete surrender to Jesus those strongholds come down.

What about you? Share about a time that you have experienced this...

I will never forget, during a year when I participated in a pageant (of all things!) I had a hairstylist said to me, "You know, you Christians say you trust God, but you have your fists clenched so tightly to things and He has to pry your fingers off of it each morning." Wow. I guess He saw through my act.

This is what the Lord says:

"Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the Lord.

They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future.

They will live in the barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land.

⁷ "But blessed are those who <u>trust in the Lord</u> and have **made the Lord their hope and confidence**.

They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water.

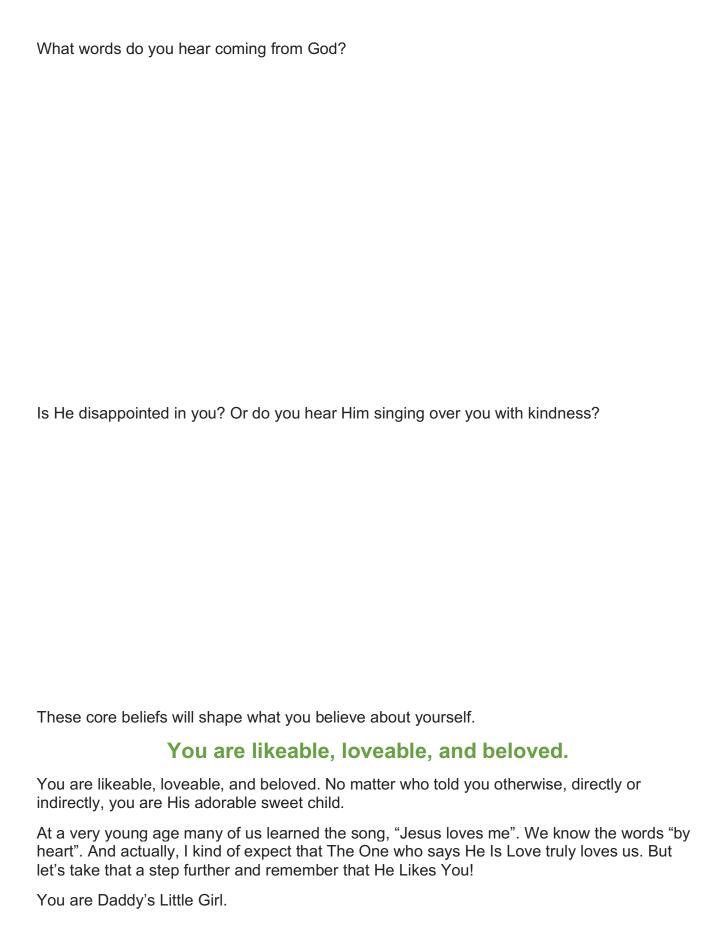
Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought.

Their leaves stay green,
and they never stop producing fruit. Jeremiah 17:5-8

So, I come to you as a fellow traveler, desiring to walk as the beloved of Christ. We are created for connection. We are designed to experience joy! Jesus offered Himself as the remedy to our weariness and burdens as we rest into His gentleness and humility. We do not have to live like stunted shrubs in the desert. But turning to people to fulfill us or depending on our own human strength is cursed. There is no life in that pathway. "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death." Proverbs 14:12. Ironically, the writer of this verse ended up choosing the path of death. We'll talk more about him in a bit.

Let's turn our attention toward your relationship with our LORD. When you imagine your Heavenly Father, what expression or emotion do you see on His face?

Do you see harsh and critical eyes? Or do you see tenderness and compassion?



You are His masterpiece.

Think of how your heart swelled when you held your sweet little newborn. Remember? Now, flip that scene and see yourself in the arms of your Maker, on the receiving end of that adoration. His is a true and pure liking and loving that is free from all selfish love.

Because you are so cherished, you can flourish like a tree planted by living waters! Trust in the Lord. Make Him your hope and confidence. You can do this through His Love, the blood of the Lamb, and the power of the Holy Spirit. It can start with a small little whispered prayer of, "Jesus." He loves to answer the calls from His beloved.

So let's talk about King Solomon, the author of Proverbs. This highly esteemed king knew God, saw Him twice, but only let the truth rattle around in his head a bit until he decided to give his heart to his wives and their gods. I wonder if he was so driven to prove himself through his words, palace buildings, and popularity with people? Didn't he lament through Ecclesiastes about emptiness? I guess we really can learn from Solomon. King David, on the other hand, who had some serious storms in his life because of some very epic fails, returned to His Lord each time. His songs continually emphasize God's favor, loving kindness and delight in his people. This little shepherd-turned-king allowed his heart to be tender before his Maker.

And whereas King David only had the Old Testament covenant and the promise of a new covenant to come, we are given the amazing ability to see the culmination of God's promise to save humanity. We walk in the grace-soaked times of the New Testament Covenant. This is the time when we experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God Himself resides in you. What kind of songs and dances would David be creating had he lived after the Resurrection?

So, in the spirit of one who loves songs like King David, I put together a Spotify playlist that might deeply and eternally spark your joy by reminding us of our true position in Christ. If this isn't your cup of tea, simply create your own list.

https://open.spotify.com/user/gkhuitt/playlist/5T3uAX7KCJ90shpl7mJckb?si=Dexez6TFSn6el8Av9qBlKw

Youtube also has great resources for Christian Meditation Music complete with beautiful relaxing scenes and scripture verses. Here is one you can try titled "Father's Love". The first verse is Isaiah 49:15.

"Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zQkbexN8-k

Or maybe you are inspired by artwork? Have you seen this beautiful depiction of The Promise coming to us through the broken story of Eve and redeeming story of Mary? (See: https://www.monasterycandy.com/Detail?prod=99)

You have the opportunity every moment of the day to choose what thoughts you will dwell on and believe. Write out scripture and post them around your house or office to remind you of your position. When a wayward thought drops into your mind, weigh it against the Truth. The power of meditation and prayer is miraculous. By spending time soaking your mind in His Word and communing with Him, your heart and mind will find tenderness and true identity. Create your own list of music, art, Scriptures, YouTube Christian Meditation Music. Carve out times in your day when you can sit quietly with the Lord and let Him remind you who you are. Be creative and do what touches your heart and bears good fruit. Your emotions and fruit are good indicators that show you what you're depending on for life. John 15:15:

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."



Rim Huitt

A fellow pilgrim currently "camping out" in Alaska with her husband of 23 years and her three children, a corgi, and a cat, *Kim Huitt* is constantly looking for God's fingerprints all over His creation.

An avid audible listener, podcast supporter, and book list junkie, she is constantly journaling about her passions. Her children are 16, 13, and 9. She writes about their style of home education on her blog and she just started a series of vlogs on home educating. She volunteers as a client advocate at her local Community Pregnancy Center and has taught Sunday School for many years.

Kim's passion is to see women of all ages understand their identity in Christ, find their worth in Him, choose the way that leads to abundant life, and purposefully replace lies with The Truth. And the truth is our Father loves and adores you.

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