

Praise for *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl*

Teenage girls often look to others for security and significance—most often, it's boys. Good-looking boys. That was me at the age of sixteen, and had someone put this book in my hands back then, who knows the heartaches I could've avoided. *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl* is a must-read for today's young women!

—**JONI EARECKSON TADA**, CEO/Joni and Friends
International Disability Center

What a joy it has been to watch Paula on her “journey from neediness to freedom.” The transformation has been nothing short of remarkable. Her reflections on that journey are honest, engaging, refreshing, and insightful. In this book, young women will find Paula to be a relatable, caring, wise friend. She will make you laugh; she will make you cry; she will make you think. And she will point you to the only true Satisfaction for a heart that longs to be chosen and cherished.

—**NANCY LEIGH DEMOSS**, author, *Revive Our Hearts*
radio host

Love the boy. Hate the boy. Long for the boy. Wait for the boy. If you want off the roller coaster ride of romance, this book is your ticket. In a style that feels like a great conversation with a good friend, Paula gives us front row seats to her up-and-down ride on the roller coaster of love and then teaches us that there is a better way. You will be encouraged, inspired, and entertained by her story, and ultimately you'll find the surprising secret to the lasting Love you're looking for.

—**ERIN DAVIS**, author of the *One Girl* series

There are not many words that describe this book . . . because it was amazing. I cannot tell you how much it related to me . . . and gave me the example and Scripture I needed to get through my obstacles. I am *really* boy crazy and love the thought of love, but this book helped me in more ways than could be counted.

—**GINNI MATHIS**, a teen reader

With encouraging transparency, deep faith, and wisdom learned in the crucible of pain, Paula Hendricks invites us into her heart. As I read, I saw myself over and over again: as a “boy-crazy girl” and as a woman who has been taught by Christ that He “is in the business of transforming broken girls into beautiful trophies of His grace.” Nothing is more soul-satisfying than the realization that surrender of all to Him is not a loss at all. If you are a boy-crazy girl (or woman) or if you’re a mom or grandmother who knows one, this book is a wonderful resource. I heartily recommend it!

—**ELYSE M. FITZPATRICK**, author of *Found in Him: The Joy of the Incarnation and Our Union with Christ*

Here is warm, wise, and clear-headed counsel from someone who has dug past the surface and has identified the root cause of boy-craziness. Paula knows firsthand about the “expulsive power of a new affection.” Take the quiz in the first chapter and see if this book is for you or for someone you know.

—**BOB LEPINE**, cohost, *FamilyLife Today*

Paula allows us to take a peek into her life through stories, transparent journal entries, and God’s guidance along the way. She’s relatable, humorous, practical, and just plain real. Gospel-saturated and biblically sound, *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl* provides wisdom for young girls, teens, and moms navigating the tendencies of our boy crazy hearts. Paula has written a book that gives hope for every boy crazy girl.

—**TRILLIA NEWBELL**, author, *United: Captured by God’s Vision for Diversity*

Paula Hendricks has charged right into the heads and hearts of most females with her *Confessions*. I wish I could’ve read this book as a young teen; it addresses so many common temptations and provides gospel-centered help. With refreshing transparency, Paula invites the reader into her struggles with image, beauty, insecurity, lust, and of course—

guys! Paula comes alongside the reader as a friend and opens her heart to tell her story. She doesn't run from the tough questions, but uses Scripture to grapple with the heart issues. If you're a teen, you need this book. If you're a parent or you have input into young women's lives, you need this book. May the life lessons Paula shares here impact the next generation for God's glory!

—**KIMBERLY WAGNER**, True Woman blogger and author of *Fierce Women: The Power of a Soft Warrior*

Boy-crazy? It doesn't have to define you! There's a way to get your heart back. Jump inside *Confessions*, get to know Paula, and find your way out. And in the process, you'll discover that the true love you seek is actually seeking you.

—**CARRIE WARD**, author, *Together: Growing Appetites for God*

A great read that is both poignant and relevant to teens today. Paula speaks truth into the lives of her readers in a way that convicts, motivates, and inspires. I know it inspired me!

—**KATIE**, a teen girl

Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl is so brutally honest and biblically encouraging that I wish I had read it when I was younger. Like Paula, I also believed that all I had to do was trust God enough and be pretty enough to attract a boy. *Wrong!* If you're the least bit boy-crazy like Paula (and like me) you will be thoroughly encouraged challenged in your faith and relationships.

—**RENEE FISHER**, the Devotional Diva, is an author of four books including *Not Another Dating Book* and *Loves Me Not*. She writes for young adults at <http://www.devotionaldiva.com>

In *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl*, Paula bravely opens her heart and journals to confess what many young women struggle with—a deep need for a guy’s approval. This raw and honest look into her journey will encourage others to seek the One worthy of seeking. Paula shares how God helped her step off the crazy cycle of heartbreak over meaningless crushes and get on to a more meaningful relationship with Him.

—**HEATHER PATENAUE**, author of *Emotional Purity: An Affair of the Heart*

I’ve watched dozens of “boy-crazy girls” wrestle with God on their journey of trying to find love, value, and acceptance in romantic relationships. In *Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl*, Paula intentionally reorients all girls to the gospel with gut-level openness and honesty, and for that I am grateful.

—**BRAD NEESE**, student ministry pastor (and daddy of two beautiful girls)

Confessions of a Boy-Crazy Girl takes an honest look at the core heart issues that hide behind the lies and mind games that can keep you trapped in the repeat cycle. Sprinkled with humor and filled with biblical truth and realistic wisdom it navigates you on your own heart-searching truth journey pointing to a new direction, purpose, and resolution. In the end, it will encourage you to believe unashamedly with Paula and others, “This was me before Christ transformed me from the inside out. This is the radically different person I am today—crazy after Christ!”

—**SUSAN HENSON**, founder of Pure in Heart Conference Ministries, coauthor of *Life Lessons from the Princess and the Kiss* and *Life Lessons from the Squire and the Scroll*

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of a
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girl



ON HER JOURNEY FROM
NEEDINESS TO FREEDOM

paula hendricks

MOODY PUBLISHERS

CHICAGO

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*To my parents, John and April Hendricks,
for instilling a God-consciousness in me from birth.
And for keeping such close tabs on me
during those tumultuous teen years!
At the time, I thought you were just plain ol' mean,
but now I can't thank you enough for sparing me a harvest of regret.
Thanks for forgetting all about those days of rebellion.
Today I count you the dearest of friends
and am so grateful for your love and support.
I love you!*

Contents

Before We Dive In	13
Part 1: The Searching (Doing It My Way)	
1. The Prayer that Rocked My World	17
2. Early Lessons in Love	25
3. Awakening Love	33
4. If I Could Just Be Beautiful Enough: My Ticket to Love	41
5. Lusting Behind My Parents' Back	49
6. The Relationship in My Head	57
7. Forcing a Fairy Tale	65
8. Running from Love	73
9. The Broken Fix-It Woman	81
Part 2: The Breaking and the Remaking (Relinquishing Control)	
10. Breakdown and Breakthrough in a Twelve-Passenger Van	89
11. You Want Me to Love Him More?	97
12. When You Get What You Want but It's All Wrong	105
13. A Shattered Dream: Winter in My Soul	113
14. The Knock on My Door	119
15. The Part Where Everything's Supposed to End Happily Ever After	127
16. Beauty from Ashes	133
17. How It All Ends	141
Acknowledgments	149
Notes	151

before we dive in

This book (and my story) recently took a surprising turn. It looked like it was shaping up to go something like this: *Trust God with your love life, and when you do, watch Him deliver the gift you've always wanted—wrapped up beautifully with a nice, neat bow.*

Now though, once again, things haven't turned out like I thought they would—and this story is quite different (and more realistic, I think). *Trust God with your love life, and buckle up for the ride!*

While I never would have said this, in reality I was treating God like a math equation: *this plus this plus this equals that*. In my case, it was: trust God + wait on God + pray about everything + be led by Scripture = getting the guy and the love I've always wanted.

But I never was any good at math. And God is not a formula.

God is a Person—one who's more interested in securing my *forever* happiness than my *temporary* happiness. Hard to believe, but as my Creator, He knows better than I do what will truly make

confessions of a boy-crazy girl

me happy. And, ultimately, the ache I'm looking to fill will never be satisfied by anyone or anything other than Him.

But how can an invisible God satisfy when all I want is a pair of strong arms to hold me close?

That's what I hope to answer through this book as I share my journey with you—the good, the bad, and the ugly. It's a story of high hopes dashed by disappointment and pain, followed by more hope, disappointment, and pain. But it's also a love story—the story of a sweet, patient, pursuing Love. I believe all the pain I experienced in relation to guys is what God used to drive me to Him—the one I really wanted all along, even though it took me years to realize it.

My prayer is that your pain and disappointment would drive you to Him as well, that you would surrender control and trust God with your love life, and that, as you wait on Him, you would get your deepest needs met in Him. After all, He's the one you've been longing for all along—even if you don't yet see it.

While I hope to point you to the One who alone can satisfy you, my relationship with God won't get you anywhere. It's time to develop a relationship with Him yourself—getting to know Him the way you would any new friend. I hope to help with that, too. Thankfully, He's gone to great lengths to make a relationship with you possible.

Enough prefacing. Let's dive into this journey from neediness to freedom!

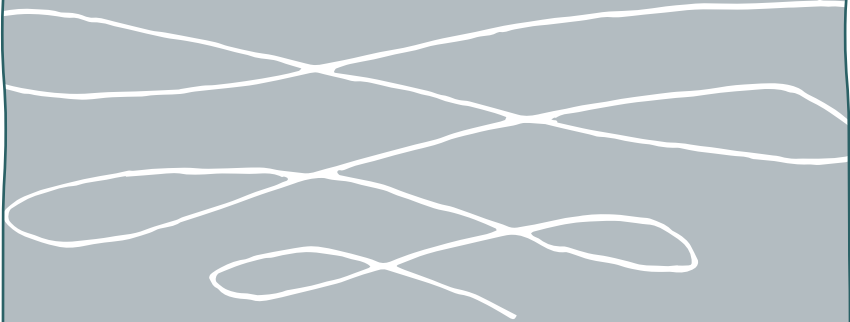
Your big sis in Christ,

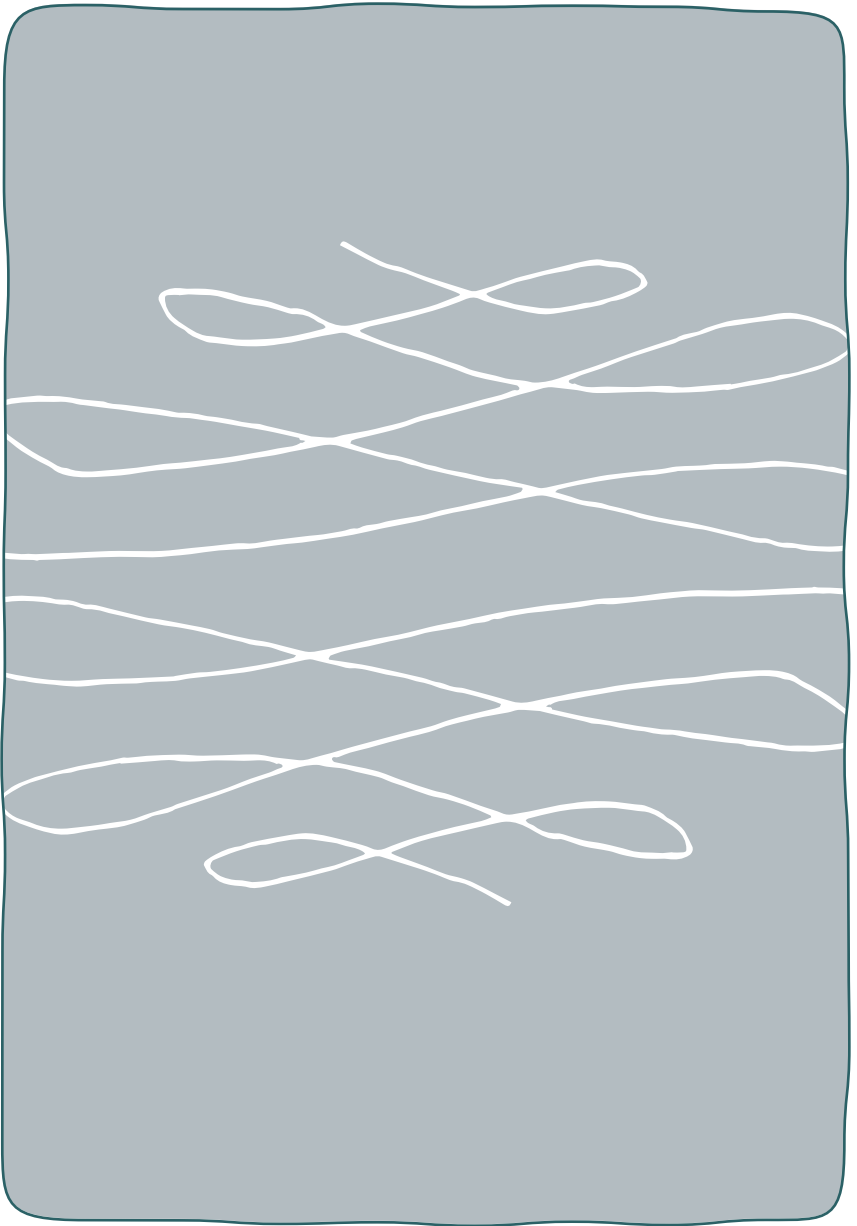
Paula

BoyCrazyGirlBook.com

PART 1:

The
SEARCHING
(Doing It My Way)





the prayer that rocked my world

It was a desperate prayer I prayed that fall—that God would free me from my idols and teach me to trust Him with my love life. I don't know what I expected, but it certainly wasn't a punch to my gut that left me reeling with shock and my whole world spinning out of control. To say I didn't see it coming would be the understatement of the year. Had I known how God would answer my prayer, I'm not sure I would have had the courage to pray it.

While the light fixtures swung, the walls did the tango, and the evidence mocked, “Your God has purposefully been cruel to you,” deep down I knew the truth. This blow was a severe mercy.¹ Yes, it hurt—hurt so bad my tears didn't dry up for months—but I also knew God was answering my prayer in a way that would ultimately bring healing and freedom.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

the searching

I Want Off!

The reason I prayed this bold prayer was that I wanted off my merry-go-round ride that never stopped its perpetual spinning. It went something like this:

1. Spot a cute boy (we'll call him Boy A).
2. Dream about Boy A.
3. Do whatever it takes to make Boy A notice me.
4. Even though Boy A doesn't pursue me, hang on to my dream of Boy A until he (a) moves to the North Pole with no access to a cell phone or computer, (b) dies and is buried or cremated, or (c) begins dating another girl.
5. Mend my broken heart by hating Boy A and finding another cute boy (Boy B).
6. Replace Boy A with Boy B.
7. Dream about Boy B.
8. Make sure Boy B notices me.
9. Hang on to my dream of Boy B until he . . .
10. Move on to another cute boy—Boy C.

The truth is, I went through an entire alphabet—and more—of boys over the years.

Early Beginnings

I was ten years old when I first wrote about a boy in my journal. It didn't seem to matter that his last name was Roach, or that he came in and out of my life one short afternoon. I wrote, "*Dear*

1: the prayer that rocked my world

*Diary, today I really got to know *Nick Roach! I really like him! I wouldn't ever tell him that!"*

Nick Roach wasn't the first boy I noticed. A couple of years earlier I had lain in bed night after night praying, "God, please let me marry Chadwick Chandler Chadderdon. Please let me marry Chadwick Chandler Chadderdon." (If you like tongue twisters, try that one on for size!) I don't remember much about Chadwick, except that he had blond hair, lived on a farm, and was in my Sunday school class.

As the years passed, my "cute, innocent crushes" became more and more frequent—and more and more costly.

But it didn't look that way at first. In high school, my friends thought I was hilarious because I'd pretend I was in love with the most unpopular guys in school. We nicknamed one guy Jello (because of the way his stomach jiggled), and we sent notes back and forth laughing about how much I liked Jello.

If my friends and I had known where my boy craziness would take me, though, we wouldn't have laughed. I was about to experience Psalm 16:4: "The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply."

"Little g" Gods and the "Big G" God

I should explain: I wasn't running after one of those fat, little, golden idols. A friend once described a god, or an idol, to me this way: an idol is something that, without it, you think you'll face a "hell"—your own personal version of torment and pain. But with your idol, you think you'll be saved from that hell. Whatever you think will save you from your "hell" is your idol.

the searching

Have you ever thought about what your “hell” and idol are? Most of us have more than one, but my main idol was a boyfriend. I thought it would save me from the hell of not being loved.

An idol, or a “little g” god, is a dangerous thing and will always disappoint us. That’s because it’s a cheap substitute for the “big G” God, the one we were made by and for. This “big G” God is our Creator and the King of the entire universe. Not a cruel, capricious king, but a kind and just King.

In the beginning everyone and everything was subject to the King. But then one of the King’s servants decided *he* wanted to be king. Ever since that day he has been leading a rebellion against the King. You may have heard of this servant. His name is Satan. Whether you know it or not, you are now caught up in this cosmic clash—the King desiring (and deserving) your wholehearted love and submission, and Satan wanting nothing more than for you to rebel against the King.

And most have rebelled against the King. When He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth over two thousand years ago, His people hatefully shouted, “We do not want this man to reign over us. . . . Crucify him, crucify him!” (Luke 19:14; 23:21). So they did. Some, though, said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54). And because He was, death couldn’t keep Him down. He rose from the dead and returned to the throne room of heaven.

The King of Kings

In Revelation 19:11–16 we’re given a sneak peek of Jesus’ soon return to earth to destroy His enemies and set up His kingdom for good. Read about it for yourself:

1: the prayer that rocked my world

I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems [crowns], and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Did you catch that? Jesus is the King of kings. It doesn't get any higher than that. Jesus is the greatest. The highest. The bestest. (Sorry, I know that's not a word, but I just had to.) As the King of kings, He deserves our fear, our obedience, our honor, and our celebration.

But instead of loving and worshiping the King of kings, I gave my love, worship, and affection to a "little g" god: boys. You'll get to read all about that in the following chapters. But first, let's talk about you.

Your Turn: Take the Boy-Crazy Quiz

Can you relate? Let's stop for a minute so you can take the Boy-Crazy Quiz and find out how you rate. Simply circle yes or

the searching

no to answer the following fourteen questions. I'm going to make a quick cup of chai while you're working on it. See you in a few!

1. In a room full of people, do you always know where "he" is? (yes / no)
2. Are boys your number-one favorite topic of conversation with your friends? (yes / no)
3. Do you often dress to catch a guy's attention? (yes / no)
4. Do you replace one crush with another almost as soon as you realize the first relationship is not going anywhere? (yes / no)
5. Have you asked a guy out? (yes / no)
6. Do you have your eye on more than one guy at a time? (yes / no)
7. Do you believe you'd finally be completely happy if you had a boyfriend? (yes / no)
8. Do you change your schedule or plans in order to bump into him? (yes / no)
9. Do you tend to have more guy friends than girlfriends? (yes / no)
10. When you're relaxing with a good book, movie, or song, do you pick those that are filled with ooey-gooey romance? (yes / no)
11. If you journal or pray, are your pages or prayers filled with thoughts and requests about guys? (yes / no)
12. Are you always trying to figure out which guys like you? (yes / no)

1: the prayer that rocked my world

13. Would you be willing to get a total makeover for a guy? Not the hair, makeup, and new clothes kind, but the “I’ll change who I am at my core if that’s what it takes to get you” kind? (yes / no)
14. Anything I’ve missed? If so, write it here:
-

If you answered yes to any, several, or all of those questions, then keep reading—this book is for you!



YOUR JOURNAL CORNER

Is your life more marked by submission to or rebellion against the King of kings? What “little g” god are you living for, and what personal version of “hell” do you hope your idol will save you from?



* Many names and details in this book have been changed to protect the privacy of others.