

*Revive Our Hearts™*

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# MUSIC TO A MOTHER'S EAR

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Ten Weeks to Tuning Your Heart to Your Savior

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## WEEK ONE

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### I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY

Horatio Bonar, 1846

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto Me and rest;  
Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my My breast."  
I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad;  
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad.*

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give  
The living water; thirsty one, stoop down, and drink, and live."  
I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in Him.*

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's Light;  
Look unto Me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."  
I look to Jesus, and I found in Him my Star, my Sun;  
And in that Light of life I'll walk, till trav'ling days are done.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

God will furnish everything I need to glorify Him today.

Then Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the people who are wise and smart. But you have shown them to those who are like little children. —Luke 10:21

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR OR FIND SOME REST?

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;  
Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast.*

"I'm totally sleep deprived." The busy young mom squeezed out a thin smile and tried to be a good sport.

Can you identify? Some days when you're juggling family schedules, the only way to get everything done is to cut out your precious sleep. Of course at times that sleep is cut for you. There are those nights when someone wakes you up with a cough or a bad dream, or the baby is fussy in the wee hours of the night, and the next day you feel like you're sleepwalking through waist-deep molasses.

Or maybe there just aren't enough hours in the day for you to get everything done, so you work late into the night. That's when weariness sets in. You lose your joy, and your peace evaporates because you're running on empty.

Is there a remedy for the sleep-deprived, mom? Jesus Himself speaks the words that we need to hear. He gently says to you and me, "Come to Me and let Me hold you.."

And when we go to Jesus, He supplies the resources we need. When we listen to His voice, we find ourselves refreshed enough to face the day.

In Matthew 11:30 Jesus says, "The teaching that I ask you to accept is easy; the load I give you to carry is light." The Greek for the word easy is *chraomi* and means "to furnish what is needed." If I know that God will provide everything I need today, I can begin to find rest. If I focus my mind on the promise that God is working out His plan for my good and His glory, life's stresses become manageable.

Do you want the kind of rest that will restore your soul and your joy? Then listen to what the voice of Jesus is saying in this hymn. Each verse is a promise, and each chorus can be our response.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Accept my teachings and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit, and you will find rest for your lives.

—Matthew 11:28-29



## COME AS YOU ARE

*I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad;  
I found in him a resting place, and He has made me glad.*

Can you relate to this mom's experience? "I signed my daughter up for the five-hour-three-times-a-week gymnastics class because the coach said she has potential to be a great gymnast. But after a few weeks of picking her up at school, handing her a snack and her leotard so she could eat and change in the backseat, fighting rush-hour traffic, missing dinnertime together as a family, and feeling completely overwhelmed by our evening schedule, I collapsed in a puddle. 'I can't do this anymore,' I cried. My daughter looked at me and said, 'Mom, I liked the old class better, and I miss eating dinner with the family.'"

The mom admitted, "I realized that I'd never even prayed about the decision. I just thought it was a great opportunity, and I didn't want my daughter to miss out. I was wrong not to ask God what He wanted us to do. I thought pursuing her gymnastics talent was important, and I was willing to make some sacrifices. After my meltdown, I asked the Lord for wisdom. Now my daughter is back to the less rigorous gymnastics schedule. Everyone is calmer, we're having dinner together, my kids have a less frazzled mom, and the evenings are much more manageable and enjoyable."

This mom recognized that her mistake was not praying about the decision. She let an opportunity become her plan.

What decisions are facing you right now? Have you sought God's wisdom about issues like family meals (how many a week can we count on?), TV boundaries (how much time—and what shows—should we allow our kids and ourselves?), bedtime rituals (will I give my kids my full attention for the twenty minutes before they go to sleep?), and extracurricular activities (how many outside activities can we allow and still have good family time?).

We moms don't have all the answers. That's why we "come to Jesus, as we are, weary and worn and sad." And the result? The hymn's first refrain says it all: "I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad."

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

So when you pray, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name always be kept holy.

May your kingdom come and what you want be done, here on earth as it is in heaven. —Matthew 6:9-10



## WHAT AM I THIRSTY FOR?

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold I freely give  
The living water; thirsty one, stoop down, and drink, and live.*

Heather's six-year-old bounded in the back door, his face red and sweaty from playing. "I'm so thirsty, Mom" was all he needed to say, and a drink of water was placed in his hand. After he gulped it down, he put his hand on his chest where his heart was wildly racing, and he said, "Well, helloooooo Jesus!"

Isn't this a great picture of what we need to satisfy our longings? We need Jesus. He calls Himself the Living Water because He promises to fill our desires and meet our needs with the quenching love and grace of His Spirit. We need to follow the child's example, run in the door, and say, "I'm thirsty, Jesus, and I want Your living water!"

So why not sit down and drink in some of your Bible before you do anything else? Head for the comfy chair with your Bible? and, as you drink its Living Water, you'll hear the voice of Jesus say, "I freely give." He's right there in the pages. And when you hear His voice, you just may say, "Well, helloooooo Jesus! I'm so glad You're here."

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

As a deer thirsts for streams of water, so I thirst for you, God. I thirst for the living God. When can I go to meet with him? —Psalm 42:1-2



## SOUL REVIVAL

*I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him.*

On vacation with his wife, my brother-in-law, Ken, was walking by a hotel pool full of happy, splashing children. Two chaperones sat near the shallow end. Looking at the water, he noticed a lifeless silhouette floating in the deep end. Ken immediately went over, reached down, and pulled the girl out of the water.

Certified in CPR, Ken turned the girl's face to the side and expelled as much water as he could while someone called for help. Then Ken started mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Over and over, he pushed down on her abdomen and breathed into her mouth. Pushing and breathing. Pushing and breathing. Water poured out of her mouth, and then she vomited, but Ken did not stop. More than twenty-five minutes passed before the medics finally arrived, administered oxygen, and took the girl to the local hospital.

Ken gave his phone number to one of the chaperones and asked her to let him know what happened to the little girl. Six days later, Ken answered a phone call at home and heard a young voice say, "Thank you for saving my life." It was Michelle, the girl Ken had rescued. Several months after the incident, Ken's family received an invitation from Michelle's parents. On the scheduled afternoon over thirty people gathered for a celebration dinner. Michelle's mother told the miracle story and said that, according to the medics, her daughter would have died if not for Ken's perseverance and skill. Tears, hugs, and gifts were lavished on Ken and his wife, Sharon. "We could never thank you enough for saving our daughter's life," Michelle's mom said.

You can feel her gratitude down to your toes, can't you? We can express that same kind of gratitude to Jesus who rescued us. We can praise God for saving us from drowning in the pit of sin and despair. He reached down, lifted us up, and breathed His Spirit into our hearts. Jesus Christ doesn't give up when our spirits are lifeless. He stays right there with you and me until we're revived. Call on Jesus right now and say, "Thank You for saving my life." Then celebrate as you sing, "My soul revived and now I live in Him."

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Then I will put breath in you so you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

—Ezekiel 37:6b



## IT'S DARK OUT THERE!

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's Light  
Look unto me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright.*

Three-year-old Dylan was afraid to go to bed because he imagined ghosts in his bedroom. With unusual wisdom, his older brother, Will, said, "Dylan, the only ghost in here is the Holy Ghost." Will explained that God's Spirit stays in the room all night and that there is nothing to worry about because God is in control. The next week Dylan told his Sunday-school teacher, "The Holy Ghost lives at my house!"

And, when you and I ask the Lord Jesus to light our hearts—and homes—with His presence, we can say with Dylan, "The Holy Ghost lives at my house!" God promises to deliver us from the kingdom of darkness into the Light of His Son when we acknowledge our sin and receive Jesus as our Savior. Have you done that—and, if so, do you turn to God's Spirit when darkness and fears arise? When fears knock at the door of your heart, send Jesus to answer. Remember that the Holy Ghost lives at your house and can drive the darkness away.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The Lord is my light and the one who saves me. I fear no one. The Lord protects my life; I am afraid of no one. —Psalm 27:1





## WALKING IN THE LIGHT

*I look to Jesus and I found in Him my Star, my Sun;  
And in that light of life I'll walk, till trav'ling days are done.*

“Your children don’t need a perfect mom; they need a mom who knows where to go to be transformed.”

These words from my friend, Regina, were like a balm for my soul. I had blown it with my kids. I had made a promise and not come through—and it was too late to do anything about it. I had called Regina and asked her to pray for me. She didn’t tell me that what I had done was acceptable. Instead, she encouraged me to ask my daughters for their forgiveness and then go straight to the Lord in prayer, confess my procrastination, and ask for strength to be diligent next time.

My kids were amazingly gracious when I admitted my sin and asked their forgiveness. I also told them I had asked the Lord to give me strength to do—next time—what needs to be done when it needs to be done in a way that would glorify Him. I said, “I don’t want to let the Lord Jesus down, and I’m sorry I let you down.” They happily forgave me.

Walking in the light of God’s forgiveness means not just looking at a particular issue, but remembering God’s big picture . He wants me to be a transformed mom. And the moment I admit my sin and ask for forgiveness, the strength to go on pours in. What personal weakness can you lift up today to the Light of Life so that you may become strong in the power of His might?

It may only be in looking back someday we see just how far we’ve come. But our example will help our kids know just where to go when they fail and need to be transformed.

### REST HERE

But people who trust the Lord will become strong again. They will rise up as an eagle in the sky; they will run and not need rest; they will walk and not become tired. —Isaiah 40:31

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father’s Ear

*Lord of heaven and earth, You want me to come to You for rest, and You alone are able to restore my soul. I don’t know why I keep trying to do everything on my own. Forgive me for not seeking You for guidance and strength before I plan my day. Now I come to You just as I am... sometimes weary and worn and sad. I humbly ask You, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, to give me rest and restore my joy. Thank You for speaking to me. I want to listen and obey. Amen.*



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## WEEK TWO

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### SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER

William W. Walford (William Bradbury)

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, that calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne, make all my wants and wishes known!*

*In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief,  
And oft' escaped the tempter's snare, by thy return, sweet hour of prayer.*

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, the joys I feel, the bliss I share  
Of those whose anxious spirits burn with strong desires for thy return!  
With such I hasten to the place where God, my Savior, shows His face,  
And gladly take my station there, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.*

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, thy wings shall my petition bear  
To Him, Whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless;  
And since He bids me seek His face, believe His Word, and trust His grace,  
I'll cast on Him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.*

### MUSIC TO A MOTHER'S EARS

Look Who's Coming to Breakfast

A week later the followers were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came in the stood right in the middle of them. He said, "Peace be with you." —John 20:26

## FIRST FRUITS FOR JESUS

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, that calls me from a world of care.*

Are you kidding? An *hour* of prayer? Does God really expect a busy mother to carve out a whole hour to pray?

Take a look at this week's hymn. You just may come away with renewed excitement about spending sweet minutes, if not hours, of prayer with your heavenly Father...

What's your first thought upon waking? It may be *Do I have enough time for a cup of coffee before the kids wake up?* That's okay, but how about trying this before your feet touch the floor. Simply breathe this prayer: "*Lord Jesus, thank You for this new day. Thank You for loving me and my family. How can I please You today? Grant me Your grace to listen for and to obey Your voice.*" Let words like these start your sweet hour of prayer for the new day.

One mom has made it a habit that the first thing she touches every morning after her coffeepot is her Bible and prayer journal. Not a magazine, not the newspaper, not the TV remote for a weather report, not the computer keyboard to check e-mail. She reaches for the Word of God and something to write in. And then there's the wise mom who says, "I don't call it a quiet time. With a toddler at my feet and a baby on my lap, I call it my time with Jesus."

However we manage our morning routine, words of Scripture can set the tone for our day of communion with Jesus. Scripture may come spoken on a CD, in the form of hymns to hear and sing, or as memorized passages that run through our minds. Choose whatever helps you begin the day of prayer with God's Word. First thought, first touch, first words of praise, first minutes with Jesus—try it and see if you notice the difference.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

We set our eyes not on what we see, but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we cannot see will last forever. 2 Corinthians 4:18



## WHAT SHOULD I ASK FOR?

*And bids me at my Father's throne, make all my wants and wishes known!*

Wise King Solomon who gave us the book of Proverbs also gave us a wonderful picture of the kind of prayer that pleases God. Remember in 1 Kings 3 when the Lord invited Solomon to name whatever he wanted and it would be granted? Instead of riches and power, Solomon asked for an *obedient heart*. Overwhelmed with the task of leading God's people, Solomon admitted, "I am like a little child; I don't know how to do what must be done" (verse 7). What a great example for us moms charged with the task of leading kids from infancy to mature adulthood! When we feel helpless and overwhelmed, we can ask the Lord Jesus for the same thing... an obedient heart.

Am I reluctant to obey God? Do I cringe at having to give up my secret sins and self-indulgent comforts in order to fully obey His Word? What is holding me back from praying--as Solomon did—for a submissive heart? Begin with confession, receive God's forgiveness, and then your most urgent prayer can be for a heart that pleases God.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

I ask that you give me an obedient heart, so I can rule the people in the right way and will know the difference between right and wrong. —1 Kings 3:9



## WORDS THAT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE

*In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief,  
And oft' escaped the tempter's snare, by thy return, sweet hour of prayer*

What is the greatest temptation you face? After we admit our personal biggies (overeating, overspending, yelling, sinful indulgences, complaining, criticizing, laziness, fear...*my* list could go on and on), it's time to ask ourselves, "Am I willing to pray about this?"

When we face a temptation—when we're ready to scream at the children or lose control in some other area—it may be time for desperation prayers like the one Ella's mom told me about. Three-year-old Ella was told that, since she's a big girl now, it's time to stop sucking her thumb. Her mom said, "Ella, you need to pray and ask Jesus to help you to stop sucking your thumb." A few days later Ella's mom observed her in the car seat gazing out the back window toward the sky and softly pleading, "Help me! Help me! Help me!" Even a little child can learn that the best way to handle temptation is to send up a fast SOS to the Savior. After all, Jesus paid for our sins so that we may have a way to escape.

But back to temptations. Sometimes I bring distress on myself because I'm not willing to obey God or respect my husband or love my kids with Jesus' love. What's your snare?

Now look at today's lines from the hymn. When you're tempted to fear or despair, calm your heart with a divine distraction...and *sing* (is this what the hymn is really saying to do?) your way out of the tempter's snare. Prayer is calling out "Jesus, help me!" Sing the name that returns you to the One who grants power and peace. The music of Jesus' name can be tender resuscitation for your soul. When you're feeling desperate, singing softly to your Redeemer is like the Heimlich maneuver, dislodging fear and opening the passageway to your heart once again OR enabling you to breathe in God's peace.

Applying the words of this hymn can save (change) your life.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The only temptation that has come to you is that which everyone has. But you can trust God, who will not permit you to be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, he will also give you a way to escape so that you will be able to stand it. —1 Corinthians 10:13





## DO I HAVE FAMILY SPEED DIALING?

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, the joys I feel, the bliss I share  
Of those whose anxious spirits burn with strong desire for thy return!  
With such I hasten to the place where God, my Savior, shows His face,  
And gladly take my station there, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.*

One of the first things we moms teach preschoolers is their phone number. And today even young kids have three-button phones that allow them immediate access to Mom, Dad, and home. But speed dialing our heavenly Father is nothing new. Long ago He set up a calling system that grants us immediate entrance into His presence.

It reminds me of a panicked cell-phone call my friend Susan received from her daughter who was a new driver. After taking a wrong turn and running out of gas, the sixteen-year-old called her mom from the interstate median, sobbing. Over the phone Susan calmed her daughter down and, after pinpointing her location, drove to her rescue with a can of gas and a hug.

That's just what we need when we're stranded in our mothering, isn't it? Aren't you glad we can speed-dial -our heavenly Father? We can sit in our car or stand in the kitchen and call on the Lord Jesus for help: "Jesus, I'm glad You're available. I need You—right now. I feel overwhelmed, and I don't know what my next step should be. . Please come pick me up!"

Prayer is not complicated. It's talking and listening; it's a family phone conversation. Jesus Christ can come to your rescue with a fresh supply of grace to fuel you on a draining day. Furthermore, you have an unlimited calling plan, and family speed dial is included in your prayer package. So today, when you're tempted to panic, push the praise button instead. Bless the Lord for His goodness. Such praise is music to any mother's ear.

Applying the words of this hymn can save (change) your life.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

I will sing to the Lord, because he is worthy of great honor. The Lord gives me strength and makes me sing; he has saved me. He is my God and I will praise him. —Exodus 15:1- 2



## YOU'VE GOT WINGS!

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, thy wings shall my petition bear  
To Him, Whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless.*

Today's hymn verse is all about flying, but not with our own wings. It's about taking our petitions--what we had hoped for, what we long for, what we wish we could know—and letting Jesus Christ, our Advocate, handle the requests and determine the outcome.

Do you remember the Old Testament story of Jacob? *Jacob dreamed that there was a ladder resting on the earth and reaching up into heaven, and he saw angels of God going up and coming down the ladder (Genesis 28:12).* Jacob was searching for a wife when he had this flying dream. He was about to make the biggest decision of his life, and God let him see where his prayers were going. *Then Jacob saw the Lord standing above the ladder, and he said, "I am the Lord...I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you" (Genesis 28:13a, 15b).*

What answer are you searching for today? Do you have a decision to make? What request do you need to place at the foot of the ladder? In the New Testament, Jesus gives His followers a glimpse of the messengers that ascend and descend to the throne of God: *"I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man" (John 1:51).*

Remember today that you've got wings. Leave your prayers at the ladder to the Lord. Your Redeemer is waiting to bless you.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Be humble under God's powerful hand so he will lift you up when the right time comes. Give all your worries to him, because he cares about you. —1 Peter 5:6-7



## DELAYED DREAMS—BUT GOD IS AT WORK

*And since He bids me seek His face, believe His Word, and trust His grace,  
I'll cast on Him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.*

Have you ever been caught in traffic due to roadwork and tried to see what's going on ahead? Is some construction crew moving dirt, replacing broken portions of the median strip, or laying the foundation for future travelers? It's frustrating to lose valuable travel time just sitting. But building and repairing roads does take time and cause delays. But when we're forced to wait and can't see ahead, we get impatient, don't we? Sometimes we honk and complain; sometimes we seek an alternate route in hopes of reaching our destination faster.

What are you waiting on along this stretch of life's highway? Are you willing to just sit while God is doing His work in your life? What situation delays your dreams? When you can't fix your husband or kids and you're frustrated with the wait, it's time for more minutes of your sweet hour of prayer.

Such prayer is real work. It is staying still when you can't see ahead. It is trusting that God is at work to resolve the problem.

A prayer journal can help you keep track of the waiting time. Describing your concern and the situation you can't resolve on your own allows you freedom in your spirit to leave it in God's hands, to believe His Word, and to trust His grace. It may be awhile, perhaps even years, until you see what work God was doing in your heart while you waited. Only in looking back can we get a view of the spiritual highway God has built. In the meantime, we wait with assurance that He is at work and that His timing is perfect.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.

—Hebrews 11:1

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Father in heaven, You call me to meet with You every day. Help me be a woman who welcomes You into my heart every morning and stays in touch throughout the day. Thank You for the privilege of prayer. Thank You for working even when I can't see what You're doing. And thank You for Your perfectly timed answers. I believe Your Word and I trust Your grace. Amen.*



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## WEEK THREE

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### I SING THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD

Isaac Watts

*I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies,  
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at His command and all the stars obey.*

*I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;  
He formed the creatures with His word, and then pronounced them good.  
Lord, how your wonders are displayed where'er I turn my eye;  
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky.*

*There's not a plant or flower below but makes your glories known;  
And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from your throne;  
While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care,  
And everywhere that man can be, Thou, God, art present there.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

All the power I need is available from my God.

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.  
—Revelation 4:1-31

## MOM'S COMMAND CENTRAL

*I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.*

If you're a mom, there's only one place to start the day, and that's the grand throne room of heaven. Let's take a peek. It's more elegantly designed than any Fortune 500 CEO's office on earth. When you open the door and look inside, you'll catch a glimpse of God who's seated there.

The boardroom of heaven boasts a powerful Person seated on a throne surrounded by living creatures and elders—top executives and overseers. The scene suggests strength, order, and competence. This is a command center of unrivaled power. Nothing on earth even comes close.

Now, look closely at what is going on around that majestic throne. The Chief Executive Officer, called "Almighty" by name and infinite in power and wisdom, is radiant. Flashes of lightning and rumbling thunder issue forth as living creatures speak words of adoration to the One on the throne: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

And this Lord, mighty beyond our highest imagination, has delegated His most important **product line** (Bobbie, would you consider another analogy for children besides "product line"?) to you. Yes, mothers have been handed the crown jewel of the corporation. When God placed a newborn in our arms, He handed you and me human life containing an eternal soul. Nurturing and shaping that little person is therefore the most important job in the world. We mothers have been entrusted with the masterpiece of God's creation.

Do we wonder if we can handle the task? We would surely fail with our assignments if we did not hear the enthroned One promise that He will go with us everywhere, meet with us every day, spend time with us in strategic planning sessions, and give us the inside information we need to succeed.

He also promises to us set up every appointment, perfectly timed to improve His product line. He will instruct us as we watch over, shepherd, and grow that simple life into a fine display of God's glory.

Are you ready to get started? You must begin by walking into the throne room and sitting down with the Boss. Make your to-do list with an open Bible. Ask for His plans for your child. Tell Him you want to match your schedule with His appointment calendar.

When you sing this hymn that affirms your belief in His authority, you are in the right place for help. The One who sits on the throne will give you all the power you need.





## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

They put their crowns down before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it." Revelation 4: 9-10



## MY HELPER CREATES ORDER

*I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at his command and all the stars obey.*

LOGICAL CONNECTION OF THREE SENTENCES? Everything God created is intended to glorify Him. His order, for instance, displays His wisdom. The way I order my life and my home is a reflection of my priorities.

Before I begin to reorganize some of the areas that need help, I look to God and His Word for inspiration that comes from gazing at a perfect model of divine order. That order gives me peace; may order in my life and my home also bring peace.

But how can I keep up with all the piles, messes, laundry, closets, and drawers in my home? Am I delegating tasks and teaching my children responsibility? Do I calmly ask for help and hold family members accountable to create order in closets, the playroom, and living areas? Have I taken the time to show my children how to organize their drawers? Do I carefully state my expectations and lovingly inspect their work? Could I make work more of a game? Have I asked God for His help in creating order in my schedule as well as in my home?

I will sing the mighty power of my God, a God of order, a God of grace.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

We must not become tired of doing good. When we have the opportunity to help anyone, we should do it.  
—Galatians 6: 9-10



## MY HELPER GIVES GOOD GIFTS

*I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;  
He formed the creatures with His word, and then pronounced them good.*

Frequent visits to my grandparents' farm when I was a young girl gave me a wonderful connection to the earth and its bounty. I can still feel the warmth of the egg my grandmother pulled out from beneath her "laying hen" in the chicken house and taste the sweetness of the yellow corn steaming on my plate less than an hour after it was picked from the field. Today we go to grocery stores where the display of fruits and vegetables is endless, but the connection to the earth and the hand of God that provided the rain and soil can be easily overlooked.

I want to be thankful for the bounty God created to fuel our bodies. I want to marvel at His provisions for our health. Do I tell my family that I am grateful for food and for the money to buy groceries? Am I careful to buy foods that are nutritious and eliminate those that aren't? Do I read labels to make sure the fiber count is high and the sugar is low? How careful am I with the health of the people entrusted to me? Is the way I buy and prepare food helping my children form good habits? Am I allowing my children to make grocery lists and am I teaching them to make wise food choices?

And do we faithfully thank our faithful God? Saying grace at meals binds our family's hearts together in appreciation of God's goodness. It is extra special to hold hands around the table and sometimes even sing the blessing. At mealtime let the children join in singing the mighty power of God our Provider.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. —1 Corinthians 10:31



## MY HELPER REVEALS HIMSELF IN BEAUTY

*Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed where'er I turn my eye,  
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!*

A family therapist I know told me what she recommends for patients dealing with severe and incapacitating stress. Before prescribing any medications, she instructs her patients to eliminate stressors for one month. She tells them to turn off the TV, stop reading the daily newspaper, and reduce all unnecessary input from the computer. The reason, she said, is that piled up bits of information that we can't control—police reports and natural disasters—make us feel stressed and overloaded.

How appropriate, then, to—as our hymn this week instructs us—survey the ground or gaze upon the sky instead. Looking up and down and around for evidence of God's wonderful majesty and sovereign power feeds my spirit and gives me strength that will sustain during stressful times. God provides sights and sounds for my mental, emotional, and physical health.

What will you turn off this week in order to look and listen more closely for God?

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

My whole being, praise the Lord. Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with glory and majesty; you wear light like a robe. You stretch out the skies like a tent. —Psalm 104:1, 2



## MY HELPER MAKES SCENTS

*There's not a plant or flower below but makes your glories known;  
And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from your throne;*

I invite you to stop and examine one beautiful flower today and study its petals. (Even the flowers in grocery-store buckets count!) Take time to marvel at God's design--at the color, the fragrance, and the variety of His creation. What *do* those flowers do to show God's glory? They simply *are*, right? But how much of what I *am*, not just what I *do*, glorifies God?

Today I will concentrate on things God has designed. God puts on quite a show for our enjoyment when we take time to smell the flowers, listen to the birds sing, look at everything from anthills to cloud formations to flower petals. Survey both the ground and the skies—and be sure to show your child the beauty, color, and design of something God has made. Take in a deep breath of honeysuckle blossoms and, together, sing the mighty power of God. After all, we—like those flowers—were created for God's glory.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? —Psalm 8:3





## MY HELPER IS EVER PRESENT AND AVAILABLE

*While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care,  
And everywhere that man can be, Thou, God, art present there.*

When our daughters graduated from college and decided to move away to other cities, I struggled to let them go. In tears, I visited my prayer partner, Sandra, and expected her to wallow with me in pity. But my very wise and wonderful friend said, “Bobbie, would you rather the girls be in God’s will and far away from you—or out of God’s will and close by where you can see them?” I knew Sandra was right. I needed to let them go. So I kissed my children good-bye and freed them to follow the path God had placed in their hearts.

Letting go, however, begins when our children are young. It begins as we deal with questions like these. Do I really believe God is present and involved in my child’s life? Have I told my children that they belong to God—and do I believe that? How does this truth affect the way I mother? Have I given God free rein to lead my child in the direction He has planned? Do I read to my children books about missionaries? Who are the heroes I talk about? What should my attitude be if my child asks to go on a mission trip or to an out-of-state college? What if my children grow up and want to live a long distance from me? Do I encourage my children to pray about their decision and tell them that, everywhere they go, God is present? How could that affirmation affect their thinking and their behavior? How does God’s presence with my children impact my ability to trust Him with their future?

As they move away, I choose to stay and pray.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

You know where I go and where I lie down. You know thoroughly everything I do. You are all around me—in front and in back—and have put your hand on me. —Psalm 139:3, 5

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father’s Ear

*Father in heaven, You reign in majesty. You alone are worthy of my praise and my song. And You have entrusted Your greatest creation into my keeping. Thank You for my children—and I know I need Your power to help me be the mother You called me to be. So I come to Your throne room to sit in Your presence. I ask for Your guidance, Your strength, Your wisdom, and Your instructions. I also release my children to follow the purpose and plan You have prepared for them. I pray in the strong Name of—and with praise for—Jesus Christ. Amen.*



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## WEEK FOUR

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### O WORD OF GOD, INCARNATE

William Walsham How, 1867

*O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,  
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky;  
We praise Thee for the radiance that from the hallowed page,  
A lantern to our foot-steps, shines on from age to age.*

*The church from her dear Master received the gift divine,  
And still that light she lifteth o'er all the earth to shine.  
It is the golden casket, where gems of truth are stored;  
It is the heav'n drawn picture of Christ, the living Word.*

*It floateth like a banner before God's host unfurled;  
It shineth like a beacon above the darkling world.  
It is the chart and compass that o'er life's surging sea,  
Mid mists and rocks and quick-sands, still guides, O Christ, to Thee.*

*O make thy church, dear Savior, a lamp of purest gold,  
To bear before the nations Thy true light, as of old.  
O teach Thy wand'ring pilgrims by this their path to trace,  
Til, clouds and darkness ended, they see Thee face to face.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

Just What You're Looking For

The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like. He holds everything together with his powerful Word. —Hebrews 1:3a, 19

## HIDE AND SEEK: INVISIBLE GOD BECOMES VISIBLE

*O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,  
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky;*

There is something enchanting about playing hide and seek with a toddler. When it's their turn to hide, a sympathetic parent may choose an easy hiding place by sticking their foot out from behind a curtain. The little person never knows that mom or dad intentionally made it easy to find them. The laughter that ensues when the secret place is discovered is a parent's delight.

Do you want to find God? It's not easy because our Omnipotent God lives in unapproachable light. *He lives in light so bright no one can go near it.* (1 Timothy 6:16) He is so righteous that we cannot enter His Holy place in our human sinfulness. That's why He sent Jesus. Jesus was God *incarnate*. That means He was God *with skin on*. We can see the footprints of Jesus as he walks through the pages of the New Testament, we can listen to the words He spoke and pay close attention to the way He treated people like you and me. Because of Jesus, God has made it easy to see Him. And it's the Father's delight when we find Him. When we look for Him with all our hearts, there will be Jesus sightings every day. Today's hymn starts with the prophecy from Isaiah 9:2 about the day God would visit the earth as a human. *Before those people lived in darkness, but now they have seen a great light. They lived in a dark land, but a light has shined on them.*

Who are you seeking? Jesus is waiting with His hand of love sticking out from behind the world's dark curtain. Delight your Heavenly Father. Seek Jesus. The ease of finding Him is purely intentional.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father—and he was full of grace and truth. —John 1:14



## WHERE'S THE FLASHLIGHT?

*We praise Thee for the radiance that from the hallowed page,  
A lantern to our foot-steps, shines on from age to age.*

Living in central Florida where hurricane warnings are forecast every fall, our family has learned to place flashlights in strategic places and have fresh batteries at the ready. When the wind howls and rain blows sideways in sheets, we are prepared with a light source. The same is true of the Bible.

We don't need to sit in darkness, knocked down by the pelting onslaught of the evil one. Today's hymn verse says the light of instruction, righteousness and peace radiates from the pages of God's Word. The more Bible we have inside our hearts, the better prepared we will be for crisis. What verses have you memorized? What scriptures, hymns or songs do your children know by heart that will light their footsteps in the dark times ahead? How can you prepare your children? Do you read aloud from the Bible at the breakfast table? Why not sing and pray with them in the car and at bedtime? Read God's Word as if your life depended upon it. Because it does. Find your spiritual flashlights and keep fresh grace batteries close at hand.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Here is the message we have heard from Christ and now announce to you; God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. —1 John 1:5



## GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME

*The church from her dear Master received the gift divine,  
And still that light she lifteth o'er all the earth to shine.*

We gather to worship in a place we call a *sanctuary*. We withdraw from the dangers and distractions of the world to a holy place...a sacred and set-apart place. We enter into the sanctuary of a church each week to leave behind the world of frenetic activity, fear and anxiety. In the sanctuary we are transformed as we focus on God's majesty, love and grace.

A 37-year-old mom told me that she still remembers the feel of her mother gently stroking her hair when she was a little girl lying in her mom's lap in church. Even a child enters into God's planned *sanctuary* of peace at church. The dark world waits outside the sanctuary, but inside, God provides His light of renewal and restoration. No other place promises it. He will surprise and speak to us in ways that we cannot predict or manufacture by our own fretful and faltering efforts. Church is the place your family gazes at the omnipotent God.

Are you giving your children a place of sanctuary and worship by taking them to church every week? The church is God's provision for your family's purpose, joy, stability and safety. *During danger he will keep me safe in his shelter. He will hide me in his holy tent.* (Psalm 27:5) Before the time of trouble comes, get your kids to church. You can't imagine the miracles and the well-timed people God will bring into your children's lives. Don't give into the temptation to miss church. It's the Lord's house and His plan for your family far surpasses any breakfast in bed, trip to the mall, or outing you could plan. It may only be in looking back that you see how entering the *sanctuary* has preserved your family.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

I ask only one thing from the Lord. This is what I want: Let me live in the Lord's house all my life. Let me see the Lord's beauty and look with my own eyes at his Temple. —Psalm 27:4



## A JEWELRY BOX AND A PICTURE OF JESUS

*It is the golden casket, where gems of truth are stored;  
It is the heav'n drawn picture of Christ, the living Word.*

It was time for prayer requests in our Bible study circle when one young mother confessed, “I’m having a hard time getting my family to go to church. My husband says it’s our only day to sleep in and the kids want to stay home and watch cartoons. I give in nearly every week without an argument. I sort of like having the day off, too. Why should I make the effort to keep trying?”

Today’s hymn verse is talking about the church. The church is like a golden treasure chest. It holds gems beyond our imagination. God established the church—His family, to be a picture to the world of His great love—a picture of Jesus. In Ephesians 3:18 we catch a glimpse of the veritable fortune displayed in the Church. *And I pray that you and all God’s holy people will have the power to understand the greatness of Christ’s love—how wide and how long and how high and how deep that love is.*

Christ’s love displayed through the church is **wide**: It covers every experience of every member of your family. It reaches people all over the world with the Gospel, the Good News about Jesus Christ. The church is **long**—it lasts for a lifetime. It embraces each member of your family from infancy to death. The church is **high**—its people will celebrate with you and your family the happiest moments of your lives. The church is **deep**—it’s filled with people who will sit with you in your deepest grief. People who will go down into the pit of despair with you, bring you dinners and care for your family when you can’t. The church family will love your kids, hug you and stay with you when you can’t lift your head off your pillow.

What would you say to the busy mom who asks “Why make the effort to go to church?” Today’s hymn pleads for a fresh look at the jewels contained there. Don’t isolate yourself from God’s treasure chest. Don’t cut your children off from the greatest gems which are theirs for the taking. Let them sit next to you, sing and worship, open God’s Word and be surrounded by a family who will love them from childhood to old age. Do you want to hear God’s voice and catch a glimpse of Jesus? Go to church this week.

He’s always there.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Christ’s love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever. —Ephesians 3:19, 21



## STAYING ON COURSE: A GUIDE INSIDE

*It floateth like a banner before God's host unfurled;  
It shineth like a beacon above the darkling world.  
It is the chart and compass that o'er life's surging sea,  
Mid mists and rocks and quick-sands, still guides, O Christ, to Thee*

How do you get specific answers to the hard questions that come up in your day? It's easy to handle decisions like the grocery store list and what to eat for breakfast or what to wear (most days, anyway). But the big stuff—What school is best for my kid? Should we move to a new city? Is it the right time to take that job offer? Should we plan the trip? Buy the house? These decisions are sometimes difficult and often we don't have enough confidence to make the final call.

Today's hymn verse makes the bold assertion that God's Word is the chart and compass for every decision in the life of a believer. And, like a compass, God's Word is the true north of truth, showing us where we are. It's up to us to turn our feet away from impure motives and toward the direction of God's plan. Then we can start marching. It's why we need the Bible. Today, as you read your Bible ask the Lord about every situation that arises, "Lord is there a principle here that I need for a decision facing my family? Is this from You? What are you trying to tell me?" And when there's a closed door, ask "Am I missing a blessing in this obstacle? Please guide me here. What are You doing in my life? My child's life?"

Instead of resenting the circumstances or the people blocking your plans, you can then rest in the knowledge that God is a good God. He will work out His purpose for His glory and your good. He will bring about what He has planned. Choose to thank and praise Him for an answer that will be coming. The Word of God is your chart and compass. Jesus will meet you in every line. His Holy Spirit is the Guide inside.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Your word is like a lamp for my feet and a light for my path. Guide my steps as you promised; don't let any sin control me.—Psalm 119: 105, 133





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## A PLACE FOR WANDERING PILGRIMS TO BE PART OF A ROYAL FAMILY

*O make thy church, dear Savior, a lamp of purest gold,  
To bear before the nations Thy true light, as of old.  
O teach Thy wand'ring pilgrims by this their path to trace,  
Til, clouds and darkness ended, they see Thee face to face.*

Abby... There were two little girls, ages 8 and 10, who grew up in a family that didn't attend church. Their mom often slept late on Sunday mornings. Their dad was up early and on the golf course at the country club just a few miles from home. A kind neighbor noticed the girls wandering around or riding their bikes on Sunday mornings and invited the girls to go to church. Attending Sunday school and church became a favorite weekly event for the little girls. They would don their fancy dresses, excited to go to place where they felt loved, heard beautiful music and enjoyed hugs and Bible stories. On Sundays when the neighbor wasn't available to drive them, the youngsters walked two miles to another town church all alone. They didn't want to miss being in a church every week.

One Sunday morning the girls invited Jesus into their hearts. They were wandering pilgrims no longer. Even at such tender ages, the girls experienced the love of Jesus and their spiritual path was set in the right direction. The two girls (and later their baby sister) grew up with Christian friends in the church, married devout men from other churches and raised their own families in Christ-honoring churches. The sisters, now grown and both grandmothers, still sing the songs they learned at the churches of their childhood.

As you listen to today's hymn on the CD, Abby, a ten year old, sings the verse about the church being a lamp of gold. Abby is the granddaughter of one of the little girls who long ago walked two miles to hear about Jesus. Leaving a legacy of faith is as simple as a youngster starting down the lighted path. And the path always leads to Jesus. He lives at church. Children find Him there.

Wandering pilgrims of all ages need a place to be loved with God's incredible healing grace. Children belong in the tabernacle where healthy relationships can take place. Who do you know that could use some light in their darkness? Invite someone to church this week. Abby's grandmother is grateful for the neighbor who took her to church. And, by the way, that grateful heart belongs to me.



## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

I want more than anything to be in the courtyards of the Lord's Temple. My whole being wants to be with the living God. Happy are the people who live at your Temple; they are always praising you.

—Psalm 84:2, 4

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Father in Heaven, Your great Wisdom is personified in Jesus. Because of the radiance of Your Son Who became flesh and lived on earth, You are not hidden from my family. Thank You for Jesus. Thank you for establishing the church as a stable, loving, serving family on earth. Give me courage to face the challenges of my family's schedule and get to the sanctuary to worship You. With a grateful heart I want to glorify You and offer my life to serve Your people. Amen.*

### A Note about the Hymnwriter:

**William Walsham How 1823-1897** served as a bishop in the slums of London. Living and working with the poor, William refused to ride in his own carriage and used public transportation. Friends in his district called him *the omnibus bishop*. He stressed the Bible as the Word of God and the church as the means of its delivery to the people. As a writer of poems and hymns, William penned descriptive words to help his beloved parishioners picture Jesus.



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## WEEK FIVE

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### DRAW ME NEARER

Fanny J. Crosby, 1875

*I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice, and it told Thy love to me;  
But I long to rise in the arms of faith, and be closer drawn to Thee.  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to the cross where Thou hast died;  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to Thy precious, bleeding side.*

*Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord, by the power of grace divine;  
Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope, and my will be lost in Thine.  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to the cross where Thou hast died;  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to Thy precious, bleeding side.*

*O the pure delight of a single hour that before Thy throne I spend,  
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God, I commune as friend with friend.  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to the cross where Thou hast died;  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to Thy precious, bleeding side.*

*There are depths of love that I cannot know till I cross the narrow sea;  
There are heights of joy that I may not reach till I rest in peace with thee.  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to the cross where Thou hast died;  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to Thy precious, bleeding side.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

You are Loved

Nothing above us, nothing below us, nor anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. —Romans 8:39

## KNOWING I'M CHERISHED

*I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice, and it told Thy love to me;  
But I long to rise in the arms of faith, and be closer drawn to Thee.*

Her eyes sparkled, and everyone in the room was captivated by her delight. Kendal had just received a diamond engagement ring from my nephew, Erik, and her countenance was radiant as the couple moved among the family and friends gathered for a celebration.

Do you remember when you were newly engaged? Your hand spent most of the day outstretched toward someone you were anxious to tell about the man who was in love with you, the man who planned to pledge his lifelong love to you. You knew you were cherished and, like Kendal, you undoubtedly lit up the room.

Now think about the Lover of your soul. He has pledged His eternal love to you and given you, instead of a diamond, His Holy Spirit to seal His promise. And His voice comes to you over and over again and says, *"You are my beloved. I cherish you. I want to share all the resources of My glory with you. There is not a split second in the day when I am not thinking of you and how much I love you. I love you with My life, and I give you My Name."*

This Lover of your soul is waiting to take you up in the arms of faith. He wants you to be close to Him. He misses you when you leave His side for even a moment. Knowing and remembering that you're loved and cherished like that just might make the difficult and ordinary tasks of your day easier to handle...and perhaps even a pleasure. So today draw close to the Savior with an open Bible on your lap and love for the Author in your heart. Read sweet and personal promises in the love letter God wrote. Yes, you are His beloved, and you will light up your home just thinking about how much you are loved.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

I have called you by name, and you are mine. —Isaiah 43:1



## A MISSION STATEMENT FOR MOMS

*Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord, by the power of grace divine;  
Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope, and my will be lost in Thine.*

“I’m so weak that he walks all over me. I need to be strong, but I’m afraid if I am, he’ll turn away from me and totally rebel.” These words came between sobs as I spoke with a friend whose teenage son was doing everything he could to disrupt the family.

Yes, moms who read their Bibles and love Jesus may still have a kid who goes off the deep end and plunges into sin. And what can a mom do when she’s paralyzed with fear and can’t seem to stand up? Our hymn today gives us a godly plea for moms: *Consecrate me now*. In Bible times, before God sent His people to war, they were told to consecrate themselves, and obedience to that command included washing their clothes and their bodies—and that meant they had to get naked.

Likewise, in order to be ready for service today, we moms may have to bare our heartache and neediness to God. We must also cleanse our hearts, purify our thoughts, strip off every vestige of self-righteousness, and say to our Commander in Chief, “I can’t do this on my own. I’m ready for to serve you as a parent Your way and with Your Power.”

We may also choose to enlist the prayer help of our fellow soldiers. Without God’s divine intervention, we cannot control anything, including our children’s will. But there is power in the blood of Jesus Christ to change the most unruly, most rebellious heart. That same blood changed you and me, and it can change us now as well. Our Redeemer can take an ordinary mom and give her steadfast hope. Stand up today, Mom. Wrap your naked self in the robe of Jesus’ righteousness, stand before Him, and sing, *Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope ’Til my will be lost in Thine*.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Be strong and brave. Be sure to obey all the teachings my servant Moses gave you. Always remember what is written in the Book of the Teachings. Study it day and night to be sure to obey everything that is written there. If you do this, you will be wise and successful in everything. Don’t be afraid, because the Lord will go with you everywhere you go. —Joshua 1:7-9



## A QUILT OF GRACE

*O the pure delight of a single hour that before Thy throne I spend,  
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God, I commune as friend with friend.*

I knew an elderly woman from Pennsylvania farm country named Mimi who was a powerhouse of prayer. She made the most gorgeous quilts with hand stitches so tiny the patterned work of art burst forth from the fabric. Mimi spent her early mornings kneeling next to a bed draped with one of her first quilts. She prayed for her children and grandchildren, for missionaries, for churches, for the neighbors, for world events, for everything the Lord Jesus brought to her mind as she knelt there with her elbows resting on the quilt.

During the day, as she canned fruit, cooked, cleaned, or shopped, Mimi continued her prayer service for those who came to her mind. When Mimi died at age 97, her family set aside a quilt for each grandchild. One particular quilt that was the family's most prized possession. Not one of the prettiest patterns or colors, the prized quilt was the one with two small spots on the edge where Mimi's elbows had worn into the fabric when she knelt to pray.

Now Mimi's granddaughter has that quilt, and a great-granddaughter will be told the story of the small woman who delighted in her time on her knees before the Throne of God. What will your great grandchildren treasure when you're gone? Maybe a prayer journal with their name, a date, and a verse you prayed for that child will be the most valuable thing you leave behind. Invest in time before the Father's throne today. Sing a hymn prayer like this one as you hold a child on your lap. Rocking chairs, piano benches, and quilts can become places of prayer that will one day remind your great grandchildren of a place of pure delight you frequented often. Leave behind pieces of grace for every child of yours.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Early the next morning, while it was still dark, Jesus woke and left the house. He went to a lonely place, where he prayed."—Mark 1:35



## BLOOD AND WATER: THE POWER OF THE CROSS

*Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to the cross where Thou hast died;  
Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord, to Thy precious, bleeding side.*

A phrase that's commonly overheard when expectant mothers are together is "when my water breaks." With my first pregnancy I couldn't imagine what that really meant as I listened to friends and acquaintances offer advice, tell stories, and share funny moments about their little one's arrival. When it was my turn to go through the birthing process, however, it was no laughing matter.

Whether or not you birthed or adopted your child, getting your child from the womb to the world involved water and pain and blood.

The life and death of Jesus gives mothers an unusual and visceral picture of what really had to happen for our salvation, the new birth. The cost of delivering us from one world to a new kingdom was God's Son, His crucifixion, His blood. When the soldier at the the cross pierced the Savior's side, blood and water flowed from the wound. Jesus knew it was His time to give birth to the salvation God had promised. His heart broke for us, water from His side flowed, and His blood was shed. The pain of the crucifixion gave way to the immeasurable suffering of being separated from the Father. But then, three days later, there was the glorious victory of the resurrection.

TRANSITION Remember the moment you first held your baby, wrapped tightly in a warm hospital blanket? You held your bundle close. It was joy like you'd never known before. Well, Jesus looks at us after our delivery from sin with eyes of love, and He wants to draw us near to His side. This kind of love that delivered you from the kingdom of darkness is the same kind of sacrificial love you shower on your child. Look up at the Savior and draw your child close to your side with a grateful heart of love.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

But one of the soldiers stuck his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water came out. (The one who saw this happen is the one who told us this, and whatever he says is true. And he knows that he tells the truth, and he tells it so that you might believe.) —John 19:34-35





## LIVING WITH THE END IN MIND

*There are depths of love that I cannot know till I cross the narrow sea.*

Sitting down at a round table in the ballroom, my husband and I noticed that every table had a box of Kleenex placed near the fresh-flower centerpiece. The conference speaker had been announced, but we knew nothing more than his name, Douglas Kramp. A handsome young businessman moved close to the microphone and, as his story began to unfold, we knew why the Kleenex boxes were there.

With raw emotion and tenderness, Doug told the riveting story of his young wife, Erin, who had written a book during her dying years called *Living with the End in Mind*. An overhead screen projected videos Erin had taped for their four-year-old daughter to watch after her mother's death. She had thought of every possible subject to discuss, including "When It's Time to Pick a College and Career" and "When Daddy Dates." Videotaped from her home before she died of cancer, Erin had recorded other tender messages for her daughter, Peyton, to prepare her for various life situations.

As Doug talked, my heart was grabbed, tears flowed freely, and my life-priority list was forever altered. The Lord used this gentle young man's powerful story to reveal to a room full of convention attendees that each of us must face our own mortality in order to fully glorify God with our lives.

Anxious to read what Erin had written in her book, I went back to my room and opened to the introduction. She had written, "I once thought that if I knew I had only a year to live, I would travel around the world for the entire time. When I realized my time might be short, I wanted to spend as much of it as possible with the people I cared for most, doing things together that we enjoyed or believed in. If my family and friends were the most important aspect of my life, why was I spending so little time with them?"

Erin's story is still a wake-up call for me. Am I spending my allotted days investing in the people I love and in the Savior I'm going to live with forever? Today's hymn talks about depths of love we can't know this side of eternity. But we can catch a glimpse of that deep love when we pray with our spouse, hold our child, and worship our Redeemer. That's why I want to spend more days being involved with what has eternal value—more moments being with Jesus and more moments sharing His love with my children in the ordinary tasks of mothering. Even the song on my lips today is an eternal investment when I offer it as praise and thanksgiving to the One who died to redeem my life and take me to heaven.

There's a box of Kleenex on the table. Are you living with the end in mind?



**REST HERE**

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father encourage you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. God loved us, and through his grace he gave us a good hope and encouragement that continues forever. —1 Thessalonians 2:16-17



## THE IMAGINATION STATION

*There are heights of joy that I may not reach till I rest in peace with thee.*

Created in God's image, we have been given a transforming gift. Human imagination allows us to reach to a realm of heavenly heights by crafting things that do not presently exist. Children have been infused with powerful imaginations, and we moms can help them shape it into a positive tool when we teach them to let God's Spirit inspire them.

Encouraging exposure to great art, music and literature is a healthy way to give our kids a taste of the depths of joy that exists in creative expression. God has gifted every one of us with the ability to be creative. Negative words and lack of encouragement can hurt or stifle a person's creativity. Maybe that happened to you when you were young. You can allow the Holy Spirit of the Creator to ignite your mind with an idea, a feeling, an impulse that will lead you into creative action.

What brings out your creative side? It may be as simple as opening a child's watercolor paint box and painting a picture. Can you sing a song, or try a new recipe, build a birdhouse, or make a reading corner where you can sit with an inspiring book? Watch what happens when you put a box of crayons and blank paper in front of a child. Ask them to draw a picture of something that makes them happy. Read a story and ask them to draw something they thought of while you were reading to them. Let their imagination draw them near to the Savior just by expressing one bright thought that brings them joy.

Then savor the smile, enjoy your child's laughter, and really listen to the heartfelt expression of his or her personality. A good way to encourage more creativity is to ask, "Tell me about your picture," "What did you like about the story?," "What did that song make you think of?" There are heights of joy to be reached in the imagination that God gave each of us. Simple gifts are sometimes the most inspiring of all.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

If your children ask for a fish, which of you would give them a snake instead? Even though you are bad, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! —Luke 11:11, 13



### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Father in heaven, You draw me to Yourself in so many surprising yet simple ways. Thank You for loving me with such incredible love that You call me Your beloved and gave me Your Name. Thank You for the cross where You gave Your life to redeem me from being left alone in this sin-filled world. Today, I want to consecrate my life to You, do Your will, and draw closer than ever before to You. Through Your Word and by Your Spirit, I know I am Your child. Amen.*



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## WEEK SIX

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### PRAISE MY SOUL, THE KING OF HEAVEN

Henry Frances Lyte, 1834

*Praise my soul the King of heaven,  
To His feet thy tribute bring,  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
Evermore His praises sing.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King!*

*Praise him for his grace and favor  
To our fathers in distress;  
Praise Him, still the same forever,  
Slow to chide and swift to bless;  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Glorious in His faithfulness.*

*Father-like He tends and spares us;  
Well our feeble frame He knows;  
In His hands He gently bears us,  
Rescues us from all our foes.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely yet His mercy flows.*

*Angels help us to adore Him  
Ye behold Him face to face.  
Sun and moon bow down before Him;  
Dwellers all in time and space;  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise with us the God of Grace.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

There is a fountain of youth.

My whole being, praise the Lord and do not forget all his kindnesses. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He saves my life from the grave and loads me with love and mercy. He satisfies me with good things and makes me young again, like the eagle. —Psalm 103:2-5

## GAZING AT GOD: SING AND SAY YOUR ABC'S

*Praise my soul the King of heaven,  
To His feet thy tribute bring.*

We could study just one trait of God for a lifetime and never exhaust that single dimension of His being. God is so holy and magnificent that our words cannot contain His omnipotence and worthiness. No wonder our lyrics today call us to bring a tribute to God.

My spiritual mentor Grace Wolgemuth taught me to praise God using the alphabet . For instance, she might say, “Lord, You are **A**: Awesome, **B**: Bountiful in mercy, **C**: Compassionate, **D**: Dependable, **E**: Everlasting, **F**: Forgiving, **G**: Gracious, **H**: Holy, **I**: Infinite, **J**: Just, **K**: Kind, **L**: Loving, **M**: Maker of heaven and earth, **N**: Noble, **O**: Omniscient, **P**: Pure, **Q**: Quick to forgive, **R**: Redeemer, **S**: Savior, **T**: Truth, **U**: Unfailing, **V**: Victorious, **W**: Waiting to forgive, **X**: Excellent, **Y**: Yearning to bless us, **Z**: Zealous for good.” Try making your own list as you bring your tribute to God.

Thinking on the character of God like that changes our attitude toward every single thing in our lives: our activities for the day, our kids, our health, our future, our decisions... The list goes on and on—and absolutely everything on that list falls into perspective when we focus on the greatness of the Almighty.

Gazing on God is like putting a wide-angle lens on my life camera. So join me in saying your ABC's today and snap a panoramic glimpse of the picture God has for your family. You'll love the view.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Praise the Lord! Thank the Lord because he is good. His love continues forever. No one can tell all the mighty things the Lord has done; no one can speak all his praise. —Psalm 106:1-2



## HEAVEN'S HANDYMAN

*Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
Evermore His praises sing.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King!*

Recently on my early-morning walk, I noticed a white van parked in front of a home. As I got closer, I could clearly read the red-lettered words painted on the side:

Broken? Scratched? Dirty? Dark? Dented? Messy? Damaged?  
Call Hank's Handyman Service 407-292-5080  
We Repair it. Restain it. Paint it. Clean it.  
Light it. Hang it. Patch it. Organize it. Haul it.

That's just what we want, isn't it? Someone who will fix the broken stuff in our lives. Someone who knows how to clean up the dirt in our soul and make everything like new.

This week our hymn is full of promises from heaven's Handyman who is in the business of restoring hearts. This Repairer of broken dreams and the One who remakes damaged people is Jesus Christ. His resources include all the power tools of heaven. Primarily, He gave His life to fix our sin problem once and for all. Now He works to make us into a new creation, and His work comes with an (eternal) lifetime guarantee. When we call on Jesus, we really can be ransomed, healed, restored, and forgiven.

Our makeover begins with what the Bible calls repentance—with humbling ourselves and agreeing with God that we have sinned and continue to sin. We bow our heads and simply ask for His gracious forgiveness. Receiving it, we lift our faces to Him with a song of praise like this powerful hymn. When you sing the words, you are speaking amazing promises and remembering Jesus' death on the cross and His victory over sin and death.

Jesus walked out of the tomb under His own power to prove that Satan can no longer hold our souls in the dirty, rotten pit of hell. Jesus Christ alone is able to take the foul stain of sin and make us as pure as snow, to make a brand-new creation out of a broken, dented, ruined sinner. Jesus can restore mothers to the intended beauty of His original design. And He isn't too busy to come to your home today. If your heart is broken, wounded, dirty, sick, or damaged, call on Jesus. He repairs, restores, cleans, and recreates us. He also hauls off the old, worthless debris. So ask to be restored. He's available 24/7—and He makes house calls.





**REST HERE**

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new!  
All this is from God. Through Christ, God made peace between us and himself, and God gave us the work  
of telling everyone about the peace we can have with him. —2 Corinthians 5:17, 18



## DISCIPLINE AND THE HEART OF THE MATTER

*Praise Him for His grace and favor,  
To our fathers in distress  
Praise Him, still the same forever,  
Slow to chide and swift to bless  
Alleluia: Alleluia! Glorious in His faithfulness.*

Have you noticed that Jesus confronted different people in different ways? He always knew just what to say and exactly which punishment fit the offense. As a mom, I want to say the right thing that will put my child on the road to restoration and wholeness. But too often I fall into the blame game or I speak abruptly and blurt out consequences before determining what will truly help my loved one. Yes, as a parent I have a lot to learn...

Today's hymn verse praises God for His parenting technique. Let's see what *slow to chide and swift to bless* looks like in John 8 and learn from our Lord's example.

Throwing the woman caught in adultery at His feet, the town's elders wondered if Jesus would agree that she be put to death. Jesus quietly bent down and wrote something in the dirt with His finger before saying, "Anyone here who has never sinned can throw the first stone at her." (John 8:7)

The woman must have been both ashamed at being found naked with a man and terrified at the thought of the stoning she expected. Jesus knew the heart behind this woman's frightened eyes, though. Maybe the words He wrote were "I love this woman, and she is forgiven." Whatever it was, we know that this woman allowed her shame to lead her to repentance. We also know that her accusers left one by one. Then Jesus said to her, "I also don't judge you guilty. You may go now, but don't sin anymore" (John 8:11).

Do you know how good it feels to be cleansed from our sin, loved, and forgiven? If not, confess the indiscretion from your past that still brings shame. Let your disgrace lead you to the feet of Jesus. He is the only One who can erase the sin and restore your purity. Today, come to Jesus and ask Him to forgive you. You can have a clean heart, and isn't that what you want for yourself and your children?

Also, ask the Lord to help you parent—to be slow to chide and swift to bless and to remember to consider your child's heart whenever you issue a punishment. Regularly write and speak the words "I love you" to each child. Remind your kids that forgiveness carries with it the responsibility to stop the sinful behavior. Always ask the Lord to give you words that will help lead your child to repentance and forgiveness. And remember what it feels like to have Jesus look at *your* accuser and say, "I love this woman, and she is forgiven."



**REST HERE**

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The Lord is a God who shows mercy, who is kind, who doesn't become angry quickly, who has great love and faithfulness and is kind to thousands of people. The Lord forgives people for evil, for sin, and for turning against him, but he does not forget to punish guilty people. —Exodus 34:6-7



## WHERE I'M WEAK, HE IS STRONG

*Father-like He tends and spares us;  
Well our feeble frame He knows...*

Breathe a deep sigh of relief today as you read that God, our perfect Father, understands our human feebleness. And know that, in our weakness, He supplies strength when we live connected to Jesus and rooted in His Word.

In that Word, we learn that Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd who carefully watches over the health and welfare of His flock. He doesn't *drive* the sheep, but tenderly *leads* them with His voice. When do you hear the Shepherd's voice?

- Listen for it when you read the Scripture. Does a verse pop off the page and you're suddenly certain about something you need to do or stop doing?
- Listen for the Shepherd's voice in a choir anthem at church on Sunday. When it moves you to tears, quietly resolve to change destructive thought patterns.
- Listen for the Shepherd's voice on the Christian radio station in your car. Let the words reach deeply into your heart and fuel the courage to trust.

Today, let God's recognizable voice gently lead you through the day.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

He takes care of his people like a shepherd. He gathers them like lambs in his arms and carries them close to him. He gently leads the mothers of the lambs. —Isaiah 40:11



## HELD BY GENTLE HANDS

*In His hands He gently bears us,  
Rescues us from all our foes.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely yet His mercy flows.*

Our Father in heaven cares for mothers and their babies. After all, we are His sheep, and our Good Shepherd knows that we are not able to defend ourselves on our own. Consider, for instance, the evil forces that threaten your family. Do you criticize your husband in front of the children? Does discontent lurch inside when you stroll past expensive department-store merchandise? Do you let R-rated movie spew foul language into your family room?

The Good Shepherd wants to rescue your family from the fierce attacks as well as the subtle deceptions of Satan, the roaring lion who would devour your soul and your children's. Jesus cares about you and your little lambs. He also wants to gently lead you with His voice. Have you taught your child to listen to the Shepherd's voice? Let words of the Good Shepherd be part of the morning routine at your house. Start with a praise song at the breakfast table. Read a Bible story to your children while they eat their cereal.

Also, ask Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to show you where the enemy is trying to grab your kids. Let the Word of God guide you and the Son of God rescue you and your little ones from all your foes.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

God will save you from hidden traps and from deadly diseases. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you can hide. His truth will be your shield and protection. —Psalm 91:4



## ANGELS ON DUTY

*Angels help us to adore Him  
Ye behold Him face to face.  
Sun and moon bow down before Him;  
Dwellers all in time and space;  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise with us the God of Grace.*

Today's hymn verse tells us two things about angels: Angels do exist, and they assist us in our worship. (Nobody understands better than moms that we need helpers!)

Read a description of God's angels:

Each of these four living creatures had six wings and was covered all over with eyes, inside and out.

Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, He was, he is, and he is coming." These living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the One who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever. (Revelation 4:8, 9)

We are called to join these angels in worshiping the One on the throne in heaven. Ministering spirits are sent to help you and me do just that. May the same words that the angels sing roll off our tongues: "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!*"

Today, worship God before you read or cook or work on anything else.—and then keep worshiping Him as you go about doing those very things. But before you roll out of bed, tell the Lord God Almighty that He is holy and give yourself today to do His bidding. After all, when you bowed down with worship songs and words of adoration, you were given angel assistance for the day.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

All the angels are spirits who serve God and are sent to help those who will receive salvation.

—Hebrews 1:14



### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Father in heaven, thank You for Your Word. This very week it has sustained me. It has also reminded me that You are too infinitely wonderful for any mortal to grasp., So, confessing my sin and crying out for help, I humbly come to You and ask You to lead my family. I submit to Your plan for our lives,. Lord, help me hear Your voice and obey You. You promise You'll never leave or forsake me, and I thank You for Your faithful love. Even when I mess up, You give me a clean heart and a fresh start. I love You with all my new, clean heart. Amen.*





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## WEEK SEVEN

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### GRACIOUS SPIRIT, DWELL WITH ME

Thomas Lynch

*Gracious Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would gracious be;  
And with words that help and heal would Thy life in mine reveal;  
And with actions bold and meek would for Christ my Savior speak.*

*Truthful Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would truthful be;  
And with wisdom kind and clear let Thy life in mine appear;  
And with actions brotherly speak my Lord's sincerity.*

*Mighty Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would mighty be;  
Mighty so as to prevail where unaided man must fail;  
Ever by a mighty hope pressing on and bearing up.*

*Holy Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would holy be;  
Separate from sin, I would choose and cherish all things good,  
And whatever I can be, give to Him who gave me Thee!*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

You're a Cool Mom

The Lord God put his Spirit in me, because the Lord has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken, to tell the captives they are free, and to tell the prisoners they are released. He has sent me to comfort all those who are sad and to help the sorrowing people of Jerusalem. I will give them a crown to replace their ashes, and the oil of gladness to replace their sorrow, and clothes of praise to replace their spirit of sadness. Then they will be called Trees of Goodness, trees planted by the Lord to show his greatness. —Isaiah 61:1, 2b, 3

## IS YOUR LIFE HEIR-CONDITIONED?

*Gracious Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would gracious be;*

When I was a little girl, central cooling in homes were a rarity. Car air conditioners were sold separately and were very expensive. They were even more scarce. Although keeping cool has been a human preoccupation for millennia, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century most efforts were ineffective and people just tolerated discomfort in hot weather. Now, the modern system—involving the exchange of hot, humid air for cool, comfortable air by way of a circulating refrigerant—has altered our lives.

You may not be old enough to remember the first bulky air conditioners used at home and in our cars, but they were awkward boxes mounted in windows or under the dash of the car. My dad was one of the first on our street to get a car air conditioner and we were the envy of the neighborhood children who melted on long trips in the back seat of their cars. Comfort cooling for our homes and cars may have been clumsy and cumbersome, but, oh the escape it provided from the sweltering highs of summer.

Because cars today come equipped with in-dash units and most homes have central air, we overlook the wonder of what is providing our relief.

Our scorched and barren spirits can be transformed by the refreshing wind of the Spirit of God. As children of the Heavenly Father, we are heirs of all He has promised. And the Helper, the Holy Spirit, is the gift He gives us to exchange our hot, messy sin for His fresh, new life. Left on our own, our homes and cars can be full of blistering words, hot tempers and nasty looks. Where can we go to get rid of the selfish thoughts, ungodly passions, and heated arguments that make our homes and cars unbearable? This week's hymn is a musical plea for transformation.

The Holy Spirit of God can change homes and cars and places of work and play into livable, loveable spaces. It's God plan for you and me—His heirs—to experience this renovation. He breathes His Spirit into us as we pray and ask for the cooling effect of His kindness, truth and holiness. His Grace can be built-in...free for the asking. Today, turn on the heir-conditioner as you sing this prayer for a changed heart. Everyone in the neighborhood will be eager to visit your home or ride in your car because you'll be a really cool mom.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The wind blows where it wants to and you hear the sound of it, but you don't know where the wind comes from or where it is going. It is the same with every person who is born from the Spirit. —John 3:8



## CAN YOU EAT THOSE WORDS?

*And with words that help and heal would Thy life in mine reveal;*

One of the foolish lies perpetuated on every grade school playground goes like this: *Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.* We mothers know when our child comes home with a downcast look that words *can* hurt...and crush their spirits. But when God's anointed words come from our mouths, healing begins. What do your words sound like? Are you sarcastic or critical?" Moms are called to be the helpers and healers at home...and we do it with our words. "*How's our happy girl this morning?*" "*Here comes my little artist.*" "*How can I pray for you today?*" "*I love you with all my heart.*" As you sing the hymn today, you are asking the Holy Spirit to peek through your personality and reveal Himself to others. No sticks and stones here, only the sweet taste of God's Spirit-filled words.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Careless words stab like a sword, but wise words bring healing. —Proverbs 12:18



## STRONG ENOUGH TO SPEAK UP

*And with actions bold and meek would for Christ my Savior speak.*

Unloading her groceries at the checkout, a mom noticed her 6-year-old son standing in front of the magazine display quietly staring at a Cosmopolitan magazine. “Mommy, I saw that lady’s bra,” the youngster reported.

After paying for her groceries, the mother asked to see the store manager. “Something here troubles me,” she said. It is not appropriate to have magazines with offensive pictures and words at eye level for my children and I wondered if you could remove them from the checkout line.”

Anxious to please the customer, the store manager moved the magazines and the mom thanked him for his kindness.

Have you ever voiced your opinion about ungodly or unacceptable behavior? As Christ-following mothers, we have influence if we speak up with quiet resolve. Our words and actions, bold and meek, can be the very thing that works to change the system. Sing this hymn today and ask, “Gracious Spirit, is there something I can say or do for You today?”

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Do not be fooled; You cannot cheat God. People harvest only what they plant. We must not become tired of doing good. We will receive our harvest of eternal life at the right time if we do not give up. —Galatians 6:7, 9



## IS IT THE TRUTH?

*Truthful Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would truthful be;  
And with wisdom kind and clear let Thy life in mine appear;  
And with actions brotherly speak my Lord's sincerity.*

Rotary club, a worldwide service organization, has a pledge the members stand and say every week to start their meetings. *The Four-Way Test* was created to help men and women promote highest ethical standards in their professional lives. The twenty-four word test for members to follow in their business became the guide for sales, production, advertising, and all relations with dealers and customers. The simple test asks four questions that we as moms can incorporate into our home management job:

“Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the Truth?
2. Is it Fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build Goodwill and Better Friendships?
4. Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?"

Number one asks about truth. I want to be a woman who tells the truth. But I sometimes struggle with it. I enjoy exaggerating to make my story fit ego needs or make it more dramatic. When I embellish the story or add my own version, it can be deceiving. How about when my husband says, “Is that new?” and I reply, “Oh, I’ve had this for a while.” It is true I’ve had it a *while*, (maybe two days), but the truth is I was embarrassed to say “I went shopping and bought something I didn’t need” and am trying to cover it up. Truth leads to wisdom. My children need to hear me tell the truth...when I answer the phone, when I speak to a clerk, when I’m talking to my neighbors. Kids pay close attention to what we say and do. Truth telling is clean. As I sing this hymn today, I am asking the Holy Spirit to reveal places where I distort the truth. I need this prayer because I want to live as a truthful mom, but I can’t do it on my own. Today, ask the Jesus, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, to guard and guide the things you think, say and do.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Lord, who may enter your Holy Tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? Only those who are innocent and who do what is right. Such people speak the truth from their hearts and do not tell lies. Psalm 15:1, 2



**NOTE:**  
 There are TWO Day Five devo's for this month.  
 I included both so we will need to decide to cut one  
 or remove around.

## MIGHTY ARM OF STRENGTH

*Mighty Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would mighty be;  
 Mighty so as to prevail where unaided man must fail;  
 Ever by a mighty hope pressing on and bearing up.*

What would happen if you scheduled a tennis game one morning and your partner didn't know that during the night your serving arm had been mysteriously replaced with the world's best tennis arm? Standing at the service line you toss the ball in the air... *Whiz...* you hit a bullet past your unsuspecting opponent. Can you imagine the buzz? "Where in the world did that serve come from?" "I had no idea she was *that* good!" Do you think you'd have more fun playing with that kind of new-found skill? Do you think you'd win more matches?

Mothers have an astounding power available that can turn their weakness into strength so they can serve the Lord with gladness. When you sing this hymn, hope and courage can rise up to make you strong. With God's Holy Spirit inside, you can overcome fear, stand up to wrong doers, serve others with a glad heart and win against the opponent of your soul. God's arm is strong to save. As you pray this hymn verse, thank the Lord Jesus for giving you His Mighty Spirit.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

You will not succeed by your own strength or power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord All-Powerful.  
 —Zechariah 4:6



**NOTE:**  
*This is the second Day 5 devo.*

## WHO DO YOU LOOK LIKE?

*Holy Spirit, dwell with me; I myself would holy be;*

When babies are born, everyone looks over their tiny bodies for some family resemblance. You say, “She has her mom’s nose,” or “He has a dimple in his chin just like daddy.” Do you resemble your Heavenly Father in personal holiness? That’s what he wants for the children who have been born again into His family. Holy means “pure, set apart, and blameless.” God spiritually birthed us to look like Him. We have been called to be His Holy kids on earth. Today’s hymn makes a bold wish: *I want to be holy!* Are the things you choose to read, watch and listen to pure, lovely and holy? Today, set your attitude and actions to look just like your Heavenly Father as you sing this prayer.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

So prepare your minds for service and have self-control. Now that you are obedient children of God do not live as you did in the past. But be holy in all you do, just as God, the One who called you, is holy. —1 Peter 1:13a, 14



## CHOOSING AND CHERISHING

*Separate from sin, I would choose and cherish all things good,  
And whatever I can be, give to Him who gave me Thee!;*

The prescription for holiness follows the plea for holiness in this week's hymn. The first thing is to separate from sin. How do we isolate ourselves from the fever of the world when everywhere we go there is something assaulting our eyes or ears? *We decide to choose and cherish what is good.*

Living in Florida where weather is hot, it's common to see women hardly wearing enough clothes to cover their breasts. This poses a problem for young men. One mother taught her son the "one look" method when faced with the scantily dressed girls he sees. "You can't help it if you see a girl with her boobs hanging out the first time," the mom said, "but you *can* discipline your eyes not to take the second look." That wise mother gave her teenage son a tool he can use every day: *Choose and cherish all things good.*

By spending time in God's Holy Word, we are more sensitive to the contaminating influences of culture. Today, choose to purify your patterns and practices. Is there anything you need to discipline in your thoughts or conduct? Do you secretly fantasize about a relationship with anyone other than your husband? Do you have any private moral habits that are impure? Do you joke about shameful things? Do you try to impress others with provocative clothing? Today as you sing this hymn, ask yourself, "Am I trying to please the Lord?" Let the tears of repentance bathe your heart as you confess your thoughts and habits to the Lord Jesus. Then you'll begin to be holy, just like your Heavenly Father.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

In Christ, God has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. That is, in Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people—people without blame before him. —Ephesians 1:3, 4

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Lord Jesus, Thank you for the Person of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for providing the coolness of the Spirit's goodness, grace and love in exchange for the heat of ungodly passions, outbursts of anger, internal rage and selfishness in my heart and home. I humbly ask You to place Your Spirit inside my life. Show me how to keep the exchange going moment by moment as I choose and cherish what is good. Thank you for providing strength to live by the power of Your Spirit. Amen.*





A Note about the Hymnwriter:

**Thomas Lynch (1818-1871)** was a nature lover, poet and pastor in London, England. With an ability to see the world through the lens of an artist, he was able to paint word pictures that brought Biblical truth to light for his parishioners. One Sunday morning with a bouquet of field flowers in his hand, he went to the pulpit and preached an entire sermon using the flowers as an illustration. “Christian poetry”, he said, “is a river of the water of life.” The verses he gladly shared in this hymn are the inspiration to live the holiness he sought.



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## WEEK EIGHT

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### MORE ABOUT JESUS

Eliza Hewitt

*More about Jesus would I know, more of His grace to others show;  
More of His saving fullness see, more of His love who died for me.  
More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,  
More of His saving fullness see, more of his love Who died for me.*

*More about Jesus let me learn, more of His holy will discern;  
Spirit of God, my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me.  
More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,  
More of His saving fullness see, more of His love Who died for me.*

*More about Jesus; in His Word, holding communion with my Lord;  
Hearing His voice in every line, making each faithful saying mine.  
More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,  
More of his saving fullness see, more of his love Who died for me.*

*More about Jesus on His throne, riches in glory all His own;  
More of His kingdom's sure increase; more of His coming, Prince of Peace.  
More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,  
More of his saving fullness see, more of his love Who died for me.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

This is the Life

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Then, by believing, you may have life through his name. —John 20:31

## GOD'S SHOW AND TELL

*More about Jesus would I know, more of his grace to others show;  
More of his saving fullness see, more of his love who died for me.*

When I was a kid, I loved show-and-tell. Grade school classmates would bring pet turtles, model airplanes, or any treasure they could lug to school. Of course, every child chose something they valued to show their classmates. My favorite first grade memory was the day Jane Ellen brought her new puppy. You can imagine the fun of having a little dog at school.

Our hymn today lifts up God's beloved show and tell, Jesus Christ. He not only was the Father's treasure, He was the exact representation of God, in human form. No show and tell on earth will ever be more astounding.

How much do your children know about Jesus? Does every one in your family have their own Bible—one they can hold and read about Jesus? Tell your child what Jesus means to you. Tell them how your first came to know him. Show your family what the grace of Jesus looks like. Can you give them hugs and smiles and ten minutes of Jesus' love when you'd rather be relaxing or working on your latest project? Little sacrifices, a few minutes to rub their back at bedtime, a well-timed conversation face to face (without answering the phone), or reading aloud while sitting close could show and tell a lot about Jesus and be remembered for a lifetime.

Today, you are part of God's show and tell. He owns stars, waterfalls, magnificent mountains, symphonies and sunsets. And he holds ordinary moms like you and me up to display Jesus to our children.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

We announce to you what we have seen and heard, because we want you also to have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with God the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. —1 John 1:3



## CONTENTMENT: WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

*More, more about Jesus, more, more about Jesus,  
More of his saving fullness see, more of his love who died for me*

Everyone had left the tomb but Mary. She was blinded with grief because Jesus was dead. She wasn't expecting a miracle. Then two angels dressed in white approached her, "*Woman, why are you crying? Whom are you looking for?*" John 20:12.

*"They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they have put him,"* Mary groaned.

So Mary left her spot near the tomb and walked from the garden. As she did she passed the risen Jesus, but she didn't recognize Him. Mary thought He was the gardener. But when He spoke her name, she suddenly realized it was Jesus. He was all she wanted.

What do you want most as a mom? What's on your wish list? Maybe it includes things like a kinder husband, a bigger bank balance, kids who pick up their rooms, to lose ten pounds and look better in your clothes, a new sofa, shoes for spring, a menu for a dinner party. Little or big, our want list can be endless, can't it? Let's look at today's hymn in light of a mother's hopes and dreams.

Regardless of what's on our want lists, you and I have a longing that we cannot fill with any thing. All the stuff, even good things, we could collect won't satisfy you or me. Like Mary, we're still going to be crying until we hear Jesus speak. Today's hymn verse is a request to experience more of His fullness. He's calling your name. He is enough to satisfy your deepest longings.

Jesus told His disciples, "*All that the Father has is mine.*" (John 16:15a) He said, "*I tell you the truth, my Father will give you anything you ask for in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy will be the fullest possible joy.*" (John 16:23b, 24)

Jesus guarantees fullness of joy to moms. Our identity is not in our husbands, our houses, possessions, children, physique, status, or success. Just in Jesus. He is enough. Do you want to be content? Jesus is near. Ask Him to fill you up. He died to give you a full life for now and all of eternity. Lay your list down in front of an open Bible. The details of your life are in God's control. Open your eyes to the Giver of every good and perfectly-timed gift.



**REST HERE**

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

All of God lives in Christ fully (even when Christ was on earth), and you have a full and true life in Christ, who is ruler over all rulers and powers.—Colossians 2:9-10



## FINDING GOD'S WILL

*More about Jesus let me learn, more of his holy will discern;*

Kristen stood in the kitchen feeding her happy, smiling eight-month-old baby girl, Leah. The young mother told me about her first weeks home from the hospital when her baby had colic. After a few sleepless nights, depression had set in. "My whole life I've had a pattern for achievement." She said. "I always kept doing things that made me feel successful. If I didn't flourish with a project or new hobby, I simply left it behind and tried something else. But I couldn't do that with motherhood. Even though I was feeling unsuccessful every day, I couldn't quit and go try something new. I had to keep being a mom. I soon discovered that I couldn't do it on my own, but with the Lord's strength and my husband's kindness we made it through those difficult weeks."

What's too tough for you to handle? How does knowing more about Jesus make a difference? Try reading the Gospel accounts of Jesus. Learning the patterns of the Savior will provide you with a picture of your best and only hope. When Jesus was on earth, He kept looking to His Father in heaven for answers. He told people about His source of power: *You will know that these things I do are not by my own authority but that I say only what the Father has taught me. The One who sent me is with me. I always do what is pleasing to him, so he has not left me alone.*" (John 8:28-29)

Where's my power source? How do I discern God's will? I begin by learning more about Jesus from the Gospels. *The Father loves the Son and shows the Son all the things he himself does. But the Father will show the Son even greater things than this so that you can all be amazed.* (John 5:19, 20) As I study, I picture how God's power is working in my life. His Word sets my mind to seek the direction of His will. I'm the first to be amazed when God accomplishes His work through me.

What can you do that no one else can? Start at home. You are the mother whom God has called to nurture and care for the hearts, souls and bodies of your children. If you're wondering what God's will is, look at where He has placed you. You will be more like Jesus when you ask for the Father's words, actions, attitude and strength wherever you are. His power will be yours.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

But Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing alone. The Son does only what he sees the Father doing, because the Son does whatever the Father does. —John 5:19



## A PRIVATE TUTOR EVERYDAY

*Spirit of God, my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me.*

My walking buddy, Mary, is a math professor at a local college. Some of her students who need extra help, especially before test time, come to Mary for one-hour, private tutoring sessions. Mary determines what each student needs based on the course, the class textbook, and what problems were missed on previous tests. Knowing each student's learning style, Mary communicates in ways she determines will help them grasp difficult equations and all kinds of mathematical complexities. She gives great advice. Mary tells her students to study a little everyday, to write down math formulas on file cards, to memorize important principles, to do their homework, and to ask her questions about anything they don't understand.

Those students who come to her in person are serious. They don't want to let their tutor down or waste money. They do what it takes to be successful in math. Raised test scores and higher class grades have almost always resulted from the private sessions.

Today's hymn reminds us that we are not left alone to face the tests of life. Jesus gives us great news about our life Tutor in John 14:25, 26. *I have told you all these things while I am with you. But the Helper will teach you everything and will cause you to remember all that I told you. This Helper is the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name.*

Did you catch that? We are given a Tutor to help us remember everything Jesus said. With the Holy Spirit's help we can understand, memorize, and remember what's in our textbook. Are you a diligent student of Scripture? Your Tutor knows your learning style. The price for your private sessions has been paid in full. All your tests will be open book tests. And your Tutor will be sitting beside you for every one.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

If you love me, you will obey my commands. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.—John 14: 15-17



## I WANT TO BE A WOMAN WHO UNDERLINES HER BIBLE

*More about Jesus; in his Word, holding communion with my Lord,  
Hearing his voice in every line, making each faithful saying mine*

What women have been role models to you at every stage of your life? What is it about them that you admire? What attitudes did they display? Who would you call today with a joy or a crisis? If you can name just one godly friend, you are a blessed woman.

When our family lived in Nashville, I had three incredible prayer partners--Sandra, Regina and Betty. All three of these women would hand me wise advice from the pages of Scripture, not just random thoughts to make me feel better. All three of these friends gave me an eternal perspective when I went through a crisis or life change.

When my kids left for college, these women prayed for my daughters and for me to make the transition. When my husband lost his business and we had zero net worth, these women held me together, brought me meals and called me with encouragement in the Lord. When my daughters were married, my prayer partners were like personal bridesmaids who covered innumerable little tasks behind the scenes. When I moved hundreds of miles away from the town where we had shared time together, these spiritual buddies continued to pray for me and my family. They checked up on my progress as I tried to build a new nest in a new city.

When I think of my friends, I ask myself, "What kind of woman do I want to be?" The answer is clear. I want to be a woman who is balanced and has a strong family. I want to be confident and stable and fun to be around. But most of all, like today's hymn verse says, I want to be a woman who hears God's voice in every line of Scripture. I want to be a woman who underlines my Bible—and makes each faithful saying mine. After it's firmly in my own thoughts, I have something worthwhile to hand out to my friends. I will be equipped to be the answer to their prayers.

Looking back over a lifetime of mentors, I know one thing that stands out with every godly woman whom I have loved and admired. These women knew their Bibles. Do you want to be that kind of friend? Get out your pen. Be a woman who remembers what's important. Underline your Bible.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching, for showing people what is wrong in their lives, for correcting faults, and for teaching how to live right. Using the Scriptures, the person who serves God will be capable, having all that is needed to do every good work. —2 Timothy 3:16, 17





## ARE YOU HOMESICK? JESUS IS COMING AGAIN

*More about Jesus on His throne, riches in glory all His own;  
More of His kingdom's sure increase; more of His coming, Prince of Peace.*

It was a summer Saturday, the week of my first overnight camp experience. After bouncing along with my best grade-school friends for several hours, the church bus delivered us to the dusty entrance marked with a wooden wagon wheel sign that read River Valley Ranch. After claiming our bunks in the log cabin, we happily ran to the mess hall for our first lunch and instructions for the week. The activity list was full and exciting...horseback riding, swimming, crafts, group games, and nightly bonfires were promises of the fun awaiting us.

It was all so wonderful...until Tuesday. That's when I came down with a severe case of homesickness... something the camp nurse could fix. I missed my own [clean and air conditioned] bedroom. I missed my mom and dad. I longed to see my sisters. I wanted to pet my dog. The fun was over for me at River Valley Ranch. "I just want to go home," I cried to my counselor. No coaxing or counseling could shake me out of it. No pony ride could satisfy my longing for home. I just wanted my dad to come and get me. The happiest sight in the world would have been to see his car coming down the gravel road to pick me up.

Today's hymn verse is good news for the homesick heart of earthbound campers. Scripture promises us that Jesus is coming back some day to take us to our real home. We wait with our hope set on the news...He's really coming back and will take us home. We can enjoy the pony rides and camp canteens and face painting for a little while. But we have a home with riches and glory where our Father lives. When a longing for peace rises up in your heart, sing the words that affirm your Father's sure return. "More of His coming, Prince of Peace."

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

"Listen! I am coming soon! Happy is the one who obeys the words of prophecy in this book". Jesus, the One who says these things are true, says, "Yes, I am coming soon."—Revelation 22: 7, 20

### A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Lord Jesus, Thank you for coming to earth to show us what God is like. I want to know more about You. I will sit with an open Bible on my lap so I can learn more about Jesus. I want to hear Your voice speaking to me in every line. Thank you for the Holy Spirit Who leads me into all truth. I want to give my children a glimpse of what it means to know You and obey Your Word. You are my life. Thank you for lifting me out of my darkness and transforming me into the mom You want me to be. Thank you for the promise of my real home in heaven. I want to be full of Your love and peace today. Amen.*



A Note about the Hymnwriter:

**Eliza Hewitt 1851-1920** loved teaching children and after graduating as valedictorian of her college class, taught school in her hometown of Philadelphia. Eliza suffered from a back injury that confined her to bed and caused great pain, but her attitude was cheerful and victorious. Grateful after a doctor removed her burdensome cast, Eliza wrote the hymn, “There is Sunshine in My Soul Today.” One of her close friends was the blind poet Fanny Crosby. The two girlfriends often met to talk about Jesus and sing hymns together.



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## WEEK NINE

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### MAY THE MIND OF CHRIST MY SAVIOR

Kate B. Wilkinson 1859-1928

*May the mind of Christ my Savior live in me from day to day,  
By His love and pow'r controlling all I do and say.*

*May the Word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour,  
So that all may see I triumph only through His pow'r.*

*May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything,  
That I may be calm to comfort the sick and sorrowing.*

*May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea;  
Him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.*

*May His beauty rest upon me as I seek the lost to win,  
And may they forget the channel, seeing only Him.*

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

Let's Play Follow the Leader

So prepare your minds for service and have self control. All your hope should be for the gift of grace that will be yours when Jesus Christ is shown to you. —1 Peter 1:13

## HOW TALL ARE YOU?

*May the mind of Christ my Savior live in me from day to day,  
By His love and power controlling all I do and say.*

On her third birthday, Christine woke up and ran to look in the mirror. She had been told that three years old means you're not a baby anymore and she wanted to see what a "big girl" looked like. She stood looking at her own pajama clad form, disappointed to see that she was the same size as when she had gone to bed the night before. Jumping up as high as she could, Christine told her mom, "I am bigger now!"

Our growth into mature Christ following moms doesn't come overnight, does it? We can't jump up in front of the mirror once and, poof, be instant spiritual giants. We grow little by little every day when we feed on God's Word, exercise the faith He supplies, and obey His Word. It may only be in looking back that we can see how tall we have become, how strong our spiritual muscles have grown, and how much of what we say and do is controlled by the love and power of Christ.

Is my life goal to be a mom who is a mature Christ follower? How can I help my child today to grow just a little more into godly character? Do I know what is going into my child's mind? Do I monitor and limit the use of ipods, cell phones, and electronic games? Do I scrutinize the television and music going into her mind? Am I providing a time and place for my child to read the Bible and listen to music that is uplifting? Do I talk to my child about what is pleasing to Christ?

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

The spiritual person is able to judge all things, but no one can judge him. The Scripture says: "Who has the mind of the Lord? Who has been able to teach him?" But we have the mind of Christ. —1 Corinthians 2:15, 16



## GOT MILK?

*May the Word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour,  
So that all may see I triumph only through His power.*

God designed new mothers with a built in milk maker for their babies that surpasses the most ingenious inventions of all time. A nursing mother is a beautiful picture of *El Shaddai*, one of the Hebrew names for God. It means “All Sufficient One” and connotes God as “The Pourer Forth.” The picture of a mother giving rich sustenance from her own body to strengthen her baby is a hint of the bountiful provision of God, our *El Shaddai*. Out of His Word flows His very nature to nourish and grow us up into mature believers. God, the All Sufficient Pourer Forth, knows we need to eat and exercise bit by bit, day by day to grow. He wants to feed our hearts little by little with His knowledge. We can’t just drink it in once at a special service or listen to a sermon on Sunday and expect to be spiritually mature. No quick fix will grow us up into healthy believers.

Years ago I remember sitting and nursing our new baby Julie while her 3 year old sister, Missy, stood next to the rocking chair holding her dolly under her shirt. Looking up Missy said, “Mommy, pour some milk in my ears and it will come out my buttons.” She wanted what I had: *milk*, and she wanted it the easy way.

Sometimes we may look at a godly woman wishing we had the kind of maturity and wisdom we see in her. We wish God would instantly pour His insight into us and we’d be fully developed spiritually. But healthy growth takes years. The wisdom of God only comes by way of daily, regular feedings from the nourishment of His Word.

What spiritual food do I serve in my home? Have I neglected God’s Word this week and chosen other things to fill me, like people, shopping, magazines, movies, novels, recreation, or food? Do I plan a place I can feed every morning and evening on the Word of God? Have I memorized any verses recently? Could I write a verse on a card and put it on the breakfast table and let the family take turns saying the verse aloud until everyone has memorized it? How can I plan regular feedings on God’s Word for the hearts of each member in my family?

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

As newborn babies want milk, you should want the pure and simple teaching. By it you can grow up and be saved, because you have already examined and seen how good the Lord is. —1 Peter 2:2,3



## IT'S NOT ABOUT ME AND IT'S NOT ABOUT NOW

*May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything,*

When things aren't turning out the way I planned, it's probably time for a big dose of EP: *Eternal Perspective*. As a follower of Jesus Christ, I need to remember that every 24 hour day is part of an Eternal plan. God planned my day and my child's day, whether or not I understand it. It began before the foundation of the world. And it will continue long after my time here on earth is finished.

Not long ago, a young mom called me to say she would have to miss our final Bible study luncheon because her son had an ear infection...again. "I was looking forward to the celebration. This is not what I expected. I'm so sorry to have to miss another fun time with the girls in the study. I'm trying to have a good attitude."

Although our plans are often changed, today's hymn verse reminds us that God's peace can rule in every situation, whether or not we have it on our day planner. A sick child, a delayed flight schedule, a cancelled vacation, a down turn in our finances--whatever we face, God's peace can rule in our hearts and in our homes. Today, when something unexpected happens, try to thank God for His eternal plan and His redeeming love. As you sing this verse, you are asking for the peace of God to rule your heart. As you count your blessings, you can thank God for His plan and for giving you a big gulp of EP. Little by little, the load on your heart will be lifted.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Jesus said, "Don't let your heart be troubled. Trust in God and trust in me.—John 14:1"



## BALMS AND BAND-AIDS

*That I may be calm to comfort the sick and sorrowing.*

What do you hand out to a hurting friend? Have you ever given a soft song to comfort some one in pain or facing crisis? One of my friends recently called to say the doctor found two suspicious lumps in her breast and she was scheduled for a biopsy the next day. Over the phone, we sang together the hymn verse “Jesus, the very thought of Thee, with sweetness fills my breast.” We prayed and asked the Lord to bring the picture to her mind of God’s peace filling her breasts. She told me later that the hymn calmed her anxious thoughts throughout the whole procedure. She felt the sweet peace of Christ all day long.

When you don’t know what to say, try giving someone a song. Sing with your child in the car on the way to school. A song may quiet their anxious heart before a test. Let the peace of God rule your mind so that you may comfort the sick and sorrowing with musical words of hope.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Let the teaching of Christ live in you richly. Use all wisdom to teach and instruct each other by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Everything you do or say should be done to obey Jesus your Lord. —Colossians 3:16-17a



## AM I YOUR SLAVE?

*May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea;  
Him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.*

Sitting on the sofa with the young mom in my Bible study, we heard her grade school daughter and a neighbor girl bound in the back door as they headed up the stairs. Andrea, the mom, called to them, “Girls, you know better than to walk on the carpet without taking off your shoes!” Peeking down the steps, Andrea’s daughter and her friend called back confidently, “Don’t worry, we aren’t wearing shoes. We’ve been playing bare foot.” Andrea calmly answered, “Let me see your feet.”

The scene I witnessed from the sofa was both comical and inspiring. The girls lifted the soles of their feet displaying totally black paws. Without scolding, Andrea walked to the kitchen sink, wet a few paper towels and had the girls stand on the kitchen floor while she wiped the worst of the grunge off the bottoms of their feet. Soon the girls went merrily to the carpeted play room with clean feet and happy hearts.

Witnessing the scene made me wish I had been a more gentle mom with a servant’s heart like Andrea. I regret how selfish I was when my kids brought dirt and neighbor kids into our home. I can’t change the past, but I’m grateful for redeeming forgiveness and the picture of grace I saw in Andrea’s kitchen that day.

Resuming our visit on the living room sofa, Andrea remarked, “That little girl just became a Christian last week. It happened while the girls were playing with their dolls.” Andrea’s nine-year-old daughter had told her friend that Jesus loved her. Praying together, the young neighbor had invited Jesus to live in her heart.

Moms may never know the kingdom work that is accomplished because they faithfully serve and love their children—and their children’s friends. Today, be encouraged. Even a cup of cold water given in the Savior’s Name gains the applause of heaven. A servant’s heart and a paper towel may win the prize of a child’s soul for God.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash each other’s feet. I did this as an example so that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, a servant is not greater than his master. If you know these things, you will be happy if you do them. — John 13:14-15,16a, 17





## WHO'S THE BEAUTY?

*May his beauty rest upon me as I seek the lost to win,  
And may they forget the channel, seeing only him.*

Mrs. Rafidi gave markers and paper to her kindergarten students with the assignment to draw a picture of something they especially liked. A pupil named Luke kept leaving his seat and coming to her desk and staring at his teacher. Looking down at the boy she asked, "Luke, may I help you?" Gazing up at Mrs. Rafidi, Luke replied, "I'm drawing your face and I want to see the color of your eyes."

It is bliss to fix our spiritual eyes on the beauty of the Savior. His way of loving is glorious. His majesty is breathtaking. His peace is overwhelming. We gaze at Jesus by reading the Gospel accounts of His life. We become beautiful when we behold beauty. Strength and beauty are in the place where you meet with the Lord Jesus. I want to go to the place of radiance and carry the light to lost souls, don't you? His beauty will rest upon those that gaze at His Word. As simple as a smile, the kindness and love of Jesus may attract a lonely sinner to meet your Redeemer today. He is the One who others will see when they look at you.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Brothers and sisters, think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected. And the God who gives peace will be with you. —Philippians 4:8, 9b

## A Final Refrain: Music to My Father's Ear

*Father in Heaven, You offer the very mind of Your Son, Jesus Christ, to control my thoughts and attitudes. Forgive me for filling myself with selfish and worldly attitudes that push You aside. I ask for you to rule my life in everything today, moment by moment. May others see Jesus in me today. Amen.*



A Note about the Hymnwriter:

**Kate Wilkinson 1859-1928** was born in England and sought to promote personal, life changing faith to women. She was married and enjoyed a ministry to the girls in London. As a participant in the Keswick Convention Movement, Kate encouraged people to repent of their sins, accept Christ as their Savior, and commit their lives to holy living. The simplicity of her hymn was intended to help people maintain personal holiness. She died 3 days after Christmas at the age of 69 in Kensington, London England.



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## WEEK TEN

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### SOLDIERS OF CHRIST, ARISE

Charles Wesley

*Soldiers of Christ, arise and put your armor on,  
Strong in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son;  
Strong in the Lord of host, and in His mighty pow'r,  
Who in the strength of Jesus trust is more than conqueror.*

*Stand then in His great might, with all His strength endued,  
And take, to arm you for the fight, the \*panoply of God;  
From strength to strength go on, wrestle and fight and pray;  
Tread all the pow'rs of darkness down, and win the well-fought day.*

*Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul;  
Take every virtue, every grace, and fortify the whole.  
That having all things done, and all your conflicts past,  
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone, and stand complete at last.*

\*Panoply—something protecting completely and forming a magnificent covering; a full suit of armor.

### MUSIC TO MY EAR

Moms are Warriors

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can fight against the devil's evil tricks. Our fight is not against people on earth but against the rulers and authorities and the powers of evil in the heavenly world. —Ephesians 6:10-12

## NOTE:

*This page has the additional text which is in the word document (in the same spot) but doesn't follow the normal flow. Seems like alt text???*

### Victory Gardens for God

“I’m asking all the women and girls of this great country to help in the war effort.”

This plea in a speech by Eleanor Roosevelt during World War II was a call to arms to mothers, daughters and grandmothers all over America. Mrs. Roosevelt, who herself had two sons enlisted in the Army, turned to women like you and me, and said, “I know how anxious your hearts are.” And then she handed them their marching orders. With a shortage of help on farms to harvest vegetables and fruit, she asked those at home to plant Victory Gardens. These women would be the ones to feed the nation with healthy food.

As part of the war effort, the government had also rationed gas, nylon, rubber, and foods like sugar, butter, milk, cheese, eggs, coffee, meat, and canned goods. In addition to planting Victory Gardens, the women of America were asked to help win the war by doing other little things at home...like saving rubber by not driving cars except for emergencies, not wearing nylon stockings, sacrificing comforts and conserving rationed products...all to save resources and help our troops on foreign soil. Millions of women answered the call. They planted gardens in their backyards, empty lots, and even city rooftops. Neighbors pooled their resources, planting different kinds of foods and forming cooperatives. Women even canned their own vegetables to save commercial canned goods for the troops. Doing “little things at home” mothers and women were a powerful force in moving the nation toward victory.

The same kind of call comes to us as moms today. This week’s hymn is a clarion call to all the women and girls in the Kingdom of God to help in the war effort against the powers of evil one. We have a mandate to plant victory gardens at home to raise the fruit of spiritually healthy kids to supply the nation with strength. We are to be the brave warriors at home, fully equipped to win the war in the midst of the chaos of our culture. And, with this hymn and the Word of God, you’re about to witness a full military exercise that will leave you prepared, equipped, and ready for action. Soldier mom, arise!

### Music to My Ears: My Commander in Chief Gives Me Courage

Lord, I have many enemies! But, Lord, you are my shield, my wonderful God who gives me courage. I will pray to the Lord, and he will answer me from his holy mountain. I can lie down and go to sleep, and I will wake up again, because the Lord gives me strength. Thousands of troops may surround me, but I am not afraid.

Psalm 3:1a, 3-6

### Music to My Father’s Ears

O Lord Most Holy, You are mighty in battle. You are the great power and my strength in the midst of the chaos of our culture. Thank you for equipping me and my children for warfare against the powers of evil. Thank You for Your Word and a song to keep me and my kids standing strong. I want to plant a victory garden of fruit in my children’s hearts so we may glorify You. I want to be disciplined enough to sacrifice temporal things for what is eternal. May the ordinary tasks of my day be filled with extraordinary power from Your Spirit. I want to be the soldier mom You called me to be. Today, I ask for faith in Your great might and I pray in the strong Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## SOME SERIOUS PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

*Soldiers of Christ, arise and put your armor on,  
Strong in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son;  
Strong in the Lord of host, and in His mighty pow'r,  
Who in the strength of Jesus trust is more than conqueror.*

The phone rang and my neighbor's voice on the other end was weak and teary. "I need you to come watch the boys while I go to the doctor," she said. When I arrived, two blonde toddlers were still in their pajamas and Angie, looking pale and disheveled, had her purse and car keys in her hand.

"I'll tell you what's going on when I get back," Angie said, "I've been suffering from pretty severe depression and I need to go see the doctor. I'm sorry for such short notice, but I knew you were home and I can't take the boys with me."

I didn't ask any questions and assured Angie that we would be fine. After she pulled out of the driveway, I noticed bed pillows on the couch and several days worth of dirty dishes on the counter and in the sink. It looked like the boys had helped feed themselves and food was everywhere. When she returned home, we sat down at her kitchen table and she filled me in.

"The doctor told me that every morning I had a simple assignment," Angie told me. "I'm required to get out of bed, take a shower and put on my clothes. That's it. He said I had to start there. I promised him I would try every day this week."

Her eyes brightened as she continued. "I know it sounds dumb, but just to get out of bed, take a shower and put on my clothes sounds overwhelming to me. But I'm going to do it."

Over the next few weeks, Angie followed the doctor's simple orders. She also began to restructure her thinking patterns and habits. Soon Angie was outside taking walks. When she saw me, she would smile and wave. The overwhelming illness that would have kept her from being the mom she wanted to be was going to be conquered one step at a time. Every day.

The first line of our hymn this week is the same prescription Angie's doctor gave her to overcome her depression. We can be equipped to conquer the enemy of our souls by rising up, washing in the Word of God, and putting on the armor God provides. What are you wearing today? How about some designer armor? Rise up, wash in the Word, and strap your armor on.



## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

That is why you need to put on God's full armor. Then on the day of evil you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing. So stand strong, with the belt of truth tied around your waist and the protection of right living on your chest. On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong.—Ephesians 6:13-15



## FINISH OFF THE FLAME THROWER

*Stand then in His great might, with all His strength endued,  
And take, to arm you for the fight, the \*panoply of God;*

After hearing the story of Adam and Eve from her Bible story book, three-year-old Harper announced from her car seat, “Spaytan isn’t nice. He’s mean.” She got the picture. You and I can agree with Harper, can’t we? The old slimy “Spaytan” is mean and his intention is to take us down. He knows how to throw flaming darts and accusations our way. His bag of tricks hasn’t changed since the beginning of time, but he tries to get us with things like insecurity (you’re fat and not as pretty as she is), discontent (if you had a bigger house you’d be more organized), negativity (your husband can’t do anything right), selfishness (do what makes you happy, they will get over it), fear (if you tithe you’ll run out of money), and dozens of other arrows fly at us all day.

What darts come at you? Stop and ask, “Where did that thought come from?” If it doesn’t line up with Scripture, it’s a pretty sure sign that it’s straight from the pit of hell. Soldier Mom, Satan wants to scar your children through you. It’s time to use your weapon and send the flame thrower back to the pit.

Designed to snuff out burning arrows, ancient shields were made of metal overlaid with a thick piece of animal skin. The leather was soaked in water before battle. Warrior mom, you’d better have your shield battle ready by dipping it in the blood of Jesus and the water of the Word before you go out of the house. And you’d better hold it over your heart, because that’s the target. Hold up the unwavering belief that God is full of redeeming love. Think one thought all the time: *With God’s power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine* (Ephesians 3:20). The shield of faith is what you must carry to finish off the flame thrower.

## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows of the Evil One.  
—Ephesians 6:16



## HAND THE HELMETS OUT

*From strength to strength go on, wrestle and fight and pray;  
Tread all the powers of darkness down, and win the well-fought day.*

Kids in my neighborhood are into skateboards and rollerblading. They have set up elaborate ramps and poles to slide on and play for hours practicing their stunts. The youngest blader, a first grader, has been given strict instructions by his mother to wear a helmet at all times. In case he would be tempted to forget, his mom painted large red letters on his ramp that read: Wear Your Helmet!

We moms are vigilant protectors, aren't we? The equipment we provide for our kids is vital for their safety and happiness. What spiritual helmet have you handed your kids? Have you talked about salvation with your child so he knows how to have a personal and vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ? Of course, it starts with our own helmet of salvation. "Lord, save me. I need Your help. Cover my head." God forgives our sins and crowns us with love and compassion. He tells us "wear your helmet!" Are your children's heads protected? Today I will ask the Mighty One to protect my head and my children's heads with His salvation and His Word.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Accept God's salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.  
—Ephesians 6:17





## UNGUARDED PLACES ARE FOR PARASITES

*Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul;  
Take every virtue, every grace, and fortify the whole*

Uncle Jimmy loved yard work. Having grown up farming, he looked forward to planting vegetables and flowers in his yard every year. One summer, he started having strange joint pain and headaches and all over weakness. The doctor dismissed his symptoms as flu until my uncle's condition worsened and completely incapacitated him. Jim was so tired that he would almost fall asleep waiting for the light to change at an intersection. The accurate diagnosis came too late. A tick had bitten him and he had contracted Lyme disease. The news was devastating to the family. How could something so small cause so much damage?

Ticks that infect are tiny but deadly parasites that find living flesh and weaken the entire neurological system with their poison. Sin is just like that. It can be the "tiny sin" that hides or the tick of bitterness that lurks in our system that is tearing us apart. What habit is waiting to suck the life out of my spiritual health? What unguarded thought is going to be a place of entry into my kid's hearts? Do I ever justify my behavior and think, "I'm going to run out time and energy if I give up Sunday mornings to go to church. My old boyfriend appreciated me more than my husband does. If I don't want my kids to be geeks, I should let them do that. Even though I can't afford it, if I don't buy that outfit, I will be frumpy and out dated. It's ok to be fashionable and show a little skin."

I don't know what the unguarded place is for you, but I am painfully aware of mine. It's my mouth. The blood sucking parasite I fight the most is a critical, negative tongue. I could justify it and say "Oh, my mother was negative and that's where I learned it." But I don't want the tick to ruin my spiritual nerve center. I don't want my children to fight the same parasite when they are adults because I let them be infected with my caustic tongue.

No, I will leave no unguarded place if God will be merciful and give me strength to take every virtue and grace to fortify the whole. The battle for my children's future and their lifelong habits will be determined by how I face the tiny ticks at home. I will help my kids see the ticks that will leave them weak and unhealthy. Leave no unguarded place today. Look for ticks and kill the tiniest parasite before it attaches to your life.

### REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

Control yourselves and be careful! The devil, your enemy goes around like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat. Refuse to give in to him, by standing strong in your faith. —I Peter 5:8



## SCARRED BUT STANDING

*That having all things done, and all your conflicts past,  
Ye may overcome through Christ alone, and stand complete at last*

Terri loved singing with her two young daughters, Jennifer and Amanda. When the sisters were little they would make up plays and act and sing together to the delight of their parents. Their prayers at night before bedtime were always, “Thank you Lord for our family and for loving us so much.” Two months after their beloved and godly grandmother died, the girls were at their vacation house with Terri and her husband for spring break. It seemed like an ordinary night and the two little girls were playing and asked to take the house elevator to the third floor, as they had many times before.

Terri said “yes” but a few moments later heard a screech and knew something was wrong. She called, but there was no answer. Quickly climbing to the third floor, Terri saw the elevator open but only Amanda, the youngest, was inside. Running to the bottom floor, Terri found Jennifer had fallen to her death in the elevator shaft. Holding her precious daughter’s body in her arms as she waited for the emergency medics, Terri says, “My life ended as I waited in the shaft. All the faith I had was about to fade away. All I could say was ‘I can’t believe she’s gone.’ I repeated these words over and over again.”

After that night, Terri went into a deep and dark seclusion. “I didn’t want to live. Because music had been a big part of our lives together, I didn’t want to listen to any music or have anything to do with it.” In her aloneness, Terri faced battles going on in her mind. “Satan reminded me how much God had hurt me over the years. He would say ‘You see the God you trusted? The One you had faith in? He took your daughter!’”

At the same time, Terri said “God was speaking to my heart and said ‘I cried with you when you were crying. I was with Jennifer when she died. She is safe now.’” Terri felt like telling the voices to leave her alone, but, she says, “God’s voice came to me again and again, reminding me that He loved me so much. He reminded me that He wasn’t finished with me, that I had a husband and Amanda.”

By God’s grace, Terri says she decided to live and see what God had in store for her. She listened to God’s tender voice. “If you trust Me, I can put music back in your life. You can sing again. I will bring you joy once more. We’ll start over.” As she told her story to her friends in the church choir, her countenance was radiant. “I can’t imagine a day without the Lord,” she said. “I praise Him everyday.” Terri knows that God restored her faith and now, every Sunday morning, she lifts her voice in worship. Terri celebrates the musical bond that she and Jennifer once shared together. “I’m singing now to God and the angels,” she says. “If you let Him, God can bring your life back.”



## REST HERE

Look it up, mark it in your Bible, date it, and say it out loud.

And you will know that God's power is very great for us who believe. That power is the same as the great strength God used to raise Christ from the dead and put him at his right side in the heavenly world. God has put Christ over all rulers, authorities, powers, and kings, not only in this world but also in the next.

—Ephesians 1:19-21



## A FINAL REFRAIN

### SOVEREIGN AND OMNIPOTENT GOD

I want to be a soldier under Your authority. I will trust in Your power to lead in the battle that rages around my family every day. I am helpless without Your mercy and strength. Thank you for providing armor for the battle. Help me to recognize enemy attacks and extinguish deadly arrows with the shield of faith. As my children and I fortify ourselves with Your Word, please bring verses to our minds when we need to fight the enemy of our souls. We want our lives to be an honor to Your Name. I pray for Your Divine protection. Thank you for the Bible and for providing everything I need to stand firm when I am attacked. Your resurrection power is lifting me above the fray to the place of peace in Your presence. And I pray for other Christians around the world going through trials. Guard and guide Your people today. In the power of Jesus Christ I submit this prayer, Amen.

