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Discovering Treasure

How God's Word Can Change Your Life

Oh, how I wish I could meet you and see your room or your place! Nothing is as special as your personal space. If you're like most girls, you've probably got lots and lots of cool stuff in your space. And I'm guessing that you have lots of colorful pens, pencils, and markers for drawing, making greeting cards, working on crafts, and writing in your journal.

Well, to this day, I still love and use colored pens and markers. And the M-O-S-T special way I use them is when I am reading my Bible. Here's how it all started.

When I was about your mom's age, I purchased my very first Bible. As I was paying for it, I noticed a glass bowl filled with brightly colored highlighter pens on the checkout counter. On a whim, I reached into that bowl and picked out a gold marker. And I prayed! Maybe it was because I had been a Christian for only three days before buying a Bible, but in my heart I prayed and talked to God:

God, I'm a new Christian, and I don't know anything about You. I'm going to start reading my brand-new Bible tomorrow and mark everything I learn about You, God, with this shiny gold highlighter.

And then I spotted a pink highlighter—my favorite color! So I picked it out of the bowl too, and I prayed again:

And God, I don't know anything about being a Christian woman, wife, or mom. When I start reading my new Bible tomorrow, I'm going to mark everything I learn about women and being a woman with my super-special hot-pink highlighter.

And you know what? The next day, I opened up my crisp new Bible, laid out my two new marking pens, and—I discovered treasure! Without knowing it, I was living what the Bible says: If you look for wisdom and understanding and “seek them like hidden treasures,” you will find them (Proverbs 2:4).

Discovering Treasure

See for yourself what I found on my *first* day of reading my Bible, on the *first* page, in the *first* book of the Bible, in the *first* verse in the Bible! It was my first marking with my gold pen. If your Bible is handy, open it up to Genesis 1:1.

With your pen or pencil or maybe a highlighter pen, mark what you learn about God in this one verse.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

What solid fact does this verse reveal about God?

I kept reading and then I found a verse that called for my pink highlighter pen.

Genesis 1:27—With your pen or pencil or highlighter pen (maybe pink?), mark what you learn about yourself as a woman, as a female.

God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

What do you learn about God in this verse?

What do you learn about man and woman?

As a young woman, I'm sure you hear a lot about self-image. But let's think about "God-image" instead. How does this verse help you with the way you can and should view yourself? Or, put another way, how would you complete this sentence?

I am created by _____
and in the image of _____

Got Problems?

Believe me, I know from my own years as a girl and from raising two daughters that the early years are challenging ones. Some days it seems like everything is new and you wonder, "What happened while I was sleeping?!" On other days, all you can think is "I'm bored."

I've heard the heart-cries of thousands of girls, and here are just a few of their questions and problems:

"My brother and sister are driving me crazy!"

"Why do my parents set so many strict rules? I can't do anything fun."

"Why is it so hard to find a friend? Is something wrong with me?"

"I wish Mom would let me choose my own clothes."

"It seems like all my parents do is correct me and nag me about my chores and homework."

Well, here's some good news. No matter what your problem is, God has the help and answers you need. No matter how bad things seem or become, if you are faithful to look to God's Word each day, He has help and answers for your problems. Every time you open your Bible, God gives you:

- instructions on how to live and make right choices
- encouragement and comfort when your heart hurts
- guidelines and wisdom for handling your problems
- strength for dealing with stressful situations
- promises for whatever you worry about

And best of all, you have Him—all of Him—when you read God's Word!

What do you learn about God in the following verses?

Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

Be _____

Do not be _____

or _____

For/because _____

Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me (Psalm 23:4).

When I _____

I will _____

For/because _____

He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds (Psalm 147:3).

God _____

God _____

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

Don't _____

Don't _____

God will _____

God will _____

I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

In a few words, what do these verses say about God's love for you?

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The source of Scripture _____

The uses of Scripture _____

The end result—God uses it to _____

A Few Facts About the Bible

I hope you are beginning to sense how excited I was when God's Word began to guide me. My Bible wasn't just another book on my shelf that was gathering dust. No, it was alive and real! And the same can be true for you as well.

Here are a few important facts about the Bible:

Fact #1: The Bible is supernatural. It is the Word of God. What does this verse tell you about the Bible?

All Scripture is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16).

Fact #2: The Bible is forever. You already know about fads. Clothing styles come and go. Music styles change—and so do hairstyles. Well, God Himself tells us that we can trust 100 percent of His Word. What does this verse tell you about the Bible?

The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever (Isaiah 40:8).

Fact #3: The Bible is useful. Read Psalm 19:7-11 and circle each claim the Bible makes for itself, and then underline how it can be useful to you. I have done the first part of verse 7 for you.

7 *The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul.*

*The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.*

8 *The commandments of the LORD are right,
bringing joy to the heart.*

*The commands of the LORD are clear,
giving insight for living.*

9 *Reverence for the LORD is pure,
lasting forever.*

*The laws of the LORD are true;
each one is fair.*

10 *They are more desirable than gold,
even the finest gold.*

*They are sweeter than honey,
even honey dripping from the comb.*

11 *They are a warning to your servant,
a great reward for those who obey them.*

Help for Your Life

As you can see from so many verses in the Bible, God has answers and advice for your every need, your every problem. He has help for your life. Here's what Psalm 119:9 says:

How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word.

According to this verse, how can you avoid problems and stay out of trouble?

Circle the commands (what God tells you to do) in these next two verses.

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation (1 Peter 2:2).

So that _____

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

Looking at Your Life

As you think back about the subjects covered in this chapter, I hope you will think about your relationship with Jesus. A sure way to get to know more about Him is to read about His life in the Bible, in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Like the Bible says, knowing Jesus as your Savior gives you joy, purpose, and eternal life.

I hope you will also think about how much you value the Bible. Is it important to you, or not so important? Are you eager to listen to what God has to say to you?

Here's some good news. The more you read the Bible, the more exciting it becomes—and the more answers you will find for your problems. And, of course, the more you will grow to be like Jesus.

Right now, jot down at least one thing you will begin to do after reading this chapter.

I want to start _____

A Prayer for You

It's impossible to count the number of times I've heard Christians say, "I just want to know God." Or I hear them pray, "Lord, I want to know You." These are also the desires of my heart, and I'm guessing yours too!

But knowing God doesn't come from sitting on a mountaintop looking off into space. Knowing God comes from reading what God reveals about Himself in His Word, the

Bible. Read the apostle Paul's prayer for all believers. It is my prayer for you:

I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return (Philippians 1:9-10).

Now make this your prayer—substitute the words “my” and “I” every time you see “you” and “your” in the verses above.

A Prayer to Pray

This is my prayer: that _____ love may overflow more and more in knowledge and understanding, so that _____ may be able to understand what really matters and may live pure and blameless until Christ returns (Philippians 1:9-10).

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First Things First

Making God Your Number One Priority

There are many roads to Jesus, but only one way to God.” Have you heard this saying before? And are you wondering what that one way to God is? Well, here’s the answer: It is through God’s Son, Jesus Christ. It’s just like Jesus said in John 14:6—

No one can come to the Father except through me.

Once again I am wishing I could visit with you. I especially wish I could listen to you share how your spiritual journey is coming along. I wonder, have you found out about Jesus? Have you received His gift of forgiveness and salvation and new life? Do you attend church? How has God directed your spiritual growth?

Whatever your path has been, I am so glad God has connected you and me now—today—through this book.

I’ve already told you a little about my journey toward Jesus and how important the Bible is to me. That is why I