

Gracie's Way

Isaiah 43:19 ...I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

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The Right Stuff

By Sharon Hawkins

Gracie, today's busy teen, often feels awkward and misunderstood.

When Louis Braille was three years old, he was playing with his daddy's tools and got a scratch on his eye. He ended up losing his eyesight when it got infected. As he grew, he loved hearing stories. He enjoyed going to the theater with his parents but really wanted to be able to read. So, it was simple, he just had to develop a way to do that.

16:7, the Bible says, "But the Lord spoke to Samuel, Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Jesse didn't even present David until Samuel asked for him. In verses 12-13 it says, "So he sent and had him (David) brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; he is the one.' So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power..."

There are times she feels she just doesn't fit in, that she just doesn't belong—like she's the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle that not only doesn't fit but isn't even from the same puzzle. Others seem smarter, stronger and liked better. They just click, while she clanks.

When he was 15, he created modern Braille which has enabled blind people to read since the 1800's. He did this by modifying a secret communication system used by the French army. Even though he was young and blind, he didn't let that stop him, he had "the right stuff".

The rest is history. While he was still a young boy, the Lord supplied him with "the right stuff", including the courage and strength to defeat Goliath. He became a powerful king and, although he made mistakes and sinned greatly, the Lord still used him to do amazing things. He was a man after the Lord's own heart. And just like David, the Lord has great plans for each one of us.

She so wants to accomplish great things. Sometimes she's just too scared to step out. Other times she's just not quite sure how to step out.

Throughout the Bible, God used many unlikely young people to change the world. He not only created them, but He gave them "the right stuff" even when adults couldn't see it.

Then there are those occasions that she feels she's not given the chance. She and her friends get the idea adults around them think of them as just kids and don't trust them to accomplish what they know they are capable of doing.

One such boy was David, long before he slayed Goliath. His dad, Jesse, had eight sons. David was the youngest. This meant that he was the least powerful and, back in that day, it meant he was the least important in the family.

How can she combat these feelings? How can she be sure she has "the right stuff" ... ?

God sent His servant Samuel to Jesse's house to anoint one of his sons to be the new king of Israel. Samuel believed it must be the oldest son and was about to anoint him when the Lord spoke to him. In 1 Samuel

When American sharpshooter, Annie Oakley, was 16 years old, she could hit a dime in mid-air from 90 feet. She challenged a famous marksman, Frank Butler, to a rifle contest and defeated him. He later married her. Guess he didn't mind a young, determined, headstrong girl who could call him to a challenge and then deliver on it. She had "the right stuff".

Special points of interest:

- Watch for our Grace In The Wilderness Teen Conference EMPOWERED JESUS GIRL on November 16, 2012.
- We're on Facebook. Like our Grace In The Wilderness Page. Look us up...



1 Timothy 4:12
Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.



Darbi's Journal "Chasing Love": Halloween Masks

Hello ladies: it's me again...Darbi!

I am so excited because, look outside, it is Fall...my favorite time of year! I even enjoy Halloween and taking my children to fall festivals. Oh, and I love CANDY!

My story today is a little different because I am not sure I want to reminisce in such detail the sadness of my childhood. By now, I am sure you know that God has fully brought me out of the ashes.

Let me ask you, girls, have you picked out your halloween costumes yet? I know you are too old to trick or treat but what about the masks you may or may not wear everyday.

Are you true to what God has created you to be or are you desperately trying to change every day?

Well, my little girl is not too old to wear a costume and she emphatically wants to be a super hero. If even for just a day, she can pretend to be whatever she wants to be.

How many of you want to be something you are not? How many of us want to pretend not for just one day but every day. I

Two Different Lives

When I was born there were three children before me. My mother was twenty two years old and trying to support her desire to consume alcohol and raise children she could not take care of. My father was also an alcoholic who physically and mentally abused my mom. He loved his children but wasn't capable of being a great father. I have been told that when I was born my father was not present and did not sign the birth certificate. The only great Father that I had was the one that breathed the breath of life into my lungs--my Heavenly Father.

About a year after I was born, another child was brought into the world without seeing the light of day. I believe the Lord needed that child more than my mother did. About a year after that, my mother gave birth to her fifth child. It was a boy! I was the only girl out of four boys. It did

guess everyone does to one extent or another.

Most girls are never happy with who they are, wanting to be thinner, have longer hair, the cutest boyfriend, and so on. We want to be what we think will make everyone else happy.

I know this first hand because, when I was your age, I was searching for love and I knew I would never find it the way I was as a young teenager.

So, I did everything I could to be thinner, prettier, more popular...I even had the 80's "BIG HAIR!" I was trying my best to please everyone and in the hopes that they would please me and love me.

Now I can look back and see how sad I must have made my Heavenly Father because He was giving me all His love and I couldn't see it at the time. Were my masks blinding me of His love? The more I tried to change myself the more I changed who He had made me to be. Our Father made us in His image. Oh how wonderful!!

Ladies, please don't fall for Satan's lies! If you think you are not good enough, not pretty enough, not thin enough, then I am sad to say you are falling for lies. He will

not bother me at all. I loved being the baby girl.

During this time in our lives, I believe people were praying for our safety and care. My mom drove drunk with all of her children in the car and, of course, none of us were wearing seat belts. We had so many angels around us and the Lord protecting us and we didn't know they existed.

Some things I went through in my childhood no one should have to go through. But as a child, I thought it was normal and just part of life. My father was killed by his own brother when I was eight years old.

It was then time for the state to intervene for good. We were taken into DSS custody and had to be placed into foster care. I didn't have the best experiences

have you so focused on putting on the masks of popularity and longing that you will miss how wonderfully made you are.

My little girl wants to be a superhero, wear a costume and be something she is not. I want her to know the truth--God created HER in his own image, in the image of God he created HER ... Genesis 1:27

God wants all of His daughters to know they are wonderfully made in His image! ...

Satan wants you to know you need your masks! ...

Who are you going to believe?

Love ya , Darbi

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Anonymous

there but it was a little better environment. At the time, I couldn't understand why my mother didn't want us anymore. She never came to see us and had her own life. At the time we were placed into foster care, my mother was too busy for us, or we were too busy for her.

What I have learned now that I am an adult with my own children is that sometimes parents make mistakes. My mother was only doing what she learned from her mother and father and didn't know how to break the cycle. Everyone in my mother's and father's families were alcoholics and alcoholism is genetic.

I was later adopted by a family that lived far away from where I was, it seemed. I knew I was safe then. They had a nice house with plenty of food to

Two Different Lives (Cont'd)

Anonymous

eat and there wasn't any beer in the refrigerator. This was new to me! I could have my own bed and my own room for the first time in my life.

I started going to school and thought it was so great. Before, my birth mom didn't make us go to school. But I wanted to because it was a chance to get away. When we had gone to school, we had all walked a little over a mile back and forth. We would stop halfway and get water out of the water fountain at a local restaurant that served burgers and fries. I remember my brothers would pick me up and hold me so I could get a few sips before heading to our home.

We lived in a two-bedroom mill-village house on a cozy Greenville road. I will never forget sharing a room with my four brothers and Grandmother who lived with us as well. We had a set of bunk beds and a double size bed that was shoved into a very small room. My little brother and I shared the bottom bunk with one small yet warm blanket.

Each day after our walk home we would wait for our supper. My parents had food stamps but with feeding seven people every night you didn't get much at the store. We usually ate banana and mayonnaise sandwiches and water that my mom added sugar to, to add flavor. I didn't know people around me were eating steak and potatoes. I thought it was normal to sometimes go to bed hungry or wanting more. I never really felt normal though.

After I was adopted I wondered how my friends were going to react knowing that I didn't live with my real parents. What

would they say if they really knew why? I never said anything to them and they never knew the difference. When I got into high school I met so many people that I was able to open up to and realize I wasn't the only person who was adopted.

I had friends though that never knew my parents weren't my biological parents. And if they did know the truth, it probably wouldn't have mattered. I sometimes wondered why I couldn't have what they had. Not toys or bikes, I had those.

Why couldn't I live a normal life? But what does normal mean anyway! Why couldn't I live with my birth parents and not have all the problems that we had had. One day I learned why.

It was hard living two different lives. Soon I learned that the past is something that you have to deal with and move on. Dwelling on the past doesn't help you to move on from the past.

I have now moved on from my past through prayer and dealing with each thing one moment at a time. I began to learn the love of God in my life then. In church, I learned about why God loves us and why we are here. I believe that God allowed me to see the things I saw and experience the things that I did so I could be a better person in my future.

With all that went on in my childhood it made me think less of myself. I struggle with low self esteem and self worth. But that's not what God created us to think of ourselves. He created us all in his image and he makes no mistakes. Everyone in my family were alcoholics and none of them were happy and I wanted to know why.

God is always working in someone's life. He created you so why wouldn't He want the best for you? God loved me so much when I was little so much that He took me out of a situation that I may not understand, into my life now.

I don't have an easy life now but I do have a great life. I have problems and frustrations. I may not always react the way I should to a problem or situation but God will show me how to the next time.

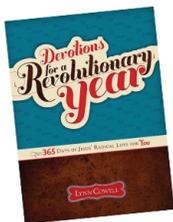
The good thing about it is that God doesn't just love me this much. He loves everyone in the whole world this much.

God gave his only Son to die for our sins. It's hard for me to imagine living my whole life without my sins being forgiven.

I am so thankful for the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. Without His love, we wouldn't have the opportunity to be saved from our sins and give our hearts to Christ. Believing in God and giving your life to him is the best decision anyone will ever make.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.



Devotions for a Revolutionary Year

Lynn Cowell of Proverbs 31 Ministries has written an exciting new book called "Devotions for a Revolutionary Year: 365 Days of Jesus' Radical Love for You". It is specifically for girls ages 13 - 17, each day addressing issues close to a young girl's heart such as body image, crushes, performance, and social media. "Devotions for a Revolutionary Year" fills a girl's heart with the truth

that only Jesus can fill the love gap in her heart. Seeing God does have something to say about the important things in her world, she can establish a history with God and a pattern to last a lifetime. Info at <http://www.lynncowell.com/books/>

Lynn's free [7 Day Faith Builder](#), seven days of devotions straight from her new book can be sent directly by email. These devotions are designed to speak to the issues that girls face each day, especially as school is back in full swing. These devo-

tions are free of charge! <http://www.lynncowell.com/7-day-faith-builder/>

Lynn Cowell is a Proverbs 31 speaker and author. She lives in NC with her husband, Greg, of 25 years and their three children. The Cowells enjoy hiking, well-worn sweatshirts and anything that combines chocolate and peanut butter. Connect with Lynn at www.LynnCowell.com and on Facebook at Lynn Martin Cowell.



Facing the Giants...

By Brenda Horne

What is one of your biggest worries? Is it possible to stop worrying about it?

Not becoming a Christian singer. We only have so many chances in this life and I don't want to miss out on what God has waiting for me. Middle school

I fear not getting to see someone in my life. I trust God and know that He is in control but it scares me to think that this person may not always be there. Middle school

My family worries me. Neither my mom or dad come to church. Middle school

I am afraid that someone is going to hurt me (either physically or emotionally) I try to stop thinking about what other people think and focus on what God thinks. Middle school

I worry about stuff at school. People can let you down and make you feel bad.

I am afraid that something will happen to my family like they will get sick or lose their job. The only way I can stop worrying is by reminding myself that God is always with me and if something does happen I know that He is still in control. Middle school

My biggest worry is not ever getting a job or getting married. Its hard to find a job now a days and hopefully I'll get one I'm in love with. Also I hope to get married

one day. Everybody wants that happily ever after. God has that person who is perfect for you unless He has even more special plans for you. But I do hope and pray to marry a Christ like young man who can lead me. College student

One of my biggest worries is never having a family of my own and never getting married. It is possible with prayer but even with that it feels impossible sometimes. My other biggest worry is, Jesus telling me I missed out on an opportunity for Him. For that worry all you can do is , every single time you feel that quiet nudge of the spirit, go with it and listen to it. It will cause you to get uncomfortable but I'm glad Jesus was willing to get uncomfortable. After all, He left Heaven and He also told the religious people off. College student.

I worry that the government will take over and it will be like the hunger games. I can't stop thinking about not having enough food to eat.

I mostly think about losing my Mom. She passed away and I miss her so much!!

My biggest worry is losing friends or disappointing people that I love. Sometimes I don't worry about it when things are going good but if not, then I do. I don't think I will ever stop worrying because I am a worrier. Middle school

Nervous, afraid, troubled, anxious, uneasy, scared... all of these are words that describe worrying. But we are told not to worry, the God of the universe tells us not to waste our time worrying. God takes care of the grass in the field. Do you really believe He will not take care of you?! He knows what you need, so seek Him instead of worrying. Be anxious for nothing. Make it all about our Big God and not about the worry. It's been said ... "Don't tell God how big your problem is, tell your problem how big your God is!" Talk to Him every day—openly, honestly, humbly. He's waiting to tell you, "Don't worry, I've got this!"

Luke 12:25, 26, 28-31, 34 tells us, "And which of you by worrying can add a *single* hour to his life's span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? But if God so clothes the grass in the field... how much more *will He clothe* you? And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying your Father knows that you need these things.

But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Philippians 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

By Amanda Jane Seawright



As I sit here this morning and I think about what all God has done for me, I try to remember the blessings as a kid, besides the obvious like being raised by two godly parents. That's 1. I'm sure God kept me from spider bites and snake bites as I roamed the woods around my house, that's 2. I'm sure there were so many

near misses as a kid that I did not see or even think about, 3.

God's hand has been on me since before the day I was born. I was blessed to grow up in a loving church that was dedicated to reaching the lost and helping the helpless. That brings me to 4.

My God brought me through an old boyfriend's motorcycle wreck that almost killed him and left him paralyzed. He was

19 and I was 17. That's 5.

At the age of 23, He healed me of cancer, that's 6.

He carried me through a divorce at the age of 26 and even when I was angry with God, He still forgave me and loved me through it. When I thought I may not be able to pay my bills on my own, although I was determined to do so, He was there to see that I did.



(Cont'd)

He has blessed me with a wonderful family and friends who have been by my side through it all. Most importantly, God was there even when I didn't see Him.

Each day is a new beginning and filled with so many wonderful blessings of God! I may not be rich monetarily, but I am very rich with love and forgiveness and mercy.

I haven't gone hungry or cold yet. I might have a yard that's muddy because there is no grass or not have the latest fashion of clothes. But I'm loved beyond comprehension by our Lord and Savior.

I have always wanted to have kids and be a mom. But at 30 years of age, the Lord hasn't seen fit for me to do so. But what He has done is filled my life with nieces

and nephews and friends' kids who I love dearly and get to spoil rotten and send home.

Two of my best friends are house parents at a children's home and I get to spend time with their kids and give my love to them. Some of the kids have never gotten to experience love and kindness.

I can't even write all my blessings. I've lost count. I will spend the rest of my life thanking God for everything He has done for me and my family and friends and it still won't be enough to repay Him. Thank the good Lord that I don't have to repay Him. He freely gives His love.

"Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your many blessings. See what God has done!"

Dear Lord: Thank you is a word we too often say. But do we really appreciate you

like we should? The answer is "no". I'm guilty of saying and making light of it, like you owed it to me.

Dear Lord, I don't deserve Your love, mercy, forgiveness or grace. I do, however, deserve eternal hell.

But, Lord, I can never tell you enough how grateful I am that You love me—not for what I did or didn't do. But just because Your love is that wonderful! You're that wonderful! There will never be the right words to praise you enough for what you have done.

Amen

"Oh, how I love Jesus!

Oh, how I love Jesus!

Because He first loved me!

"Ni zan je da Yesu ko ina. Ba damu da gargara hanya ba."

By Kara Murrell

(I will follow Jesus anywhere. No matter the roughness of the road.)



As my "hutmate" and I walked down the dirt road to the well on

our first day in the village, everything seemed surreal.

I was so excited, but so nervous at the same time. Within the first 30 minutes of being at my new home for the summer, I was humbled more than I had ever been in my life. We looked like children at the well trying to draw our water and they laughed at us as we tried to carry our 60 pound jug back to our hut.

Our first day in the village was tough. We barely knew the language, but everyone wanted to talk to us. The first two weeks were physically draining. It was difficult getting used to the heat, sleeping outside, no running water, no air conditioning, limited food choices, lots of bugs, no privacy, unexpected storms in the middle of the night, seeing starving children, and speaking a new language.

The easiest thing to get used to was the simplicity of life. Each day we got up, ate

breakfast, had quiet time, then we spent the rest of the day building relationships with the women in our village and sharing the Gospel with them until it was sundown and we prepared for bed. Our purpose was so clear. We woke up and shared Jesus. We didn't worry about where we would go for dinner or what we would wear the next day, we were only concerned with sharing Christ's love with our friends.

God showed his power in the short time I was there. In my village, we started working with one woman who was interested in learning more about Jesus and, by the time we left, God was working in the hearts of 8 women. I take great joy in sharing that the results were not because of anything I did. I was merely a tool this summer as God called me to a remote village in the desert only to love on women and share the Gospel by pressing a few buttons on a cassette player.

Since we only knew enough of the language to get by, we weren't able to answer many of the questions the women asked. We relied solely on the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts. We clung to the promise that His word will not return void. It was very encouraging to see two women

who wanted to learn to read in order to read the Bible. We were able to read several passages with them and we were given the opportunity to pray with them "cikin sunan Yesu Almasihu" (in Jesus' name) on several occasions.

Although it was difficult to live in the desert among people who were hard to love at times, when it came time to leave, I wasn't ready to go. These people are so lost and the spiritual darkness in that area is overwhelming. We were able to build some great relationships and I know God will send more workers out into that field to harvest the seeds that were planted in His time.

Since I have been back in the States I have been struggling to find my place here. My heart is still with my friends in the village as I am so burdened for them daily. I have to keep reminding myself that God wants me here and he will use me wherever I am. Although my daily schedule is a little different, my purpose is the same as when I was in Africa. I am called to share Christ's love and build relationships with others.

Trust is Hard

By Nicki Koziarz

"But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, 'You are my God.'" Psalm 31:14 (NIV 1984)

It was news that made my heart ache like no other. Nothing would ever be the same.

I climbed into my red Jeep Wrangler, buckled my seat belt, and sped down a dark country road. The night sky was clear but I could barely see through the tears that poured down my face.

I flipped off the radio and screamed at God, "Why?! Why did you allow this to happen?"

Pressing my foot on the brake, I pulled over and parked on the side of the road. The air was cold and the silence was eerie.

"Do you trust Me?" I sensed God whisper.

The question climbed through layers of my doubts and skepticism. Truth be told, I didn't trust God.

Oh, I trusted Him when things were good, when life was easy. But in the lowest moment of my life? I didn't really trust Him.

I wish I could tell you Jesus showed up in my car that night and I have never dis-

trusted God again. But that is the furthest thing from the truth.

It would be years before I could say I trusted God again. And even today ... I have trust issues with Him.

Why is trusting God so hard?

The obvious answer is, *you can't see Him.*

Then there's the sensible rebuttal, *He's mysterious.*

Or the overused answer, *God's ways are just not our ways.*

But today I'm thinking that trusting God is so much more than just a position we accept.

Trusting God is a place of response.

In my desperate situation that night what I really wanted to say to God was, *"I need to trust You more than ever."* Yet my soul and my mouth didn't know how to connect that thought.

I need to trust You.

On days filled with uncertainty and fear, this practice of verbally placing our trust in Him can be powerful.

Today as I learn to trust God more, here are some things I'm saying aloud:

Jesus, I need to trust You more than ever to believe that You work all things out for my good. (Romans 8:28)

Jesus, I need to trust You more than ever to fight this battle I am facing. (Exodus 14:14)

Jesus, I need to trust You more than ever to be my God who provides beyond my limitations. (Philippians 4:19)

That night part of my lack of trust for God was from my own failure. I had fallen far from God - yet in that painful moment, He was still the One I turned to. I can't help but believe it is in our moments of complete brokenness we are able to experience God's faithfulness and presence by daring to turn to Him and learning to trust Him again.

What do you need to trust Jesus more than ever for today?

Nicki Koziarz is a lover of Jesus, words and creativity. You can connect with her on Twitter @nickikoziarz, on her website: www.nickikoziarz.com or on Facebook.



What Is Your Whale?

In the book of Jonah, it tells a story of a man who feels the calling to go into a town, Nineveh. He keeps putting off the call. Trying to run from God, he went out on a ship.

Jonah heard a voice saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Jonah 1:2. Jonah's punishment was that God sent out a great wind on the sea. Jonah 1:4.

When this storm comes up, Jonah is sleeping. This can be taken as a sign of trying to run. When this storm comes up, all the other mariners cry out to their gods. The captain of the ship wakes Jonah up and says to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish." Jonah 1:6.

All the men feared because they knew that Jonah had fled from God because he

told them he had. Jonah told them to throw him overboard so they did, which caused the sea to calm. Then these men took vows and grew to have even more fear of the Lord.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights." Jonah 1:17.

Jonah cried out to God and asked him to save him. In Jonah 2:4, Jonah said ... "I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple." He is praying to God and confessing his knowledge of his sin, of growing away from God and running, but vows now he will look back at God and follow His will for his life.

Jonah 2:8-9 says, "Those who regard worthless idols forsake their own Mercy. But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of Thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." Since Jonah prayed to God and confessed, God saved Jonah, by telling the fish to spit Jonah up, so the fish spit him up on dry

land.

How many fish have swallowed us up and spit us out? Many fish have swallowed us whole. The fish could symbolize sin and the devil. The fish swallowing us could be our guilt or money or anything. When we don't listen to God and we do our own thing, God will punish us. Jonah's punishment was the fish to swallow him.

For us it could be anything. For a lot of us, the fish never spit us out, because we refuse to confess our sin to God, and choose simply to believe that we are going through a hard time. It is the devil wearing you down and destroying you, giving you fear and making you be scared. It is not from God.

Keep in mind that the only power Satan has over you is what he has been granted from God. The devil rules over the world and can steal your joy but John 16:33 shares this wonderful news from Jesus. "I have overcome the world."

By Shauna Swanberg



Manly Wisdom

By Brenda Horne

My husband is sitting at the kitchen table minding his own business when my youngest daughter walks up behind him and starts playing with his hair. She had found some small, pretty little hair clips and decided they would look really nice in her Daddy's hair. When he realized what she was about to do to him, he stated, "No, I don't want those in my hair."

My daughter giggled, didn't say a word and kept playing with his hair, to which my husband asked, "Why are you giggling?" She said, "It's cute that you think you have a choice." My husband of three daughters and two granddaughters laughed and agreed. He conceded that he had lost this battle (along with many previous "daughter "battles) and allowed the hair styling to begin. The whole process lasted maybe 3 minutes (my husband doesn't have that much hair, LOL).

Now, my husband of 6'3" and large build could have stopped his daughter ... but he didn't. He allowed her to do what daughters do. Once she had completed her hair styling, he looked at her and smiled. As you can imagine, he made quite the princess and we all had a good laugh.

Being a good father and leader of our family is not something my husband takes lightly. He, like other fathers, knows the toll the hardships of life can take on a man. And those hardships can definitely have an effect on his ability to loosen up and laugh with his family.

My husband knows he is not the perfect Dad, and like all parents he makes mistakes. But he tries to have compassion and understanding for his daughters and granddaughters. He allows those silly moments to happen simply so he can laugh and connect with them (even if it means getting his toenails painted while he naps in his recliner).

It may seem to some that his "man" card gets taken away by such girly actions, but the truth is they each love him more because he can laugh with them. And there is nothing more manly than receiving the love of your children!

Psalms 103:13

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

Proverbs 15:1 (NIV)

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Proverbs 14:26

He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.



True Colors

By Marie Pritchett

Bon fires, hay rides, hot chocolate, pumpkins, football games, fall festivals, cooler temperatures, apple cider and changing of the leaves, these are just a few of the reasons I LOVE fall!!! Fall is my favorite time of the year.

While enjoying some quiet time on the porch swing and admiring God's beauty through the colors all around, I began to wonder how appealing I am as a Christian? Do other people see me as a vibrant, warm and inviting person? Do they see God's beauty through me?

Yellow is my favorite color. Yellow is a color that makes me smile. Yellow reminds me of excitement, joy and cheerfulness. As Christians our joy and happiness comes from God and knowing our future is secure with Him. Sharing that joy and cheerfulness with others is a reflection of what God has done in our lives. If we aren't cheerful as Christians do you think other people will want what we have? If we have Christ, we should have joy in our hearts and that joy should shine through us for the entire world to see.

A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones. Proverbs 15:30

When I think about the color of the leaves changing, the color red stands out. There's just something about the trees filled with red leaves. It's just amazing. It's as if they are screaming, "Hey, look at me!" Red reminds me of passion. I think we could all use a little more passion in our walk with Christ. We should stand out in a good way. We should be a reflection of God and all his glory.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matthew 5:16.

The color orange is so beautiful in the fall. We see it everywhere. In the leaves, in the night sky and in the pumpkins we all admire. Orange reminds me of warmth, thoughtfulness and compassion. As Christians we should be just like that—thoughtful, warm and loving, caring about others and putting their needs before our own.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as

God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32

Finally, there is blue. The blue sky makes all the other colors much more beautiful. When you walk out to a bright blue sky you can't help but smile. God is like the big blue sky. With Him we have everything to smile about but without Him the world can be dark and gloomy. Others can see if we are living for Christ and depending on Him in our lives. It comes out in our actions and behavior.

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world! John 16:33

Conclusion: Showing Christ through everything we do is so important in our witness to others. The colors of our life do matter. When we say we are Christians, we represent Christ in how we act and behave. I pray God's colors shine in my life. I don't want God to be hidden from the world because of me.

Are you showing God's true colors?



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FOCUS SCRIPTURE VERSE:

Isaiah 43:19

...I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Grace In The Wilderness is an out-reach ministry for Today's Busy Woman and Teen Girl. Our mission is to encourage women and teen girls:

-To look upward to God as they discover Him in a new and deeper way,

-To look inward as they discover who they are in Christ, and

-To look outward as they discover God's plan for their lives.

We appreciate your prayers and support. Donations are also appreciated and may be made payable to Grace In The Wilderness Ministries (address to the left).

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*"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched—they must be felt with the heart!"
... Helen Keller*

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