

# Gracie's Way

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



## Nobody's You-er than You!

By Sharon Hawkins

"Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is You-er than You." —Dr. Suess

One of the hardest things that Gracie Ankles, Today's Busy Teen, faces is the battle to be herself. E. E. Cummings once said, "To be nobody but yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting."

Peer pressure is a killer to self-esteem. A girl just wants to be liked, to fit in.

So, Gracie said she was 18, rather than 16, said she was allowed to date anyone she wanted, said the most popular guy in school had asked her out. What's a few lies among friends if it elevates you a few rungs on the social ladder, right? What's a little white lie when it comes to what people will think about you, right? No, wrong, very wrong!!

Maybe Today's Teen, Gracie Ankles' deepest fear is not that she is inadequate, but that she is powerful. Maybe it is her light, not her darkness that most frightens her.

She asks herself, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and famous?" Who is she not to be if she is a child of God?

Gracie and her new boyfriend, Justin, had been invited to go to the movies on Saturday with four of the most popular couples

in school. She told her friend, Tiffany, that she really didn't want to see the movie they had chosen. It had lots of bad language and numerous sexually-explicit scenes. But the rest of the group planned to see it and had invited them. Who was she to be the "party pooper?" She and Justin had made plans to go.

One thing she forgot to plan on was having to get past her parents. When she asked her mom if she could go to the movies on Saturday with her friends, the first question out of Mom's mouth was, "Who are you going with?" The second was, "What are you going to see?" The third was, "What is it rated?"

"Oh, Mom, I knew you were going to give me a fit about this! Arghhhh!!!," Gracie snapped as she spun to go to her room. As she often did, her mom followed. Oh, please, not again...she's so pushy..!!

Grace sat down on the bed beside Gracie, took her hand in hers and looked her square in the eye. (Boy, she hated when her mom did that!) Grace quietly asked her questions again. When Gracie had answered, her mom paused. "Is this something you really want to do or are you agreeing because the crowd wants to?"

Gracie's anger seemed to magically disappear as she began, "No, I really don't...It's not the sort of movie we should be going to see." Mom replied, "Okay, then, guess you know what you've gotta do."

Man, Gracie hated it when her mom made sense like that and she couldn't argue with it!!

Gracie picked up the phone and began by calling Justin. Of course, he was fine with whatever Gracie wanted to do. He was just thrilled to be with her! Cool, she really could like this guy :O)!!!

Then she began calling her girl friends. To her surprise, one by one, each friend told her they hadn't really felt good about it either and would rather see the other movie she suggested. So, they made new plans.

Go, Gracie!!! She stood up for what she knew was right, for who she was and she made a difference!

Pretending to be less than who we are in Christ won't make us any real friends and it won't change the world for the good. When we let our light shine, it makes other people around us more comfortable to let their light shine too.

In love, you were uniquely created by the Lord of the Universe. To not be yourself is to rob the world of you and the impact God created you to make on it!

Be yourself, an original is always worth more than a copy. Besides, who else are you gonna be? Everyone else is already taken! You're one of a kind and nobody could ever be you-er than you!!!

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### Special points of interest:

- Watch for our Grace In The Wilderness Teen/College Age Girl Conference in October of each year.
- We're on Facebook. Become a fan of the Grace In The Wilderness Page. Look us up...



### Psalm 139:14

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*



## Sliding Board of Life

By Amanda Seawright

I was playing outside with my 2 1/2-year-old nephew, Hunter. As we played, he began to climb up the sliding board the wrong way. Of course, he would get so far and slide back down.

I watched him do this a couple of times. I then asked if he needed help. Of course, he said, "No!" lol :O)! He kept

trying for a little while longer before he gave up and went on to something else.

As I watched him, I thought about his refusal for help. It made me realize that we do the same thing to God. We try to do things on our own. When we can't do them by ourselves, God always asks if we need help.

So like Hunter, we refuse His help. We make things harder and they seem impos-

sible. But if we would accept God's help, we wouldn't struggle so much.

So the next time you try to climb "the Sliding Board of Life," remember to let God help you. With God, all things are possible.

**Psalm 46:1**

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*

By Brenda Horne



## Facing the Giants...

As a Christian, what is the hardest thing you face at school?

Temptation with friends and boys and a lot of other things. Diamond, 12, 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

The toughest thing I face at school is always trying to be the best example for all my friends, knowing they are watching me. Also having good Christian attitudes when your friends are being argumentative. Madison, 16, 10<sup>th</sup> grade

Hanging out with certain friends. Anonymous, 13, 7<sup>th</sup> grade

The toughest thing I face at school is having a Christian-like attitude during trying times. Brett, 16, 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

The toughest thing I face at school is when you try to talk to someone about God and you're afraid they are going to ask you something you can't answer. Jenni, 14, 9<sup>th</sup> grade

The toughest thing I face at college and pursuing a Christian lifestyle is the week-

ends. High school has some of the same pressures, but I would say that college can be more difficult because you make your own decisions, not your parents. I am going to admit that it is fun hanging out with a bunch of goofs who you consider to be your friends, but you have to be careful not to fall into sin. It is easier to tear down a reputation than it is to build it up, girls especially know this. It is hard watching the majority of your friends going out and meeting up with everyone on Saturday nights, as you stay in and watch a movie. But it also has its benefits.

You can say that it is ok to go and hang out as long as you don't drink, or as long as you don't participate. But why would you put yourself in a position where you are destined to fail? I can speak from personal experience that it becomes comfortable, and I had to quickly pull away before I did something I would regret. Being a Christian, you are also the "salt and light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-14). People are going to watch you more than you think. You shouldn't always be worried about what other people think, but you should be worried what God thinks and what kind of stand you are taking for Him. It is easy to get frustrated, but lead by example. College is going to be a challenge of your faith, but it can also be a blessing to your life and

your work for God.

Hillary, 18, College freshman

High school and college are definitely tough years to stand firm in your faith. I'm sure you can relate to each difficulty our Teen Panel faces. So what exactly does God expect from you.

The Bible says in **Micah 6:8... what does the LORD require of you: but to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?**

Let's break it down:

**To do Justice:** do wrong to none and do right to all. Treat others fairly; *even when they are not treating you fairly!!* You are set to a higher standard. Fight to do what is right.

**To Love kindness:** be glad for the opportunity to do good. It's your choice on how you react to others; you choose whether to be "mean" or to show kindness.

**Walk humbly with God:** realize there is no good in you except for what Jesus gives you, then pray for Him to help you with each situation you face. Because without Him, you can do nothing!

Finally, you are a child of God! You belong to Him!! So when you say, "God, I just can't do it!" He proudly says "But I can, if only you ask."

By Reid Long, 16



## The Answer

This world is chocked full of deceit. Earth is a place that contains lies and temporary satisfaction. We're surrounded by things that are tempting and convincing. We like to think that these things that tempt us are harmless. Think again! It doesn't matter how innocent it seems. If it starts making us think we can't live without it,

we could possibly die with it. Our life shouldn't depend on things that are not of God. Our life should depend on God Himself!

We will find ourselves disappointed when that lie leaves us hanging with no satisfaction. No matter what it is in this life, it will eventually fade away.

I know what you're thinking... "I should just give up. I can't find comfort in anything or anybody, I'm always going to be unsatisfied." There is an answer.

He is the truth. He is full of everlasting love. He will comfort you. He will protect you. He is dependable. He will satisfy. He will endure. Jesus Christ, that is your answer.

## So Much More

By Lynn Cowell

Call it a crush. Say he was hot. I liked him; he didn't like me. It's not like I wanted to be the most popular. I just wanted to be wanted. Was that asking too much? If all this guy stuff was supposed to be such a great thing, then why was my crush crushing me?

Have you ever been there? On the wrong end of a love equation?  $Guy + Me = Value?$  "I" simply was never part of *that* math problem. I had been told I was cute, fun to be around, a good friend. Then what was wrong with me?

The truth was nothing! There was nothing wrong with me; just like there is nothing wrong with *you*. We are loved extraordinarily; we just missed the love that has been loving us all along.

Do you struggle day-to-day with similar pain? Tough stuff like waiting for the right boy, not doing what everyone else is, keeping a clean heart and mind? I did too and still do sometimes, but I made a discovery that really changed everything. Jesus' radical love.

It all started after my parents dropped me off at my dorm a thousand miles away from home, leaving after a short twenty minute stay. You want to talk about being lonely? Surrounded by complete strangers, I was exactly where I needed to be. In the middle of this lonely place, I found true love. It happened when my school counselor passed on these words to me from a friend:

"I think you are so beautiful, Lynn...Let me start at your feet and go all the way to your head. Your toes are so pretty...they each should have a ring on them and then be slipped into soft and lovely slippers fit for a princess. Your hands are so

soft, with fingers that are slender and feminine...a diamond placed on each one. Your arms are strong and defined, but perfect for a lady...they each deserve silk gloves to your delicate elbows. Your cheeks are smooth and rosy, surrounding a smile that is captivating. Just looking at your hair makes me want to run my fingers through it and never stop!"

Stunned, I thought *Really? Is this true? Someone out there that really sees me this way?* I was a little leery. One of the stars of the football team once sent me a flower for one of those fundraisers on Valentine's Day. The note said, "I want to ask you out." I felt butterflies in my stomach until the yucky feelings swept in. My mind began to swirl; had I been the brunt of a joke? Quickly shoving the white carnation into my bag, I tried to shove down all the hurt swelling in my heart.

When I received *this* new note, I so hoped it was true. Have you ever heard of falling for someone before you even saw him? These words he had written created the perfect picture of what I wanted. Note number two confirmed my hope: "How beautiful you are! Oh, how beautiful!" Short and sweet.

When I heard that all these notes were words from the Bible in a book called the Song of Solomon I was shocked. I had never known that Jesus felt *this* way about me. I had known Him as Savior and best friend, but this was different! Some of my friends had boyfriends say "I love you", but come on. How powerful can love really be after two weeks?

*I took these verses and like a girl with her first boyfriend, I read these "love notes" over and over again. Two changes happened: verses like these showed up often*

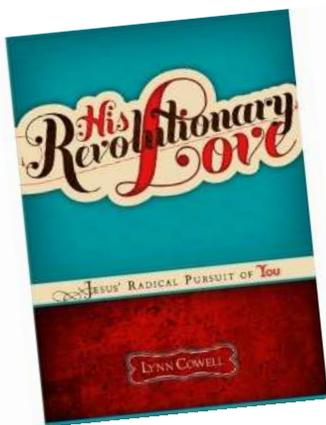
*when I read the Bible. (They had always been there; I had just never seen them!) I also began to feel different. Filling my mind and heart with words of love caused my loneliness to melt away. I saw myself differently. The need to be perfect began to dissipate.*

*I know that you feel pressure to be perfect too, especially if you want guys' attention. Eighteen-year-old Zach says, "I wish girls didn't feel like they had to look perfect." That's easy for him to say, right? He doesn't have to deal with the starlets on TV with smooth skin, models in magazines air-brushed to look fifteen pounds lighter or mannequins in the mall wearing size two!*

*As I let these words of Jesus melt into my heart, my own fears that I would never find the "right guy" that wanted me began to subside. There was already one who said I was His! From that time to now, this powerful relationship with Jesus has grown stronger and stronger.*

*That gives you a glimpse of how I fell for this revolutionary love. Maybe you think this sounds a bit strange. Let Jesus whisper words of love to you too! I bet you will fall for him just like I did!*

*Lynn Cowell is a speaker and writer with Proverbs 31 Ministries and the author of "His Revolutionary Love; Jesus' Radical Pursuit of You" being released this month. She writes in Charlotte, NC where she loves sushi, chocolate and peanut butter and well worn out sweatshirts. Catch up with her at [www.RadRevolution.org](http://www.RadRevolution.org).*



*Lynn's new book, His Revolutionary Love, shows teen girls how a relationship with Jesus can meet their deepest desires—from the need for identity and significance to being seen by someone as beautiful.*

Featuring personal stories of the author that don't gloss over her frustrations and failings—as well as stories from teens who are experiencing the pressures, difficulties, and confusion so many young women face—this book shows teen girls how Jesus' unchanging love changes absolutely everything.

To order: <http://shopp31.com/teens12yrs-17yrs.aspx>; or  
<http://www.amazon.com>



## Is the Grass Greener?

By Hillary Gambrell, Freshman, Mars Hill College

Have you ever heard the phrase “The Grass is Greener on the Other Side?” I have news for you. This is correct, as long as you let your FLESH do the thinking.

These past couple of weeks God has dealt with my heart about relationships. He has also allowed me to pour into a dear friend of mine with the same struggle. God works through our lives in very mysterious and perfect ways, that sometimes it takes a test of your faith to produce the endurance you need to be a light in a dark world (Matthew 5:14).

The question of relationships and what I want in a healthy relationship came to me through deciding what God wants from my life, NOT what I want or what others want for me. This can be a very hard thing for anyone, but especially for an impatient person as myself. To completely put your life into someone else’s hands takes a great deal of faith, trust and GUTS.

Many of you may struggle deeply with trust due to previous relationships, past failures, and in my case, a father who was not around as a child. Many of you had a father here on earth, but he was not as loving and as tender as your friends’ fathers, or fathers depicted on the movies.

You begin to seek love and affection from other guys because this is a new kind of love to you. I understand. I am here to tell you that God, your Father in heaven, is the only father you will ever need, if you will let him be. Amazing right?

The very same God who created you, challenges you, and cherishes you, wants to love YOU more than anybody else on

this earth could possibly dream of. Many girls seek out the missing love and compassion in their lives through guys who will tell them the things they want to hear, but when the going gets tough, where are they? You would probably be willing to search the entire earth to find the one man who could make your life “complete,” but what about the One who completes your life from infancy to death?

God’s promise to us is that if we seek the Kingdom of God and all of his righteousness (Matthew 6:33), He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

It is very important to be “yoked,” or connected, with someone who is a Christian and also has a desire to grow spiritually. It is easy to get frustrated with those around us who are walking down the wrong path, but they are also susceptible to danger, even if you or they themselves cannot see it at the time.

The best thing you can do as a Christian is to lead by example. In 1 Peter 3, God is revealing to us that wives should submit themselves to their husbands, and also that they must lead by example so that when the husbands should stray from the Word “they may be won over without a message by the way their wife lives.” I know you are thinking...Wait! I am not married! This may be true, but God wants the male to, of course, be the spiritual leader of the household, but he also wants the woman to reveal her beauty of her heart.

God wants you to take the same precautions in a relationship so that your marriage may be built on the foundation God has laid out for your life.

1 Peter 1:24-25 says that “All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like a flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower drops off, but the Word of the Lord endures forever.”

Basically God is saying that his followers will no longer desire the flesh, if they seek His kingdom and the blessings He has bestowed unto our lives. It is easy to look at other people’s relationships, possessions, talents, and appearances, but God took nine months to create the perfect you, when it only took him seven days to create the complex earth we live on today.

Listen to what God is telling you above all else and he will provide for you! In Matthew, when Jesus asked Simon Peter who He was to him, Simon Peter answered “You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!” Jesus replied to him that he was correct, because no fleshly being revealed this to him, but the Father in Heaven revealed it to him!

This means that no one on this earth understands your relationship with God. If you seek his wisdom, grace, and abundant love, He will reveal to you the heart of your desire.

**Proverbs 16:9**  
*A man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.*



## A Young Woman After God’s Own Heart

By Marie Pritchett

Have a heart for prayer—We talk to our friends, we talk to our parents, we talk to our boyfriends. How much time do we set aside each day to talk to God? God wants a relationship with us. Every relationship needs communication. When we pray to our Father, we are opening up lines of communication between us and God. God cares about even our smallest concerns. Do you have a habit of falling asleep when you pray? Is when you are so tired the only time you take out of your day to talk to God? You were so excited

when you were talking to your friends throughout the day. That is how God wants us to talk to Him, too. When we are passionate about our “talking time” with God, we are on a whole new level. Make sure you set aside time with God each and every day.

Have a heart for your future husband—Start praying now for the husband God wants for you. Sometimes, we “date” for fun. Be very careful!!! You never know who you are going to fall in love with! Pray that God will guard your heart and

guide your decisions. Before dating just anyone make sure you seek God’s wisdom. Making a bad choice in dating can cause you a lifetime of heartache.

Have a heart for spiritual growth—Let’s say you quit school after pre-school. How would your life be different? How could you grow without the knowledge that the rest of your schooling would provide? Yes, you would grow physically but what about your wisdom? Would you grow in your knowledge?

## Young Woman (cont'd)

The same is true for your spiritual growth. You need to be growing in the Lord every day. Do not become stuck or at a “stand-still” in your spiritual growth. Spend time each day reading your Bible and doing a devotion. Even if it is a short 5-minute devotion, it can help you to stay on track and help you to grow in your Christian walk. Some days are easier than others, but with God’s help, all things are possible. We sometimes think that things should happen instantly, but it takes time. Just like it takes time and true dedication to build your body physically, it takes time and dedication to build your body spiritually.

Have a heart for service—When we serve others, unselfishly, we grow. Jesus was the ultimate example of a servant. We

need to strive to be more like Him and to live by His example. Pray about how you can be a servant and try to serve in any way God is leading you to do. Maybe you feel led to do mission work such as a mission trip with your youth group or volunteering at your local soup kitchen. There are limitless things you can do to serve God. Do not miss out on an opportunity to achieve all that God wants for your life. Don’t let Satan tell you that anything is impossible. Remember he is the “father of lies.”

Don’t use your teen years as an excuse to avoid responsibility. These years are intended to be a launching pad for your future! Don’t waste them. Invest in yourself and others. Each of us has a gift, along with the potential to use it. Just think of the millions of lives you may touch by following God’s calling for your

life. God gave us an imagination for a reason. Dare to dream! Look deep within yourself and ask, “What kind of person do I want to be now? Who do I want to be in 5 years? 10 years? What do I have to do to get there?” Take action. Write down your answers and your plan to make it happen. It doesn’t have to be perfect but it is a start. God created you to do great and amazing things! Do not waste your life. You can make a difference.

You may think of yourself as a shy, insecure girl who is never pretty enough, smart enough or confident enough to be much good to anyone. But you are so wrong! God made you just the way you are and God doesn’t make mistakes. God has given you everything you need to carry out His plan for your life.

By Samantha McCollum, 15

## God is Enough

He is enough to stop a storm, heal a patient, or carry you through hardship. He is always enough if you let Him be! Satan sells us lies about how God will never be

enough to fill the hole in our hearts. But that hole, is a GOD-SHAPED hole and nothing you could ever find in this world can fill that hole, but Him. He fills that hole,

because He created it, and is the only One who is enough to fill it.



By Brenda Horne



## Hectic in the Hallway

You just want to get to class with no drama, that’s all. You head

down the opposite hall to avoid her but there she is coming around the corner, headed straight for you. She speeds up when she sees you; she looks like a torpedo headed straight for its target. You don’t know why she likes to cause trouble for you, but she does.

As she approaches, she has her hands on her hips and her eyes are like daggers shooting right at you. You pause for a moment and think to yourself “If she gets in my face, God, I am going to....” then you realize you just said God. You try not to use the Lord’s name in vain, but she makes you so mad. Besides He’s not here anyway. God isn’t in the school hallway worrying about you. He’s out in space somewhere, worrying about important stuff. He’s definitely not in this smelly, crowded hallway... or is He? The thought skims your mind just seconds before she reaches you.

You take a deep breath and stand there looking at her. And just like you knew

she would, she takes her bony, little finger and sticks it right in your face. With that shrill high-pitched voice of hers, she starts blaming you, accusing you and judging you. Your mind explodes with anger and you think “God, I hate her! Oh no, I just said God’s name in vain again. But why not, this girl is in my face and if she’s not careful I’m going to beat her eyes out.”

She continues to yell and students are staring. You weigh your options. “I could punch her in the face. I’m bigger than her scrawny little behind. I could win... but that would only get me suspended. Or I could cuss her out. That’s what I’ll do; I’ll get all up in *her* face!! God, she won’t shut up!! Shoot, there’s God’s name again. Hmm, God, are you really here... right here...right now? Lord, you say you will never leave me nor forsake me. You also say you will give me a way out. Lord, please get me out of here, I really don’t want any trouble, help me please. Amen

Ok, she’s still in my face yelling...THAT’S IT. I’m punching her square in that big mouth of hers!! Wait, there’s the bathroom, I’ll go in there, no that won’t work, she’ll just follow me.

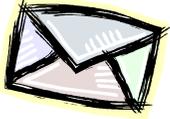
But there’s Mrs. Brighton’s room. The door is open! She never has her door open between classes; she even locks it to keep students out. OK, Lord, that’s my answer. Mrs. Brighton, here I come. Psycho girl will just have to yell at the back of my head, cause I’m out of here!!

Oh and Lord, sorry I used your name in vain, please forgive me. Next time (and there will be a next time) I will call to you on purpose and not because I’m angry and Lord....thanks for being with me... even in this hectic hallway.

When God closes one door, he always opens another, especially when it’s hectic in the hallway.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** ...But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

**Hebrews 13:5** ...Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.



## Letter to My Teenage Self

By Delia Evett

Dear Teenage Self,

First of all, I just want to encourage you by letting you know that everything is going to be okay. I know sometimes it doesn't seem like it but you are going to be just fine. God will be beside you each step you take. Walk close beside Him and hold His hand tight. Spend time with Him each day and let Him show you which way to go. You may think you know what's best for you, but only God can give you the desires of your heart. *"Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."* Psalm 37:4.

Don't ignore Him when He speaks to you. He loves you and has so many exciting things planned for your life. Trust Him. *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen*

*to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart."* Jeremiah 29:11-13

Be thankful for the opportunities you are given and don't look at them with dread. Those piano lessons are important. Practice every day. You have endless opportunities to learn at school. Apply yourself. You should even be thankful for gym class! One day you will pay good money to try to stay in shape! *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."* Colossians 3:23-24

Be confident. Don't sell yourself short, face your fears with God by your side and trust Him to get you through. Remember that those unexpected things that come up in life cannot change the plan God has for your life. He is always in control! Don't measure your value by this world we live in or by what others may think of you,

but measure your value through the eyes of God. *"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come."* Proverbs 31:25

Most importantly, make sure that all the wonderful things you know about Jesus go from your head way down deep into your heart. Fall crazy in love with the One who is crazy in love with you. He will never let you down. Life will get hard at times. You will make mistakes and even wander away, but His love will remain the same and because of His amazing grace, you're going to be okay. *"Yet I am always with You; You hold my right hand. You guide me with Your counsel, and afterwards You will take me into glory. Whom do I have in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart, my portion forever."* Psalm 73:23-26  
Love ya, Delia

## Choose Honor

**Romans 12:10—Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.**

In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade I had this friend who had the most dazzling long, curly, brown hair. She was funny, outgoing and extremely popular. Jackie had a lot of great qualities but there was something that wasn't so admirable about her.

Jackie would frequently tease about our teacher being old, boring and filled with useless information. I actually liked our teacher, but feeling the need to fit in, one day I passed her a note that said, "I agree...he's just an old fart."

Well, as fate would have it, Mr. Brunn peered his eyes up from his desk the moment I passed that note to Jackie. He slowly walked over to Jackie and peeled the note out of her hands.

Mr. Brunn stood above me with his large frame, gray hair and black, wire-rimmed glasses. He let out a deep sigh as he read the note and chuckled quietly as he walked away. Crumpling up the note, he laid it on his desk and nodded his head towards me.

*"What on earth is going to happen?"* I thought.

The rest of the day was very intense. I awaited my sentencing and expected the worst. But Mr. Brunn never said anything.

The silence was terrifying. I had wished that he would just go ahead and send me to the Principal's office, call my parents or SOMETHING.

The end of day bell rang and I quickly gathered up my belongings to jet out of the classroom. Just as I got to the door, Mr. Brunn's deep voice with a German accent quietly said, "Nicki, may I see you."

He sat down at his desk and un-crumpled the note. Looking at the note he began to shake his head. Mr. Brunn looked up at me and said, *"I really would never expect something like this from you."*

Tears began to swell in my eyes because I knew I had hurt Mr. Brunn. And Mr. Brunn really was an incredible teacher. I tried to apologize but the words, *I'm sorry*, just didn't feel adequate in those moments. I felt horrible. Mr. Brunn taught me a very valuable lesson that day.

Our culture tells us that its cool to be cynical. The little cuts we give each other are supposed to be funny. And having a witty tongue is apparently a good quality.

But according to God's Word, we are supposed to honor the people in our lives. And that day, I took the honor away from Mr. Brunn --all for the sake of trying to fit in. From that day on, I understood the power that my tongue held. While I still make mistakes, I am trying harder each day to show honor to people above me,

beside me and below me.

Because when we are devoted to the gospel of Jesus, we are devoted to love and love is devoted to honor.

**Nicki's tips for showing honor:**

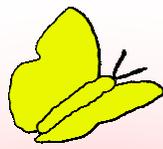
**Honor is a form of communicating.** Today, try to speak honor to someone. Telling others how good they are at something, how nice they look today is a great way to speak honor. When we show people that we find value in them, we honor them.

**Honor is a lifestyle.** I said in the article that I am trying to honor people that are above me, beside me and below me. From a police officer to a cafeteria worker, everyone deserves to be honored. Try thanking someone today for a way that they serve our community. Whether it's big or seemingly small.

**Honor is authentic.** We can't honor the people in our lives and expect anything back. True honor isn't manipulative. We honor because it's the right thing to do. Be genuine as you honor friends and family, try to think of thoughtful gifts or things you can do just for them.

Nicki Koziarz is with Proverbs 31 She Seeks (<http://www.sheseeks.org>) and is a gifted Speaker and Writer—<http://nickikoziarz.com>.

By Nicki Koziarz



## Grace In The Wilderness Ministries

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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. Our mission is to encourage women of all ages:

- 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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Grace In The  
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*Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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