

Dear Mama



a collection of letters
from Lana Vawser and friends

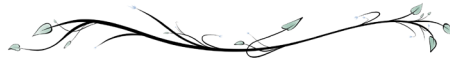
Hello Mama,

This incredible 'Dear Mama' collection of letters was birthed in His heart, for you. He dreamed of this collection of letters with you in mind. He wanted to love on you, encourage you, comfort you, refresh you, inspire you and minister to you through these wonderful friends of mine that have contributed to this beautiful book. He called this collection of letters 'Dear Mama, come to the well' because this is a space He has created for you to drink deeply, to be refreshed and strengthened in your journey as a Mama.

'Dear Mama, come to the well' and encounter His heart and the whispers of His love to you through these sacred, precious letters.

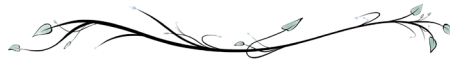
With you 'at the well' Mama's, let's drink deeply together,

Lana



To all my beautiful friends,

Thank you for contributing to this dream of the Lord's heart. Thank you for your generosity to share your heart, your life, your love, your wisdom and the revelation of His heart on these pages. I cannot thank you enough. Truly thankful for who you are, your heart, your life and your friendship.



Jesus,

Thank You for the honour and privilege of partnering with You and the dream on Your heart for Mama's across the world. This is all for You and about You. May You be glorified and Your name lifted high.



Dear Mama

I feel the Father's heart for you and I feel the Father saying:

'These are the days of promise my dearest one. You are such an incredible joy to me and I treasure you with all of my being. You were in my heart before time ever began. I brought you into this world with a destiny to reflect my very nature, to walk in my love and to carry my all-surpassing glory. I was with you as you rejoiced in wonder at the miracle of life, holding your little ones at birth. You've marveled to see your children grow along the way and you've nurtured them with the unconditional love that I've placed within your heart. I've given you to know and understand me in ways that few have ever imagined.

Mama, thank you for giving endlessly of yourself in sacrificial love for your children's benefit, without any regard of the cost to yourself. I've treasured the precious time you've taken to teach and impart all that they've needed to prepare them for life. I was watching over you when you stood guard over them through the sleepless nights and I heard your every prayer...even when all you could do was to simply whisper my name in tears of desperation. There is nothing this side of heaven like a mother's love. Mama, you're everything I had hoped you would be...and so much more.

You're an amazing mum and I love to have you as my daughter and dearest friend. I love everything about you and I cherish the time that you spend alone with me. You carry an eternal optimism based on your passionate love for me and quiet trust, despite the many voices to the contrary. You're wise in the way you manage your affairs and I honor you as the pillar of strength that you are to your family. I love that you desire most to please me. Your diligence has great reward, so never let doubt or fear have an entrance or ever be allowed to remain. Resist them when they approach, for I will always provide all that you need. I will strengthen you and I will come to your rescue

whenever you call on me.

I treasure the precious joys and the dreams within your heart. I also know the silent struggles that you've been through in the most difficult of seasons. I've wiped the bitter tears that you've wept when all of your hope seemed shattered. I held you and brought comfort to your soul in the deep valleys of darkness and turmoil. Who else could understand your deepest pain and grief like I can? At times, when you felt so lost and couldn't bear the agony anymore, I brought you safely home and granted you a new way of living out of what seemed like a total and unforgiving wasteland.

Mama, I have anointed you and have chosen to place you here on this earth for such a time as this. The dawn is now breaking and you're about to enter the season I've prepared for you to walk in. You are irreplaceable, and no one can ever snatch you out of my hand. As I survey your wondrous life, I see a well-watered and fruitful garden that will forever stand as testimony of superior love and grace. I'm releasing the Breaker to finally destroy the strongholds that have been holding you back and stealing my very life from you.

I have forever cast your sins into the sea of forgetfulness and I only see the very best in you... your selfless love and your gentle spirit. Let go of the nagging doubts that trouble your heart at times. You've displayed an incredible spirit of courage to hold fast, despite the harsh winds of adversity and the many challenges that you have faced. It's my delight to call you my own...my cherished one, faithful and true. You are far more precious to me than you can ever imagine. I'm here to love you and to guide you with my strength every step of the way.

I'm so very pleased with you Mama, because you carry the tenderness of my heart for your family, while also wielding the strength of a warrior to stand your ground and fight when you've needed to. My plans for you are vast and they can never be thwarted or taken from you. Take heart today as you ponder my word like Mary and trust in what I've promised to come to pass. My mighty angelic host surrounds you daily in watchful care to protect you and your precious loved ones from harm. I will counsel you as you seek me and flood you with wisdom as you partake of the tree of life. You are highly favored in the Courts of Heaven and through Jesus, you carry my divine nature. You're my rose and I love you with forever love.'

Mama, I feel the Father wants me to release a blessing over you:

I cover you with the Father's presence and I release the fulness of His lovingkindness upon you. I bless you for the incredible gift you are as a mother and I cover your family by His wondrous mercy. I bless the work of your hands and I cut off every curse working against you. I speak life over you and I release you from every spirit of worry, doubt and fear. I bless you with His all-surpassing grace to strengthen and uphold you each and every day. I speak comfort in your pain and abundance where this is lack. You are the head and not the tail and I decree that no weapon formed against you will prosper. I stand against every attack from the enemy in your life and I tear up every assignment of darkness against you. I release divine health into your body and I call for the covenant blessings of heaven to shower upon you.

In Christ's Love,

GARY



Dear Mama

As I sit here with the sun streaming in my window and the sounds of my children playing in the background, coffee brewing and my favourite essential oils diffusing in the background, I sit in wonder and awe of His heart for you. I sit here thinking about you reading these pages, reading these words and encountering the heart of God for you. Do you know what I see?

I see YOU! I see YOU, the GIFT that you are to your children. Did you hear that? Hearing those words may confront areas of struggle, pain or insecurity in your heart or they may come as an encouraging reminder of who you are. Whether these words come as a challenge or as a comfort, they are words from His heart to you.

These words 'You are a gift to your children' are coming from the heart of the Father and the heart of a Mama sitting in her house in Adelaide, South Australia, as a HUG and a HIGH FIVE.

So often as Mama's we can replay the day in our minds over and over as we go to bed. The things we 'should' have done better, the things we think we 'got wrong' or the places where our frustrations took over. We can start to rehearse the day and the voice of condemnation can get loud. The voice of condemnation can enter the conversation over today, over yesterday and over years gone by, but the Lord wants to break those places of condemnation, He wants to remind you today of the WONDER that YOU ARE.

As Mama's we can talk so much about how blessed we are by our beautiful kids, and rightly so, how blessed we are. Others can say to us 'What a beautiful family you have, how blessed you are'—absolutely right, but today the Father wants to whisper to your heart Mama, to our hearts as a collective, 'YOU are a gift to your children'. The way you love them, the way you nurture them, the way you comfort them,

Speak tenderly to them, the way you encourage them and champion them, your heart, your life, your very presence is a PRESENT to them. It's a gift. YOU are a gift to your children. Sure, we can look at other Mama's and look at how they raise their kids, sure we can read wonderful parenting books, we can continue to look at ways to grow in our mothering journeys, but sometimes we need someone to come alongside us and say 'YOU were chosen to be their Mama' and YOU are beautiful. God did not make a mistake giving you your precious children and calling you to be their Mama. You were chosen. The Lord chose YOU to bless the lives of your children. To raise them, and teach them the ways in which they should go (Proverbs 22:6). Your heart, your life, who you are, is leaving a beautiful print upon their lives that NO ONE ELSE CAN.

I hear His voice whispering to you:

'There is nothing greater than My love for YOU. I created you and formed you. I knew you before you were in your mother's womb, I formed and fashioned you, and what a wonder you are to Me. My heart was filled with such delight as I dreamt you into being. Every part of you. Oh the joy that filled My heart when I planned you to be the Mama to your children. I rejoiced! I did not make a mistake. I planned it perfectly. My heart filled with anticipation and joy as I saw the days we would enter together raising them, that's right, together. You are not alone. I am with you and have been with you in raising these ones. I have led you, I continue to lead you, I have guided you, I continue to guide you. I have spoken to you, I continue to speak to you. The way that you have leaned into My heart and you continue to seek Me in raising, nurturing and guiding these precious ones, is a sweet smelling aroma to Me. You carry and release My heart. Don't allow the enemy to taunt you. Don't allow the enemy's lies to entrap you. I have My hand over you and over these precious ones in your care. I am speaking the word FLOURISH over you as a Mama. I am speaking the word THRIVE over you as a Mama. Whatever part of the journey you find yourself on, there is a harvest upon you. There is a place of deep fruitfulness that is abounding and will continue to blossom forth in your journey as a Mama. You're going to see explosive fruit of seeds you've sown. You are going to see a harvest from all your prayers. I have heard every one and not one has gone unheard. The enemy has worked hard to cage you in condemnation, regret and heaviness, but I am speaking ARISE AND THRIVE! The aroma of My heart in your life as a Mama is increasing and spreading far and wide. The wonder of Me in you and you in Me is blossoming forth. Oh the wonder that you are!'

Let me echo those words from the heart of the Father.

'Oh the wonder that you are Mama!

There is no one else like you. You're not meant to look like someone else. You are unique. You are one of a kind and that's how it's meant to be. Born to shine, not to hide. Born not to conform to comparison, but born to stand out. You are a light in your home. You carry His heart, and you bring light to the lives of your children and all who come to know you. You light up their world as the light of the world shines from inside you! And you know what? You light up HIS world!

Hear Him speaking to you right now Dear Mama:

'For you reach into my heart, with one flash of your eyes I am undone by your love, my beloved, my equal, my bride. You leave me breathless— I am overcome by merely a glance from your worshiping eyes, for you have stolen my heart. I am held hostage by your love and by the graces of righteousness shining upon you.' (Song of Songs 4:9 TPT)

Dear Mama....

Oh the wonder that you are!

Lana xx



Dear Mama

Everyone has a story. And as I tell you mine, I hope it encourages you to keep on believing that your Heavenly and very loving Papa is always with you. That He has a plan so uniquely right, perfect actually. Just for you. And that He is the ultimate fixer. He restores. He *does* work things together for your good - you just need to keep believing.

I was raised not by one, but by 3 mothers. And was blessed to have been born into a Christian family. Even so, my parents divorced when I was quite young. This meant that my father could no longer pastor a church and I recall this sense of failure washing over us, in these early days. My mother loved my siblings and I greatly, but due to complex and sad circumstances my sweet little mother lost custody of her children. Consequently, I grew up not knowing her. Not until many years later.

My dad was a loving father & he enlisted his parents help. But my brothers, sister and I, had a huge gap in our lives, even though we were loved. Especially being raised in the formative years without a mother.

Some 25 years later Papa God intervened through, what was a tragedy at the time, and my sweet little mother became a part of my life.

A major healing took place in both of us. Papa reversed so much brokenness, pain, shame & suffering. It must have looked impossible to mum she was there waiting, hoping, believing for restitution between us. And it happened. She was such an example to me of never losing hope, holding onto her faithful God. Even though she had been misunderstood, mishandled medically and in and out of psychiatric hospitals, often ridiculed by others, she remained sweet and held onto her God.

By the time I was 8 years old, my dad met Josephine, a younger woman in her early thirties. She was a gentle soul and very kind. At first, we knew her as Dr Jo until we were told that she was to become our new mum. How brave she was to take on a ready-made family with four children ranging from 7-12 years old.

It was so exciting; *finally*, we could be like other families and have a 'mother'. (In those days an incomplete family was not nearly as common as it is today).

Within a few years our family grew from 4 children to 6. I was in my element, loving and caring for my beautiful younger brother and sister. And because Josephine was a popular and talented GP and worked tirelessly, I was often able, and needed, to play mum. At the age of 12, I attended a Billy Graham Crusade at the Sydney Cricket Ground. That's when I understood the salvation message, and I said 'yes' ...when I felt Jesus calling my name.

I remember talking to Jesus about His word, that I wanted & tried to read it, but it seemed dry and like hard work. But wonderfully it came alive after I was baptised in the spirit, that changed everything. I had noticed that my parents were so full of joy and liberated! I wanted what they had.

Almost a year later I was to draw on Holy Spirit's enabling power and strength in a big way. My stepmother was expecting her third baby and she died suddenly, only 3 weeks prior to the expected date. Josephine took her life. And the baby didn't survive. It was such a shock. Such a tragedy. Josephine had suffered quietly from post-natal depression, but it was not talked about or diagnosed back in those days. Even my father had not realised the extent of her subdued mood. And being so young I had not noticed anything at all, apart from her being very tired.

When the para medics arrived on that day, I told them I knew Jesus could heal her, they interpreted that as a young girl in shock.

This event changed all our lives. My younger brother and sister were not quite 2 and 4 years old and kept asking 'where's mummy?' Alternative arrangements had to be made to care for them which meant we were separated for some time. A string of live-in housekeepers became the norm and kept the home functioning, as best it could, but as a family we were broken inside.

Remember how at the beginning I said God works everything together for good?

‘And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.’ (Romans 8:38 NLT)

And in the The Passion Translations,
‘So, we are convinced that every detail of our lives is continually woven together to fit into God’s perfect plan of bringing good into our lives, for we are his lovers who have been called to fulfill his designed purpose.’
(Romans 8:38 TPT)

This has been one of my life verses.

As I look back, He amazes me!

The skill and expertise that only He can deliver, in the most perfect way and time. There is no such thing as chance with God. He *is* the master planner and choreographer.

Mother number 3 enters our lives. Maree, a woman of style and one in true search of God for many years. Papa God navigated her life to this point in time. Through meeting my father, she found Jesus and was filled with Holy Spirit. Amazingly her experiences were a parallel to my father. Maree’s first marriage ended after a few years in divorce, and she had 2 sons. Her second marriage sadly had ended in separation and then her husband taking his life. He had fathered a daughter, so Maree needed to be able to care for her as she was only 3 years.

Maree responded to an advertisement my father posted for house help so that my younger siblings could be cared for while I was attending School. Within two years she and my father married, I was seventeen years old.

There were many tense and bumpy moments. It would be unrealistic to not expect some fallout when each one of us had come through brokenness and grief and were dealing with things in our own way. Insecurity, fear, disappointments, sense of inadequacy, being able to trust were a few of the issues that needing sorting.

But there was a lot of love in the mix. His love trumps everything else and held us together. I think too because of the traumas that we had

all been through that being a family meant a lot to us.

Through this new family her second son and I had met as early teenagers. We married 5 years later. My stepmother Maree became my mother-in-law: my stepbrother my husband!

As far as statistics go, we should not have had a successful marriage as we both came from broken marriages. But God. We had determined from the outset, that we would have a wonderful marriage. It certainly came close a couple of times, but we hung on.

Maree was certainly sent by the Lord to my family and me. She was one who over the years walked so closely to Him, and He spoke through her loud and clear and was a strong prophetic intercessor who touched many lives. She wasn't fully understood or appreciated, but it did not deter her from seeking God with her whole heart and speaking out what she had been told. She taught me how to press in even deeper and was so reliant and sold out to Holy Spirit. She has inspired our family by her deep love for Jesus and her strong love towards each of us. An amazing mother.

When we were 4 years married, a couple from New Zealand said that they had been praying for us and they were given a word from the Lord. We would have a son and that he would be 'strong and mighty in battle'. What they *didn't* know was that it was a confirming word, as we had already chosen the name Joshua. In fact, I was in the early stages of pregnancy at the time, but a short time later miscarried.

A year later—to the day—from receiving that word I *did* give birth to a beautiful son named Joshua. But it was a few months later that I found that word written with the date on it a year earlier. It meant so much.

I'd known pain and emotional devastation in my younger years, as had my husband. I'd experienced some low times but when I had a total breakdown 2 weeks after giving birth, well that was an extremely difficult time. I'd believed for an easy birth; it was anything but. The sudden death of my father a few weeks before, the disappointment that he and Maree had separated, this was not part of my plan. It was supposed to be a joyous time and I had really hoped and believed that the arrival of a grandson would bring my parents back together again.

And in the background a major church split, rocked our world.

It seemed my life was falling apart.

I couldn't even look after my beautiful son, without being supervised. It took a good 12 months before I felt myself again. I truly understood what depression is like. For people to say, 'snap out of it', well you would: if you could.

It was like I was broken into little pieces. I was at a loss. Where was Papa God?

You have probably felt betrayed. I had to quickly say sorry for even thinking such a thing. For He is the most faithful, caring, wonder working and most beautiful, perfect, and loving Father.

When the absolute opposite happens to what you're believing for. Stand still and hold on. Hold onto to him with all you've got.

On my last visit to the Psychiatrist 12 months later, he let me know I was truly blessed because the severity of the break down that I had usually resulted in the need for ongoing medication, often for life. I can say 'thank-you Jesus' for your saving grace and for rescuing me.

So, where was Jesus in all of this? At times I really didn't know. But of course, He was always there. He lovingly carried me, cared for me through others.

We were so blessed to have a beautiful daughter after *another* miscarriage at 16 weeks. Father's loving faithfulness covered my daughter and kept her till full-term even though she was a *placenta previa* baby. I was so grateful to be well and this time well-enough to be able to care for my baby daughter.

Over the years He had turned me inside out and put me together again, the right-way up.

So, you see, I know my God is faithful. I know He is everything He says He is. My healer both inside and out. My restorer.

When I haven't understood the why, I've learnt to rely on the one who does. He sees, He cares, He loves so deeply. I may fail...but He never does.

He builds into you His very nature and through time and life's challenges you learn He is utterly sovereign. And in the face of the unknowns, you

can remain confident, for Papa God is totally trustworthy.

Completely trust Him, build yourself up in hope and faith. Keep declaring his word, hold onto your favourite verses and say them over & over. Know He is all that he says He is.

Love xx

Alison

Prayer

Precious Father I'm overwhelmed with thanks for you are so good. I can't thank you enough for all the miracles in my life and my family. You kept us together and you kept love in my life. Now I pray for this precious Mama whom you love. Show her that you are ever loving, that you keep all your promises. Amen

Decree

You are faithful to fulfil every promise
You are kind and give saving strength
Tender-hearted and patient
The greatest miracle worker doing more than what I ask for
You generously bless me and satisfy my deepest longings
You draw near to me when I call out to you
Your power is limitless
And so is your love.
You are my ultimate restorer!
(Based on Psalm 145 TPT)



Dear Mama

You really are on the Father's Heart today!
Well not just today, BUT ALWAYS!

He is your greatest advocate and cheer leader!
Perhaps your days have been so full of mundane
must do's, problem-solving pressures, diplomatic discussions,
age-appropriate conversations, and all before lunch!

I get that life is full and can overtake your time incredibly!
Maybe over the years your sense of adventure, your wonder
or surprise is all but diminishing. The Father says, 'Be still.'
Jesus says, 'I am near.'

As I was praying for you, I felt Holy Spirit wanted me to share an
invitation with you! As I lifted you up before the Lord in prayer, I heard
Him say, '**LIFE IS MADE OF MOMENTS. LIVE MOMENT TO MOMENT!**'

Whilst pondering over these words, I thought about Jesus's days
on earth and realised the depth of His love, and encouragement!

I began to realise, as people came to Jesus; that it was in 'A MOMENT'
of time, they had experienced a life-changing, radical encounter and
were
never the same! They were healed and delivered! Fears gone!
Lives full of blessing –filled with love!

The reality is, when we look too much into the future,
we can easily miss those special 'moments' that He prepares for us,
moments of hope, wonder and true fulfilment!!

I am speaking about, moments of opportunity, moments of clarity,
moments of wisdom, moments of faith and empowerment, moments

that have the potential to change our lives, direction, and destinies –forever!

I was reminded of the story of Esther, who became the Queen of Persia and how she too experienced, a 'God moment' but also became a 'moment-embracer', as she found herself suddenly positioned in an extraordinary place, standing before her King!

In this window of extraordinary occasion, Esther chose to embrace 'the moment' even at the risk of losing her life, choosing to seize 'her moment'–the good things, the Lord had prepared!
It was 'a moment' she couldn't afford to miss! 'A moment' in time, that would define her purpose and destiny!

Esther 4:14 (CEB) says:

'Perhaps, this is "the moment" for which you have been created!'

Knowing the end of the story, it's easy to now assess the significance of Esther's decision in embracing 'her moment', but may I suggest and encourage you, that you also have been privileged and honoured of the Lord, to experience 'similar moments' –each day!

Mama don't miss your moment, your special and substantial moment's with Him and the things that –He has prepared for you!

Let's take another significant pause in time, as we consider the life of Anna the prophetess, who was also perfectly positioned, and aligned in the temple, at the right time, place, and exact day, to witness, hold and touch the long-awaited promise of the redemption of Israel!

It was through faith and patience that Anna also seized her 'God given moment' –encountering Emmanuel on that special day!

Luke 2:38 (NIV) says, 'Coming up to them, at that very moment.'

At that very instant, Anna enters the temple seeing Mary and Joseph, she immediately recognises the Messiah and begins thanking God!

I believe in this New Era; we need to become more sensitive to these 'heavenly moments' that our Father gives to those who expectantly wait on Him! I am certainly not talking about 'mundane moods'

but –‘supernatural pauses!’

Mama can I encourage you to choose His embrace!?

Yes, ‘embrace the moment’ precious one, embrace the moment!

Some of my sweetest times with Him, have been when hanging out the wash or sorting my pantry or some other of my chore or duty.

Mama, practice His Presence!

Receive His embrace!

Ask for that moment with the Lord! In fact, keep on asking and you will receive what you ask for!

Matthew 7:7-8 (NKJV) says

‘Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.’

Search for Him, lean into Him my precious one and –He will be found!
Yes, He will assuredly show you the future, but it’s in His ‘PRESENCE-NOW’ –that will change your life forever!

It will change your limited perspective, to His higher ones and you will be amazed and surprised, what He, is thinking of you! He wants to be in all our seasons, weeks, and days, but especially –your moments!

Mama, we have been given such valuable treasure, so, let’s seek these ‘jewel-moments’ and cherish them for the worth and value, they truly are!

Mama, give Him your honest thoughts, your fears, concerns, and challenges! Take that moment and pour out your heart to Jesus, and you will be surprised how quickly He shares His heart with you!

Mama, fill your home with the atmosphere of love, hope and faith! God is a dreamer, and He wants your home to be filled with His dreams and heaven’s presence!

Expect the miraculous, looking for His signs and wonders!

Mama, this is your moment to spend time with Him!

You will bloom in the desert!

He will pour refreshing water on those dry places!
He will take the pain, confusion and heal your brokenness!
He will encounter you!

He wants to share those intimate moments with you like the Samaritan women at the well! It was during one of her daily 'chore-moments' in which Jesus the Messiah made Himself known to her!
'A moment' –that changed her life forever!

A poem from Father to you!

Mama, stay awhile, our time is now –my dear.
Let my presence touch those weary feet,
upon my truth, I have a treat.

Come taste and see, don't despair,
for my love is upon you in that chair.

The world has crowded in of late,
but you and me we have a date,
breathe within all of me now,
moments of my embrace
I treasure your open face,
be filled with My love and grace,
I am here, stay a while!

A Prophetic Word

I declare more moments are coming to you daily and nightly!
You will have a closer look at Jesus, a closer walk.
You will learn and know His ways, His wisdom.
He will water you moment by moment
like a tender vinedresser.

Isaiah 27:2-3 (NKJV) says,
'In that day sing to her, "A vineyard of red wine!"
I, the Lord, keep it, I water it every moment,
lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day.'

This is an invitation for you today!
Come As You Are!

Come not to the world, come to the Source,
come to Me 'The Living Water.'
Come to Me for Refreshment.

Have your weariness relieved, and your strength renewed.
I will keep you in perfect peace!

Dear Father,

Thank you for this precious one today.
For her commitment to You and her family.
You are delighted in her, and her reward is great!

You stand by her every day and encourage her,
to hand the day over to You, allowing those times of
empowerment and direction to come and revive her!

She hears your words of faith, and her heart
is strengthened by your precious Holy Spirit.

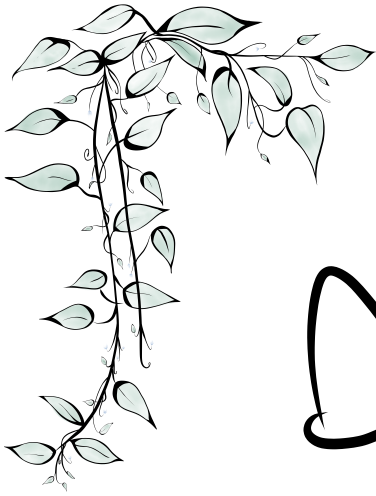
You, Jesus, are her living hope!
You are faithful to every promise and you Lord are eager
to show her what you have prepared –just for her.
Her time is limited, but You are not!

Fill this precious heart today to overflowing
and unveil your sweet truths and let her know
Your love's everlasting embrace.

Amen.

Much Love

Annette xxx



Dear Mama

I'm here to talk to you about that list you keep.

You know the one that's not on the fridge, or in your phone, but in your head?

The #mumguilt list?

The one you start making when the kids are finally in bed and all the things you did wrong in the day start popping up in your head? Or maybe your list compiles throughout the day. Just little thoughts here and there about things you should or shouldn't be doing. Things you wish you did better or wish you'd never done at all.

Don't worry, Mama. I struggle with those lists too sometimes.

But you know what I'm learning? This list breaks The Father's heart. Because those thoughts we have come straight from the one who wants to steal our joy, our confidence and our hope as Mama's. The Enemy.

Jesus died to destroy these lists Mama.

Our Mum Guilt was nailed to the cross with Him. And whenever I'm tempted to engage in these thoughts of failure, I imagine myself looking Jesus in the eyes as He hung there on the cross and saying 'Thanks, but no thanks'. Because when I choose to hold onto guilt and shame, I'm refusing to accept the beautiful gift He died to give me. Freedom and confidence.

You have such a special place in The Father's heart, Mama. You have an incredibly special part to play in His plan to bring redemption and restoration to the world.

Have you ever thought about the fact that Jesus could have entered the world in a million different ways, but He chose the womb of an imperfect woman?

Have you thought about what that says about How much God trusts us as Mamas?

When God chose Mary to carry and nurture Jesus He was sending a message to the world that women were no longer to be cast aside and overlooked as a result of being branded with Eve's mistake. It was the start of Him creating a new covenant and declaring to the world that women were to be honoured, trusted and respected.

You are one of those women, Mama.

The bible says that all of our days were known to Him before any of them came to be (Psalm 139:16). That means before He even placed your child inside your womb or in your care, He knew every single mistake you'd make along the way as you learned to love and nurture them. And He still chose you. He still knew that you were the perfect woman to raise your babies. He trusts you.

You know why?

Because God has His own list for you, Mama. And it has nothing to do with your mistakes or short comings as a mother.

He watches you every day as you serve your family. Every meal you make, every load of laundry, all of the pick-ups and drop-offs, and the countless moments where you put your family's needs before your own. And I am certain that He rejoices over and makes a list of every one of these wonderful acts of worship. These moments bless His heart more than you know.

In Matthew 25 Jesus tells a parable about those who will be openly welcomed by the King into His Kingdom because they gave him food and water, they welcomed Him in, they clothed Him and took care of Him when He was sick and visited Him in prison. When the righteous man fails to recall these interactions, He says to them 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

I often feel God encouraging me with this scripture. Reminding me that in the moments I spend serving my children, who essentially aren't able to do much for me in return, I am also serving Him.

Every meal, every drink, every cuddle, all of the dirty laundry and late nights with sick little ones. I mean, I technically visit my kids while they're in time out so I'm counting that too.

Seriously though, all of these faithful acts of service take on a whole new meaning when we see them through the Father's eyes. I have no

doubt that He will mention them all when we meet Him face to face and says, 'Well done good and faithful servant.'

So, I want you to make a new list Mama. I want you to start to notice all of the little things that you do in the day that are big things to God. And when you make a mistake, which I promise you will, I want to encourage you to throw away any guilt and shame. Remember that God saw it coming and Jesus already paid the price for it.

And remember that God is not a God of discouragement but enCOURAGEment. And when you allow Him to speak to you, you will be filled with enough courage to face another day.

The Father trusts you to be the mother of His little ones. Not despite who you are, but because of who you are.

So, I declare over you today, Mama, that guilt and shame are no longer your portion. That the accuser will no longer have a hold over your mind or your heart. I declare that your children are blessed to call you mum. That as you grow in confidence and wisdom, they will rise up and call you blessed. I release you from the lie that your mistakes are what will shape your children's futures and declare over you the truth that they will be blessed because of the love, sacrifice and faithfulness you sow into them day after day.

Do not be discouraged or dismayed, Mama. Your children don't need a perfect mother. They just need a Mama who will always remind them that they have a perfect Father.

You've got this.

Sincerely,

Sarah
X



Dear Mama

Are you feeling disconnected from the Lord? Are you longing for that extended, uninterrupted quiet time you had with Him prior to having little ones? Do you feel guilty because you feel like your time is divided and you're not getting the same quality time with Him as before?

Perhaps you recently had a baby and wondering how you can connect and have intimacy with Him in the midst of nursing, changing diapers and being sleep deprived.

Maybe you have been making your best effort to rise early in the morning before your little ones wake up but somehow it seems they have 'mummy radar' and wake up before they should, to find you in your secret place. You were so proud of yourself for waking up early until they came stumbling half-asleep into your space.

Do you feel frustrated or defeated when that happens? Do you give up, get up and move on with your day? If you said yes, then I want to encourage you with this...

The Father knows your season. He blessed you with the gift of children and understands your role and responsibilities as a mother. It is His joy to watch you mother your little ones. He is not frustrated, defeated, disappointed or disconnected from you. He is very present and delights in you.

Though meeting with Him looks a little (or a lot) different in this season, this is a beautiful invitation to encounter Him in different ways. Ask Him, 'Lord, how do you want to meet with me in this season?' While there may be times you get to have that sweet uninterrupted time with Him early in the morning, the Lord wants to show you how to remain connected to Him and have ongoing dialogue with Him throughout the day. That you would know how to abide in Him and encounter Him

even as you nurse, change diapers, wash bottles and dishes, fold little laundry and read bedtime stories.

And on those mornings when they seem to rise earlier than normal and seemingly 'interrupt' your quiet time, don't give into discouragement or defeat. Instead invite them into your secret place. Welcome them and embrace their presence. I have found it is often the Father who is nudging them to wake up and come snuggle up with you to sit in His presence. Hold them and share this moment with them. Continue to pray, worship and talk to the Lord for this is how they will see what it looks like to meet with the Father in the secret place. And if you're in a season of nursing then I encourage you to lean into Him with praise and worship in those moments when you're nursing your baby. As you nurse and pray in those night time hours you will experience a new level of intimacy with Him you never knew was possible!

Father, I pray for this incredible mama nursing babies and raising children who longs to connect with you. Show her what communion and connection with you looks like in this season of 'mummying'. I pray she would experience Your presence in different and unexpected ways. Gently remind her you have not and will never leave her nor forsake her. You are right there with her in the midst of diapers, bottles, dishes, laundry, playtime and all things she does. Let your glorious face shine upon her in such a way that she would feel your pleasure over her.

Father, I thank you that you delight in her and the way she cares for and nurtures her little ones. Thank you that she does not need to strive to please You or meet with You. You are already pleased and you're already present.

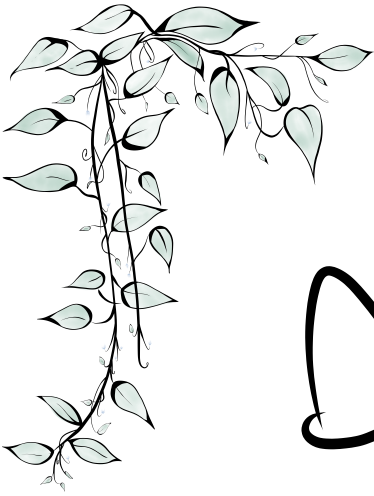
Father, I sense your joy and excitement to encounter her in new ways. You are eager to reveal a different facet of Your nature which she has not experienced or seen before becoming a mother. Thank you Father for loving and nurturing her as she is loving and nurturing her children. I pray she would experience your constant wrap-around presence and be pleasantly surprised at how you meet her in the mundane tasks. May she know how deeply loved she is by you. In Jesus Name I pray, Amen.

Lily

'Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.' (Psalm 127:3 AMPC)

'Children are God's love-gift; they are heaven's generous reward.'
(Psalm 127:3 TPT)

'It is the Lord Who goes before you; He will [march] with you; He will not fail you or let you go or forsake you; [let there be no cowardice or flinching, but] fear not, neither become broken [in spirit—depressed, dismayed, and unnerved with alarm].' (Deuteronomy 31:8 AMPC)



Dear Mama

Being a Mama is a whisper in eternity, but it is an eternity of influence for your children and their children. When Jesus spoke of us doing Greater Things than Him, I believe being a Mama is one of those things. It is such a time to plant seeds of grace, hope, resilience, acceptance, value and safety into the next generation. But where do you get those seeds to pass on if you did not receive them for yourself? How do you make a change for your little ones when you received the opposite of what you want to pass on? I have discovered, through making my own mistakes, ways to support you to make better choices or to forgive yourself for the choices you have made.

There is such a thing as being a 'good enough' parent. We do the best we can with what we know at the time. However, since children do not come with a manual, we learn on the job. We experiment with the first child, soften with the second and try to keep up with the third. But what if your focus started as, "I don't want to be my mother"? Then we try to do things differently. But in times of stress, we might go back to what we knew.

Dear One, you were a little one once. You deserved to be loved, valued and kept safe. There may be part of you that is still longing to feel loved, to feel like you are enough, to feel like your voice matters, or to feel safe in relationships. This may be where you began your parenting journey, trying to give what you did not receive. But when you did not have answers, you turned to other people's expectations to tell you what to do. This poured on the 'mother guilt' and made everything worse. This was not God's design for you.

Precious One, what happened to you was not your fault. Nothing you or anyone else ever did to you can disqualify you from God's love. Remember the experience of the first time you held your little one, before thinking 'what do I do now?' Remember the feelings of awe at

what a miracle they are. That feeling comes from the One who made us. He looks at you that way. Oh, nothing can separate you from His love.

His love for us never changes. Even if you did not receive that kind of love from human parents for whatever reason, you can learn to love as you are loved by Him. Jesus tells us to 'love others as we love ourselves.' Oh my goodness! I think He knew we would have trouble with loving ourselves, so He changed it a few verses later to 'love others as I have loved you.' He did not change His mind. He is describing how to love yourself by giving you an example. So how does He love you? Have you noticed?

'He loved us long before we loved him,' according to 1 John chapter 4. Here, it says that God is love. The Passion Translation says, 'Delightfully loved ones, if he loved us with such tremendous love, then 'loving one another' should be our way of life!' It goes on to say, 'we have come into an intimate experience with God's love, and we trust in the love he has for us.' This sounds like we are invited to live from an intimate relationship with our trustworthy God.

In verse 17 of 1 John 4 we are reminded, 'By living in God, love has been brought to its full expression in us so that we may fearlessly face the day of judgment, because all that Jesus now is, so are we in this world.' Think about all Jesus is now, not 'was.' Because of Grace, He is pure and holy, seated in Heaven and glorified, according to Brian Simmons' notes. Can you receive this for yourself? Can you be loved with Grace and complete glorified acceptance? Verse 17 says we are loved this way. In living from an intimate relationship with our Father we can find how to love and be loved.

Beloved, in His love, there is no fear. Yet, He created you with the ability to feel fear so that you can notice danger and keep yourself safe. Your inner little one has felt fear of relationships so she could keep you safe because they were not safe for her. It is through a safe relationship with our Father that you will find love and healing for your little one.

He loves you despite all of your wounds. By His wounds, you were healed. He can use your wounds to bring life too. He came to 'heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for captives, and release from darkness for prisoners.' Can you connect with these words from Isaiah 61? Because you are also here to do the same for yourself and others, even your children.

He empowers you to 'restore the places long devastated for generations.' You are the one to break the chain of devastation within your family line. You are going to do this by learning to love yourself as He loves you.

Remember the little one inside you? She is the one who needs to be seen, valued and loved by you with grace and acceptance. This is loving yourself. It is common to be told to cut off or pray away this part of us that has been carrying so much pain, shame and disgrace. But as you come into your identity of being royalty in God's Kingdom you will find the truth. Isaiah 61:7 says, 'Instead of your shame you will receive a double portion and instead of disgrace you will rejoice in your inheritance. And so you will inherit a double portion in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours.' He does not cut that part of you off. He loves all parts of you with grace and acceptance. He is calling you to love the little one inside you the way He does.

You needed love then and she has been holding onto that need your whole life. It turned into shame as she started wondering if maybe she is unlovable. Maybe she is expecting too much of you, God, and everyone else. But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me.' The little one inside you is one of those children. She is stuck in her pain and may not know that you continued to grow up, hold a job, give birth to your children, or meet Jesus' love. She only knows that she needs to work hard to be safe and survive. What would it be like to have compassion for your inner little one? She has worked very hard to keep you safe from pain. Remember, she is only young.

It is almost like part of you got stuck in fear and pain at a very early age. She learned that people cannot be trusted. She even struggles to trust you. So sometimes it may feel like you have a battle going on inside of you. Part of you wants to be loved and so reaches out to people. But that part learned early that people who are supposed to love you cannot be trusted with your heart or body. So, when people come close, part of you gets scared and pushes them away. It has felt like a struggle. Even loving your children has had its ups and downs.

Oh, dear One, you are the only one now who can love your inner little one in a way that helps her feel heard, seen, valued, and safe. She needs her needs met, still. She is a young part of you. Can you sense her? You have felt her fear before. Are you able to see her as the young scared little one that she is? Are you able to forgive her? Are you willing to introduce her to Jesus and love her as He loves you?

You have sensed her. You are now aware of her. When she tries to throw a tantrum, as children do, you have an opportunity to help her feel safe. As you practice noticing when she is scared, you will develop space to pause and make choices rather than joining her fear and tantrums.

As she learns to trust your grace and acceptance for her, you will begin to feel more whole. You will begin to experience genuine compassion for yourself. You have needed this your whole life. You can love yourself completely with no more shame or disgrace.

Isaiah 61 goes on to express how your descendants will be known among the nations and your offspring will be known among people. Can you imagine how being a Mama who feels completely loved and no longer carries shame or disgrace will affect your children? It says, 'All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed.' They will gain the ability to love themselves the way you love them, with grace and acceptance. Then they will love others in the same way.

Do you remember when Jesus said, 'It is finished.' At that point, the New Covenant was sealed with His grace and acceptance of you. He has given you the ability to love yourself and 'others as a grateful response to the love He first demonstrated to us.' This is no longer head knowledge. Your heart is seen, Mama. He knows you need wholeness and love. He is safely wooing you to His heart.

In Song of Songs Chapter 2, the Bridegroom-King says, 'Arise, my dearest. Hurry, my darling. Come away with me! I have come as you have asked to draw you to my heart and lead you out. For now is the time, my beautiful one. The season has changed, the bondage of your barren winter has ended, and the season of hiding is over and gone.' He finishes with, 'We will do it together.' Can you see this intimate relationship is where you will receive the seeds to pass on to your children?

Delightfully loved one, when you look at your children can you see your inner little one? Can you permit yourself to play as a child with your little ones? As your love grows in grace and acceptance your little ones will respond. Your relationships will grow.

Your heart is asking, 'what about my little ones who are grown up already?' The ones who grew up through your parenting in confusion and stress? The ones who are now struggling with relationships

themselves? First of all, go back to the beginning. You could only give what you had received. Can you offer yourself forgiveness through the grace and acceptance that Jesus gives you? Then can you offer it to your grown-up little ones? They still have the same need to be loved inside of them, just as you do. It may take a while but keep offering grace and acceptance. Their story is not finished yet, just as yours is not finished. Can you receive that? Together you will break the chains of the past generations. There is always hope in love.

Our Bridegroom-King is asking you to arise and come away with Him. He will do this journey with you. Grace and acceptance for yourself will bring more awareness of others' needs for the same. 1 John 4 reminds us, 'Everyone who loves is fathered by God and experiences an intimate knowledge of him.' Are you willing to step out and allow yourself to be re-parented by God so you can re-parent your inner little one and then your children of all ages? You are not alone. You can pass on these Greater Things because you are present with the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in an intimate relationship.

In Grace and Acceptance,

Trish Beckham



Dear Mama

I see you. He sees you. The juggle. The overwhelming feelings. Creative vision explodes within you with intensity—you can barely contain the desire to do something great for His glory. It's not your dream; it's His. But the hustle and bustle of mum life and the pressure to get it all done make the dream feel like a fairy tale. Yet, like an eagle who yearly builds her nest hoping for new birth, an innate compelling drives you against all odds. You will not quit or give up; you are made for this.

I see you in that quiet spot where you grasp your hope. Is it the bathroom, the shower, the minivan, or the actual closet? Moments of silence are like a cool waterfall to your soul, and you begin to dream with Him. You quickly grasp pen and journal, and you write the dream. You begin to pray, process, plan, and paint the picture He is giving you ... when suddenly a crash, shouts, and rivalry between siblings explode from the next room. You hear footsteps, and a little voice gets louder; the silence fades. "Mama, Mama, where are you?" Tears fall, theirs and yours. Creative explosions, the tangible presence of God, big dreams, and plans seem to scatter from your soul as you hurry from your split second of silence to referee Tiny Human World War 1,345,098 and clean up the broken item of the day. I get you. I am living this too. Could it be that you aren't just building another empty nest? Maybe you are building history with God?

Peace to Your Soul!

He is the God who dreams and the God who sees! He made you, and within your soul is His glory. You are His tabernacle, the place where He has made His dwelling. Anything you desire when you seek His heart is executed with Him. You are a co-labourer and co-heir with Christ, beautiful daughter. This season of motherhood is not a distraction; it is a time of sharpening your inner sword to be strong in battle. There is an increase of grace upon the Mama whose eyes are on the Lord

and tending to His little children.

Consider how Jesus invited Peter to shepherd after his denial.

‘Then Jesus asked him again, “Peter, son of Jonah, do you have great affection for me?”

Peter was saddened by being asked the third time and said, “My Lord, you know everything. You know that I burn with love for you!”

Jesus replied, “Then feed my lambs!” (John 21:16-18 TPT)

Beloved, through the mess, frustrations, and even failures, you are burning with passion in your heart for Him when you dream with Him and are genuinely feeding His lambs. This season is an invitation into more revelation of His grace, mercy, and love as you learn to walk with Him in the whirlwind.

Walking with God

You are the apple of His eye, created to walk in tandem with Him. He made us human beings, not mere human doings. Yes, I know, Mama, stuff must be done; there is no way around it. I am sharing in this moment an unveiling of how to work as you are seated with Him. Let the spinning plates crash to the floor and hear me out. There will be many more plates to spin, but He is an expert at cleaning up broken things. Jesus died to restore peace, to extend an abundant life of wonder with Him, eternally. The dream is wonder, abundance, peace, rest, and exhilaration in being in Him, and to give that away. He is not a fairy tale God. Eternity is now, and it’s forever yours. Oh, how I wish we could grasp the simplicity of walking with God and living out eternity now. The weight of the world would disappear as we are set free to be yoked with our Bridegroom. Connected with Him in the stillness of personal devotion is where creativity flows freely. Rest assured, His presence does not depart when the noise begins. As we walk lockstep with our creator, things become simple. We breathe Him in and we breathe Him out. He is in us, closer than our skin. We have history with Him.

Adam and Eve walked with God in this way, in the cool of the day. Most people think their interaction only happened before they sinned. But God remained intertwined in the day-to-day lives of His son and daughter after they fell. He called out to them as they hid and covered their nakedness (Genesis 3:7-9). God cared for their struggling kids, revealing His mercy and longing to be with them in the dirt, pain, and

chaos of brokenness. He communed with and spoke to Cain before *and after* he killed Able. He loves family. The primary focus of His blood-bought redemption and reconciliation is for us to know Him as our Father. His grace is an empowering gift to aid us to live in the holy wonder of being intertwined with Him forever.

Enoch was a person just like us, living in a fallen world. We read that he 'walked with God, and he was not because God took him' (Genesis 5:24 NASB). Can you imagine what it must have been like to walk with God that closely? I imagine it this way: One day, Enoch and God took a walk, and the conversation became as near as breath; no words were needed, only knowing. Enoch must have been overwhelmed with the glory of God. I'm sure His presence was nearly unbearable. Suddenly he looked around, and there was the throne! He could see the cherubim, the four living creatures, the seraphim, the flashes of lightning, the thundering, the emerald rainbow; and the right hand of the Father, the Son, the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the earth, and the elders casting their crowns amid the worship of the ages. Time was unending, The beginning and the end was known, the Alpha and the Omega revealed. Yes, beloved, before the cross, all of this existed and still does exist. Enoch, in an instant, understood eternal realities in the One who was, is, and is to come. He knew what Eden and the new Jerusalem were like at that exact moment. This man, like us, walked with God and is a prophetic sign and wonder of the redeemed.

In response to Enoch's desire to walk with God, God prevented him from tasting death. God just took him up instead. 'By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God.' (Hebrews 11:5)

Mama, you are like a cup continuously being filled with His presence. You have greater access to journeying with God than Enoch. You can apply the blood of Jesus to your life and boldly come to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and help in a time of need (see Hebrews 4:16). Because of the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, you can walk with God from the inside out. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit. His breath is your breath.

In Christ, death is defeated for all who believe. We are aliens in this land and His ambassadors—on a mission to reveal Him as Messiah (see 2 Corinthians 5:20). Simply believe because your life depends on it. You may look crazy, but don't you dare hold back talking to Him in all

situations and listening for His response. Don't just read the Scriptures. Let them come alive through you; pray and declare them. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Rise above the noise and warfare and declare that Jesus reigns above it all. Believe every single word of Christ is absolute truth.

Hunger like Enoch to walk with God. In the chaos and in the quiet, know whose daughter you are.

When you begin to live this way, you will get pushback. Bleed love, like Jesus on the cross, when you are attacked. Be quick to forgive, and disagree with the accuser—Satan, who loses (see Revelation 12:10). You are ascending above it all and learning your heritage in Christ (see Ephesian 2:6; Colossians 1:2). This lifestyle keeps your heart and hands clean. You will begin to see Him oozing all over your children, your husband, and those around you. Stay lovesick and pure in your heart. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.' (Matthew 5:8 NIV)

Build History with God

The daily journey of raw conversations, weak prayers, tiny teachings of His goodness, and benchmark moments with God build history between you and Him. Years of abiding in Him this way breaks new ground for your family line. I'm talking generations that are blessed when we walk out our story with the author and finisher of our faith.

Mary, out of whom Jesus cast seven demons, also walked with the Lord. She was first to see Him after His resurrection and first to be commissioned by Him as a trumpeter of the message 'He has risen!' to the others. She knew Jesus deeply in His life, death, and now His resurrection. Following her declaration, He appeared to the unbelieving disciples in His resurrected body, giving an interwoven mandate to preach the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils as a co-mission to them and us; revealing that He is indeed with us always (Mark 16:12–20).

Mary had history with Jesus. Her walk with Him was not haphazard. Her first introduction to the holy Man was through others accusing her of great sin. From the point of her deliverance onward, this redeemed woman broke every cultural law. Women were not allowed to be disciples, much less women like her. But nothing could keep her from being near Him. She was slandered, accused, and berated, but she had lovesick grit.

She was found pouring out her alabaster flask of oil on Him in the presence of disciples and men who shamed her. She never raised her voice in defence of herself. Jesus rose to her cause and defended her every time.

I've been to the place in Israel where historians suppose the events of John 12 transpired. The town is named after her—Magdala. I was caught up in a vision there. I saw her pressing through the crowd of men. She fell to her knees, broke her box, intensely wept as she caught a prophetic glimpse of His crucifixion. The men mocked her, and Judas was angered with Jesus. She didn't lose her gaze. She was transfixed, interceding, preparing Him for His burial, but at the same time not fully understanding why she was so compelled to abandon all. In this vision, the Lord Jesus looked at me and said, 'Tammie, what do you want?' I wept intensely and answered, 'I just want you.'

Mary Magdalene's story is to this day preached in pulpits, written about in books, and seen in movies, and it will forever be told. *But she wasn't building a ministry with Jesus; she was building a life with Him.* So often, we romanticise people like these as though they were immortal. But they are just like us—men and women with children, families, in-laws, parents, bills to pay, houses to clean, and trials in life. They had setbacks and failures but lived to abide in Christ, needing grace and His Spirit to keep the faith and finish the race. So often, the people who pioneer pathways to the Lord in our lives are virtually unseen and unrecognised by the masses. I bet you can list two or three unsung heroes right now. Though you didn't realise it in the moment, they played a big part in cutting the spiritual trail you walk on today.

David was an unsung hero for most of his life but, indeed, a massive pioneer in the eyes of heaven. Though a spiritual giant to us, he was a minor king in his day. David took five small stones, one slingshot, and history with God to the battlefield against Goliath. His history before Goliath was tending stinky sheep while alone in the field with God and killing the odd lion or bear. He accredited his victory to walking with God (1 Samuel 14:34-37). We can't say for sure whether he was forgotten, dismissed, or overlooked when the prophet Samuel visited his home to anoint a young man to succeed Saul as king, but what we do know is that God saw him and caused the prophet to correct his father, Jesse, and send for him. Pioneer Mama, He is the God who sees you. God cannot overlook you. Heaven truly knows the trail you are cutting and ploughing for your children and others.

When David walked out on the battlefield, he tuned out all accusations

and mocking. He kept his gaze on the One he had history with. He made a declaration to the unseen forces of darkness as well as the arrogant giant:

'You come at me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This is the day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, the whole world will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves, for the battle is the Lords, and He will give all of you into our hands.' (1 Samuel 14:45-47)

We know the story. David prophesied, slung the slingshot, and the word came to pass. He returned home to his father and the stinky sheep, with dirty dishes to wash and a historic victory.

We build history with God in the little things and big. Some moments alter our lives when we know He was there with us, and we were with Him. Stop for a moment and ask Holy Spirit to cause you to remember a time when He changed the course of your life. Write it down. Soak it in. You are building an altar—like the Israelites did—to remember when God met with you. Now ask Him to show you five little moments in the past week or two when you were led by Him and didn't realise it. You are correct in saying that you were created for more. You were made for walking with Him. He saw you before He formed you. He sees you now. He also sees your last breath. Like Mary, Enoch, David, and ones whose names we don't know, you are building history with God. The road you are cutting with Him will transform your entire family line. As you journey onward with Him, you will wake up one day and see those little moments pioneered extensive trails. You didn't come up with this; He did. He is not slow in His coming. He is bringing the dream to pass.

Tammie Southerland



Dear Mama

You are doing better than you think.

I know, you lay your head down at night counting the many ways you failed that day, all the times you lost your cool, the moments you missed with your little ones, the ways in which you let yourself and your children down. But you are doing better than you think.

I know, you feel the guilt creeping up inside of you, the lies trying to overpower you, the internal struggle trying to conquer you. But you are doing better than you think.

I know, you wonder why it's so hard sometimes. Why can't motherhood be the beautiful, joyful, peaceful journey you always imagined it to be? Why can't your children just understand that you love them so much, that you've got their best interests at heart, that you are doing everything you can to protect them and keep them safe, that you believe in them and want the very best for them? But you are doing better than you think.

I know, you stress about their safety. You pray protection over them. You ask Him to send His angels to watch over, to keep safe, to guard them and prevent them from accidents, illnesses, mistakes and misfortunes. When they are not with you, you feel like a little bit of your own heart is missing and have to find the courage to lengthen the chord and bond as they grow older and more independent. But you are doing better than you think.

I know, you compare yourself to that 'perfect' mother. The one who's children are obedient 100% of the time, the one who's house is impeccable, who never looks dishevelled or a hot mess, who does it all, is it all, encompasses it all, achieves it all and takes it all in her stride without a problem in the world. My dear sister, please know,

she is a figment of your imagination. And you are doing better than you think.

I know, dear Mama, you worry about your children day in and day out. Their salvation, their education, their friendships and relationships, their futures, their health and well-being, their hearts and heaviness, their pain and anguish, their souls and spirits. But you are not called to control, you are created to trust—to trust in God, to entrust them into His hands, His plans, His purposes, His sovereignty. Let go of the need to cling tightly to their lives and loosen your grip as you lay them at the feet of the Lord, every day. Only He can save them, only He can truly lead them through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, only He can transform them through His power and presence at work in their life. Let go and know, that you are doing better than you think.

I know, that you struggle sometimes with the shame that tries to clutch at your throat and hold you tightly until you can't breathe. If you truly understood and believed that you are doing better than you think, that shame would run from you, scared of the woman that you really are, arising in authority, stepping into her identity and embracing her role as protector, defender, empowerer, discipler, teacher and equipper. Don't for a minute allow those lies to wrap themselves around you. When you feel the enemy creeping in, sneaking up to your side, whispering in your ear that you are not doing a good enough job of mothering, rebuke him in an instant and watch him flee. Rise up in the truth of who Jesus says you are and realise, you are doing better than you think.

Dear Mama, you truly are doing a better job at this motherhood gig than you will ever realise. Your children love you, your children rely on you, your children look to you. They don't see the struggling mother, or your weaknesses and failures, they don't see the exhausted, tired woman you feel like you are. They see their beautiful mother. They see their radiant protector. They see their strong shelter and place of safety and security. They see the Lord in you and through you, because you reflect all that He is to you.

Each and every day, in every moment, as you tenderly love and lead them, shape and mould them, teach and correct them, strengthen and empower them, you are showing them the heart of the Father. You are giving them an example of the love of God. You are modelling to them your reliance upon Him and *His* strength and empowerment in your life. Every time you ask your children for forgiveness, you are revealing to them the mercy and grace of our generous God.

Your weakness is your beauty.

Your weakness is your strength.

You are beautiful in their eyes and you are strong in His.

The Father whispers to your soul...

'My grace is always more than enough for you and my power finds its full expression through your weakness.' (2 Corinthians 12:9 TPT)

For in your weakness you are strong, as your weakness becomes a portal to God's power (2 Corinthians 12:10 TPT). His grace is all you need. His kindness and mercy is more than enough. His power is being perfected *in* your weakness. When you feel weak, that is when you can draw upon the endless strength of God, when you feel like you're failing is when you can access His power, when you feel like you've fallen so short, only then you can receive His abundant grace.

You were never called to be that perfect mother. You were never created to do it all. But He calls you day by day to become more and more dependent on Him. He asks you to empty yourself of yourself and clothe yourself with Jesus. By embracing your weakness you are strengthened in His power. By letting go of control you are released into the security of surrender. By laying those beautiful children upon the alter, His fire will fall down and purify your heart and life, purging, pruning and polishing you to be a pillar in your home, His Kingdom and this world.

Dear Mama, you truly are doing better than you think. Let go and live freely in Him.

Lots of love,
your sister in Christ,

Nat xxx



Dear Mama

'And as Jesus rose up out of the water, the heavenly realm opened up over him and he saw the Holy Spirit descend out of the heavens and rest upon him in the form of a dove. Then suddenly the voice of the Father shouted from the sky, saying, "This is my Son—the Beloved! My greatest delight is in him."'

Matthew 3:16-17 (TPT)

I'll never forget where I was standing when I heard the voice of the Father speak so plainly, yet so lovingly to my heart. The phrase was simple and to the point. Not overly complicated, yet wonderfully complex in its meaning. He said simply, "I miss you being a child." With this one utterance, something within my weary heart let out a massive sigh of relief and there was nothing I could do to stop the tears that followed. Have you ever had a moment like that, dear Mama? The moments where the Father speaks one word to your heart and in an instant every wall, barrier, and barricade simply moves aside? The One who made your heart touches right to its core. In an instant, I could feel the weight that I had carried the past few years as a wife, as a mother of four beautiful children, and as His daughter.

Let me rewind and explain to you what I mean when I talk about the weight of the past few years. I used to describe 2018 to 2019 as the year of the great undoing, or unravelling. In the natural, my marriage was rocky and in a world of hurt. I had allowed close family relationships to cross boundaries far beyond health and freedom impacting many other areas of life. I was a mess of unhealed woundings and broken patterns that resulted from those unhealed places. I lived in, and responded to my world around me out of these places of hurt. I see now the dear Mama who thought she had to hold it all, know all of the answers, and who struggled deeply with 'not knowing' was desperate for relief.

In the midst of all of this, our daughter Ava was struggling in a

big way. Most days were a massive battle just to get her to eat. Her emotions and ability to regulate herself was extremely volatile. We could barely understand her speech leading to incredible amounts of frustration for all of us. Some nights my husband would sit next to her bed and pray for hours, while I rocked our youngest child in the room next to her. I would sit and pray, watching him slouched on the floor next to her bed, gently holding her hand while she sobbed until some measure of peace would overtake her and she would sleep. We made a doctor's appointment and prayed. I remember sitting on the bench in the exam room. I remember hearing words from the doctor, a flood of questions, and trying desperately to make sense of what was being said. This wasn't going to be a "routine appointment." Our concerns were real, and honestly, I felt absolute panic. The doctor told us that he thought she was fighting a neuroimmune condition called PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neurological Disorder After Strep). And that, dear Mama, became the moment I could no longer hide from my own heart. Our family doctor gently touched my shoulder and said, "Hey, it's okay. She's safe here and she's okay." In that moment my brain caught up with the world around me, and I realised that something big was going on and I was simply. not. okay. Where are the dear Mama's supposed to go when they're not okay? I was about to find out. My deep dive into the heart of the Father had been given one giant shove off the diving board and into the deep end. And so began our healing walk with our little girl. My own healing walk as her dear Mama had also begun.

Now, back to the father's whisper about being a child. So, there I was. Standing in my bedroom with tears streaming down my cheeks, which is a really nice way of saying I was ugly crying in a pile of laundry. As I sat with the thought that the Father would miss me being a child, my questions only grew more intense. I began to ask myself things like "Have I been so busy being a parent that I forgot that I'm His child? What have I picked up that isn't mine to carry or hold?" All of those are great questions, but the one thing that stood out to me the most was this. There is something about ME embracing being HIS child that delights HIS heart. When I am resting in the place of being His child, He gets to be to me the very name that He sent his Son to reveal to the world. Father.

In the battles of life that had come to my door, I had to learn how to soldier on as so many of us have. I and we often 'adult' our way through much of this mothering journey. There's not necessarily anything 'wrong' with that, dear Mama. Someone has to clean the vomit at 2 am and speak life into little hearts along the way. But my

operating system of feeling like I had to know every answer, handle every challenge perfectly, and always know exactly what to do- well, it flat out wasn't working. In fact, it had been keeping me from receiving the rest I needed to carry me along the way. There is much that is unseen in the realm of motherhood. The laughter, the sleepless nights, the joy, the tears. Many battles are fought for and within the unseen places of a mother's heart. Of my heart. Of your heart. What I began to see as I sat with these questions, dear Mama, is the importance of remembering that I am, and always will be, His child first. I don't need to have it all figured out. I don't have to battle all on my own strength. I don't have to carry the weight of it all on my shoulders because they've not been designed to carry that sort of weight anyway- only His are. When I allow myself to be his child in the midst of mothering, I am allowing the Father to show himself strong on my behalf. I'm allowing Him to be who HE is.

The habit of carrying things that were too heavy for me for far too long was something I learned early in life. It is something that I am now getting the joy of unlearning as he challenges me to remember that He is Father, and I am his beloved child. I'd like to tell you, dear Mama, that this journey back to the heart of being His child first has been one of ease and delight, but that's not always the way these things work.

Here's an example of the battle to remain His child in the midst of mothering. On Friday's our family goes to a homeschool co-op where we gather together to learn from other talented teachers and children in our area. Our amazing Ava has joined in with us this year, and although the gap between her skills and the skills of children her age is wide, her desire to join and participate is inspiring. Some days, many days, she will meet her threshold and fatigue will begin to take over. This particular Friday was no different. I could tell she was right on the edge of a massive meltdown, but I noticed it just a bit too late. I escorted my tired, crying, sometimes screaming child out the back of the church building and found a spot near the playground to sit for a minute. The concrete was wet with rain and the playground was locked. While I could hear the cars driving past and the sounds of children from inside the building, it felt very lonely. I sat myself on the wet concrete and invited my precious girl to rest in my lap. I held my growing 9 year old as best I could, hugged and comforted her until she had quieted. As things settled, I felt the deep ache coming from my own heart. I ached for her. I ached to see His fullness for her fully manifested. Behind my sunglasses came tears that were fighting to hold onto faith and hope. I remember telling the Father that I know

He's always with me and he won't ever leave me, but I really needed to see Him in that moment. I needed to lean into His arms for a while. Silence. I hugged my girl and waited. A moment later, I glanced to the top of the lamp post that was just a few feet away. A beautiful dove landed right atop the light. It stood there staring down at me while I sat on the wet ground, staring up at it. Neither one of us moved. The story of Jesus' baptism and the Holy Spirit descending upon him in the form of a dove came to my mind. I thought of how the voice of the Father boomed out over Jesus with a declaration of, ""This is my Son—the Beloved! My greatest delight is in him." (Matthew 3:17 TP)."" My heart knew that the heart of my Father in heaven was declaring delight and daughtership over both us in that wet, empty parking lot. In the midst of the tears and ache, the Father was there with us. He was and is watching and I knew I could lean my dear Mama heart deeper into the heart of my Father. I didn't need to be the strongest one at that moment. I didn't need to know exactly what to do. I could follow the Father's peace and his presence. I could reach out as His child and freely take from the strength, peace, and presence of my Father and THAT delighted HIS heart.

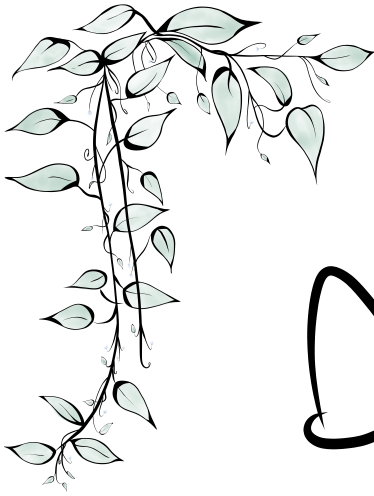
Dear Mama...No matter if you're quietly crying while holding your screaming child in the parking lot behind a church, or dancing and singing his praises during moments of breakthrough, the Father is always there in the midst of mothering. His Father's heart rejoices to fill us with whatever we need so that we can pour out the delight of childhood onto our own children. The strong Father. The loving Father. The faithful Father. He is always ready. Ready to let us cry tears of joy or grief until His robes are soaked with tears and snot. He remains ready to speak out HOPE that will put to shame any fear that would try to stalk in the darkness. He's also ready to remind us when it's time to rest, and when it's time to let our feet remind us that they still know how to dance in the midst of challenge and battle. He has already won the victory for us and our children, dear Mama. His heart is delighted and our own hearts are strengthened when we freely receive him as HE is, Father. So, while you are smack in the middle of this wild and incredible journey of mothering the beautiful humans who He has entrusted to your care, you'll always be, first and foremost, His child.

In Grace,

Courtney

Father,

Thank you for the heart of the dear Mama that is sitting in front of you right this very moment. Fill her again with the love, delight, and revelation that being your child is the best gift she can give you. Father, thank you for declaring "This is my beloved, daughter! I am well pleased with her! She is my delight!" over this dear mama every minute of every part of her day. Father, bless her heart so that as she comes to you as your daughter that she will receive your love, wisdom, compassion, and peace that she needs to guide and love the children that you have put into her care- spiritual and physical sons and daughters. Wrap her in your arms, cover her in your robe of victory, and fill her with the oil of your joy. Hold her close as she rests in your strong arms. In Jesus' mighty name we pray, Amen.



Dear Mama

Do you ever feel like this parenting journey has introduced you to fear and anxiety like never before? Pregnancy is a time of incredible excitement and expectation. It all culminates into this incredible moment where they hand you the most perfect, priceless, and helpless little baby and you feel a love like never before. Then they send you home with this priceless gift and suddenly you're 100% responsible for making sure they're safe, loved, successful, healthy, and able to function in a big and messy world. No pressure right?

This, for me, was when the fear began. And it went on to become one of my biggest battles in motherhood.

And the thing about fear is, it will try to work its way into every single moment of your day.

From stressing over whether my newborn was getting enough milk, to worrying about whether they were walking and talking on time. Then there's the fear around them getting injured or having to face serious illness. Shall we mention their friendships, futures, and faith while we're at it? My heart's starting to race just writing all of this.

Don't get me wrong, having children has brought so much love, joy, fulfillment, and purpose into my life. But the enemy has tried to rob all of that from me time and time again by using thoughts, circumstances, and sometimes even the words of others to create fear in my mama heart. However, thankfully God has taught me so much about how to find victory in this area and I would love to share a couple of my thoughts with you.

Firstly, don't google anything. Okay? Don't do it. Do not Google it. I'm kind of kidding but I'm also deadly serious. Just trust me. If you're unsure, ask a professional. A living, breathing person whose sole purpose in life is not to terrify you. Google will not ease your fears, it will only increase them. Trust me, I learned the hard way!

Okay, now that's out of the way, the rest of my thoughts...

I always thought that the opposite of fear was courage, but when I think about the kind of fear I've experienced as a mama, I've learned that the opposite of fear has actually become TRUST.

I'll never forget the night I was sitting and feeding my firstborn when she was about 6 months old. Out of nowhere I suddenly felt this intense fear come over me and all I could think about was the fact that one day she'd be old enough to go wherever she wants, with whoever she wants, and I would have absolutely no control over her safety. Talk about getting a little ahead of myself! Then all of the possible scenarios that could ever go wrong in her life began to race through my head and all I could think about was how devastated I would be if anything ever happened to her.

Then I heard the voice of God speak so powerfully to my Spirit and say 'Sarah, I have seen her life, from the beginning to the end. I know the number of her days and every single challenge she will ever face. No amount of fear or worry is going to change any of it. I just need you to love her, pray for her and protect her as best you can. Then trust me with the rest.'

Suddenly I felt like a huge weight of responsibility had been lifted off my shoulders. You see Mama, we don't need to be our children's superhuman guardian angels. We just need to love them hard (which I know you already do), pray for them often, seek God's wisdom and then leave every fear and worry that tries to steal our peace at the foot of the cross and say 'I trust you, Father.'

Because the truth is, no matter how much love you have for your kids as their Mama, it will never even come close to the love that God has for them as their Father. And they will always be much safer in His hands than in yours. Every time you pray and intercede for them, you are handing them back to Him and trusting in His plan for their life, rather than your own.

Now, I wish I could tell you that this would mean that they will forever be protected and prosperous, but even with all of the love and prayer that we invest into our children, they are still going to endure pain and hardship. And it's a bitter pill to swallow. Trust me, I know. My children have already faced way more trauma, challenges, and heartache than I would have liked them to already in their little lives.

But you know what Mama? God has been so incredibly wonderful to

us through it all.

The moments when my heart felt like it would explode from fear, worry, or pain, I've felt comfort from The Father like no other time in my life.

I remember another night I'd been walking one of my kids through something really tough and I was pacing back and forth in their bedroom in a state of frustration. I was half praying, half giving God a piece of my mind (It's okay. He knows I'm a little feisty sometimes). I was angry and asking Him why He would allow my child to endure any kind of suffering. I'll never forget the moment He stopped me in my tracks and said 'Sarah, this child was mine first. I know you're angry, but I want you to know that you can't even begin to imagine the way my heart aches and the anger I feel over what the enemy has tried to steal from them. I promise you this, I will spend the rest of their lives making the enemy pay for picking on your little one. Every single thing that he has tried to steal I will repay 100 fold by pouring out more favour, blessings, grace, and mercy than you can ever imagine. This is not their story. I will have the last word.' The issue wasn't fear. It was trust. I'd forgotten to trust in the love God had for my children. In the midst of my pain as a mama, I'd forgotten to trust Him as their Father.

Then the tears came. My heart softened and I realised my anger was actually just fear. Fear for my child's future and wellbeing. Fear that came from feeling out of control. And as I lay there with tears streaming down my face God showed me a picture of Him, as The Lion of Judah, roaring over me and my family. Declaring war on the enemy for every assignment He ever tries to bring against us. I hold onto that picture still to this day when fear tries to rear its ugly head (which it still does).

Jesus took all of your fears to the cross with Him Mama. He died so that you and your children could have full access to His love in the best and the hardest times of your life. He walked out of that tomb with you on His heart and your freedom from this fear in His hands. That is His portion for you.

So, I want you to see that Lion roaring over you today Mama. The Lion of Judah is inviting you to rest at His feet with all of your fear, worry, anxiety, and pain. As you do, He will let out a mighty roar over you and your family and His perfect love will drive out every ounce of fear that has been holding you captive.

You can trust Him, Mama. You don't always need to feel courageous.

This parenting gig can be scary sometimes, but I pray that you might learn to trust Him always. In every season and circumstance that you and your children will ever face.

I encourage you to lay fear down at His feet and allow Him to hold you and your little ones close as He roars in the face of the enemy.

He gave you these children because He trusts you, Mama. Now He's gently asking for you to trust Him too.

God bless you.

Sincerely,

Sarah
X



Dear Mama

I want to ask you a question today—how is your heart going? I want to talk to you about the heart room. You know, that place where the real stuff of life happens. The place where you dream, where you feel, where you hurt, where you laugh, where you cry. The place where the authentic, real you live.

It might be a room that is open to all, windows flung open, curtains dancing in the breeze. Or it might be a room where the blinds are drawn tight, and every door closed and latches locked.

You might live so free that people come in and take advantage of the room you have so lovingly created. It's a beautiful room—I can see it now....so many love and feel safe in your heart room. But maybe you have let people in, and they have made a mess and not treated your precious treasures gently?

Or maybe you once were open, but now, no one can get in due to past disappointments and hurts. Even when you are alone with your thoughts, you're not entirely comfortable.

Well, I want to tell you today, Jesus knows your heart. He knows what keeps you open; He knows what keeps you closed and why...

And He knows how much you love your children, and he knows how much you have sacrificed with that Mama love you are known so well for.

And the Lord wants you to know today; HE LOVES YOUR HEART ROOM. He loves that deep part of you where the real you reside. And I see a RENOVATION coming. There are new spaces and places on the inside of you that have not even been discovered yet!

You are going to feel like you have space to breathe, and your Mama's heart is going to be protected by the heart of the Father. And you will be able to live wide open in these new, restful, creative spaces He is preparing for you.

So great ready, because this time, things are going to be different.

I see PILLARS OF STRENGTH holding up glass ceilings that you will eventually breakthrough. I see sofas where you can REST, filled with His feathers of PROTECTION. I see a SPIRIT WIND blowing through open windows as THE SON shines through. A place where the RARIFIED AIR OF HEAVEN goes deep into your lungs, cleansing you from the inside out!

Your heart is getting a remodelling, and it's going to be glorious.

So, hold on, don't give up, the breakthrough is coming, it is coming, it is coming!

**NOT BY MIGHT, NOT BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT SAYS THE LORD
(Zechariah 4:6)**

Does it feel like you have used all your energy, all your physical strength, all the 'tricks', all the 'I must do' lists to find this secret place? As mamma's, we are pretty good at all of that, hey?

Well, your papa wants you to know that it is by His strength that this work will be done. All you have to do is trust Him, and the deepest recesses of your heart will be renewed.

He wants you to know it's time to stop trying to gain strength on your own. You have done this not to be deceitful or rebellious. You have done this because of shame, because of fear that the Lord would reject you. But you don't need to be perfect to come to Him!

He wants you to know in this very hour, He will NEVER abandon you. He will never hide His face from you. There is nothing that you have done in your past, there is nothing that you have thought in your mind, there is no sin that you may have committed, and there is even no sin that has been committed against you that will ever separate Him or His love from you!

So, I urge you today, my mama friend, to seek Him not just with your

physical strength (He knows you are strong), not just with your mind (He made you brilliant), but with every room of your heart open. Do not hide anything from Him because, in truth, He sees it all and knows it all, yet He will ALWAYS choose to love you. He chooses to look fully upon you only with pride and love. He will hide no part of Himself from you and will embrace you today as you surrender completely and wholly to Him.

So today, my beautiful friend, will you choose to open your heart room to Him?

Get your heart room ready...the King is coming!

THE UPGRADE IS COMING

As you read these words, I see a picture in my mind. I see these words as a letter, written lovingly to you—straight from the Father's heart:

*Dear Mama, I am bringing you into an upgrade
I am renovating you starting from the inside out
I will go into every room of your heart—even the secret ones
And I will clean every corner until the remnants of dust from your
former disappointments are gone.
Can you see me? I am opening every window so the breeze of my
spirit can blow through.
Get ready for the refreshing; I am refurbishing all the worn-out spaces
Know this...as you get older, you will not diminish. Your value will only
increase!
Yes, I am clearing out, but it will not bring decrease
As I take things away—your joy and life will become full
You will not deteriorate. You will be renewed
I want to encourage you—as I tear down the walls
It will feel like I am stripping things back—but do not be discouraged
It is not destruction but restoration
This is not the end
This is not a demolition—this is a renovation.
The upgrade is coming!*

I can't wait to come and visit—you are beautiful, from the inside out!

Roma XX

Jeremiah 29:13 (TPT) 'When you come looking for me, you'll find me.
"Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else, I'll make sure you won't be disappointed." God's Decree.'

Proverbs 8:17 (TPT) 'I will show my love to those who passionately love me.

For they will search and search continually until they find me.'



Dear Mama

My name is Rachael, and I was born and raised on the mission field in Africa, with my family - my Mum and Dad and my two older sisters. We were happily and humbly based in a small copper and nickel mining town called Selebi-Phikwe, found in the 'nose' (far East) of Botswana. In the summer, when the nights were insufferably warm, the comforting sound of fast-spinning ceiling fans would soothe us to sleep, blanket free. And in those sweet, cooler hours, just at dawn, the cicadas would often wake us, rubbing their wings loudly, warming up Creation's choir for the day.

Our large, brick house would still be quiet and dark at that hour, but I remember many mornings climbing out of bed and silently walking down the hallway, in search of a cup of water, and always finding a soft, warm glow shining at the end of the hall. It never surprised me; I always knew where it was coming from. It was the fading light of the small side-table lamp in the lounge, past the dining room. It was there, where my father sat, every morning without fail, still in his sleep-wear, caught up in the Word of God, whispering in prayer.

Though this would have been his daily secret and sacred time with the Lord, he never seemed bothered nor interrupted by my sleepy morning face watching him for a moment from the kitchen door, tasting the peace of His union with Jesus, before greeting him for the day. As I got older and houses changed, that same soft glow of peace and holy order could still be found every morning, from a nook in the house. If we were on holiday, snug in a tiny beach batch somewhere, sometimes even in the middle of the night, I'd wake to find him wearing a camping head lamp, bent over the word at the dining table, reading in the dark.

Dad's fellowship with Jesus never stopped there. Later in the morning, as dishes were returned to the kitchen and we bustled around in our

bedrooms getting dressed for the day, the sound of his deep voice could be heard worshipping loudly while he showered and praising while he dressed. If we happened to cross paths in the hallway at some point in the day, his giant, safe hand would often rest upon my head just for a moment—like a kiss in passing—and as my heart inhaled his affection, my ears would be flooded by the whispering of his prayers in tongues. He lived looking at Jesus and seeing me at the same time.

Mum, being more conservative than Dad by nature, still carried that same spiritual zeal which overflowed into our home. She kept a small devotional next to her bed and, every morning, once showers were done, all the beds were all made, and Dad had headed out to his office, she'd have her bedroom door only slightly ajar and she'd first ponder over the 'Word for the Day' and the scripture within it, before entering into prayer. And oh, how my mother would pray...I would peep my head 'round the door and often find her quietly pacing the carpeted floor at the foot of their bed. I can still picture her fist gently swinging in the air, her prophetic act of warfare as she decreed and declared scripture over people, families, nations, sickness, deception, finances...I can still hear the groan in the spirit that I heard within her bold, yet quiet, prayers and songs.

In the hours after school or on weekends when we were home, Mum would usually have a worship cassette tape playing in the stereo, and the house would be washed with anointed songs from Vineyard, Darlene Zschech, Michael W Smith, Ron Kenoly, Don Moen and many others. The atmosphere she intentionally created in our home let our little frames grow in awareness of His glory. I would lie on the floor in the lounge and tears would trickle down my cheeks as my spirit loved on Jesus, and I learnt what it felt like to simply be in His beauty.

Lately, I've been reflecting more deeply on my childhood memories. I'm now a good thirty years older, married to a beautiful, strong yet tender-hearted man. We are living in Perth, Australia and I now have two children of my own. My son is four, my daughter is two, and I often find myself wondering how on earth my parents did it! Ha!

Truly though, those earlier years of newborn-to-toddlerhood were hard on me. I was in awe and wonder, but struggled with deep fatigue, hormone imbalance, the intensity of foster care (our youngest is ours permanently through foster care), amongst other things. Honestly, I grieved the loss of the longer hours I used to spend alone, just with Jesus (never mind all of my other friends and family!). It's taken me

some time to find my new feet; to figure out the enjoyable, flexible, slower rhythm of motherhood, marriage, friendships, my emotional and physical health, and most valuably: my intimacy with Jesus.

In remembering the ways of my parents, I have gained a simple yet precious revelation. One that I hope will bless you too: I think every parent would agree that, you and I—and all mothers out there, from the moment we went into labour—lost a noticeable amount of *privacy*. Though it's all part of the package, it can feel pretty costly on those extra long days. But I'd like to propose that our privacy, when it comes to loving Jesus, is exactly what He desires us to let go of, little by little, around our children. So, in some ways, It's like we've been set up to succeed! In letting our secret place be more open to our children, we get to teach them *the way* of abiding in Him. We get to normalise in their hearts that we need Him, which is actually perfect since motherhood definitely exposes our need to drink from Him all day!

Don't get me wrong: those alone moments, where we're tucked away in secret, are so precious and valuable to keep. Be it prayers and songs in the middle of the night or reading the Word while Hubby is making the kids their toast for brekky. We find a way, don't we?! But the abiding way is actually the only way us Mamas can do this thing day in and day out with good fruit, right? I am well aware I have to drink Him in many times a day to bear the patience, joy, long-suffering and peace needed to raise my children well. And, by being less secretive about our intimacy with Him, we get to establish in their hearts that living the first commandment is a normal way of life and, from that, all the rest flows.

This will naturally look different in every home. We all have different rhythms; some of us work full-time, others part-time, some of us are studying, some of us stay at home. Some of us send our kids to beautiful schools, some of us homeschool. Some of us have older children, some of us have newborns. Some of us are single Mums and some of us are married. The one thing however that we all have in common is that *all* of us are following Jesus, which means *all* of us are first and foremost Priests in our homes. We get to raise our children, His Samuels, in His Presence. We do this by how we look at Him and simultaneously see our children when we're with them in our day. Just like my dad, we can allow them to find us in our quiet times, and even sit on our lap and join us while we're there.

We can sing (loudly!) while we shower, and we can speak in tongues while we walk the hallway, resting our hand on their sweet heads

tenderly as we pass them by, connecting the Spirit to their hearts. We can cry in His beauty while we pray and drive them to a friend's house or afternoon activity. We can read the Word with them, even if it's from the kid's bible while re-enacting the stories with fresh wonder. We can dance in our intercession or, like my Mum, teach them to wave that sword of faith while they walk home from school with you, or pray for the health of their friend.

Whatever is real to you or me in our relationship with Jesus, we can gently open up before our children. When we pop open the crackers and juice for an afternoon snack, we can also share communion, remembering the strength and mercy of Jesus, celebrating His forgiveness and our freedom in choosing to forgive. We can worship as a family before bedtime, or simply soak to worship music as we cuddle them all wrapped up in their bath towels. We get to slow down and take His peace in. In doing this, we let them learn *the way* of abiding with Him. What better gift could we give our children than to show them *the way*? And what better gift could we give our own tired Mama-hearts, minds and bodies than to be more continually aware of Jesus and more naked before Him in our day? Oh, how we need Him! And oh, how we must let our children know how much we need Him.

So here I am, still in the early days, figuring out ways to open up my secret place with Jesus around my children. Some days are winners, while others are definitely not...but to Jesus they are all beautiful. He loves the process. I'm hoping that in sharing my memories and simple revelations, the desire to open up your secret place, and revealing the abiding way, comes like a kiss of grace to you. May it feel like the Father's hand resting on your head in passing. We still get to come to the well, Mama. The deep places are still attainable, we don't have to miss out...we still get to let that beautiful vulnerability flow out of our hearts as we yield tenderly to Him in this new season. There's a beautiful discovery for us as daughters, now Mums, in how we drink from Him with our arms now wrapped around our kids.

I'm also aware some of you may have already learnt this truth and have been exploring this for years, which brings tears to my eyes. May this come like a loud cheer as you run your race—Oh I'm cheering you on, hidden Heroes of the Faith. Be encouraged! Your heart, tender and bold, has intertwined with Him and with them. He has written His Name on their hearts and nothing will ever taste more sweet to your children than His Name. Not many people would know of my parents here in Australia. But they're true heroes to me and to many in Africa, because of how they lived their life in secret, just for Jesus and their

kids to see.

I'll close with this prayer:

Loving Father, thank You for this priestly role of Motherhood. Thank You for the beauty of Your fellowship, that we get to walk with You in cool of the day, with our children close beside us. May we all come to You so eagerly, like children do; openly, unashamedly, messily...and may we simply enjoy You and deeply bless You today. We love you Jesus, we really do. May we remain in You, as You remained in the Father...and as we do, may we gather our children in with us, under Your wing, never losing our longing for You. Keep us we pray, in Your glorious name, Amen.

Great grace and peace to you.

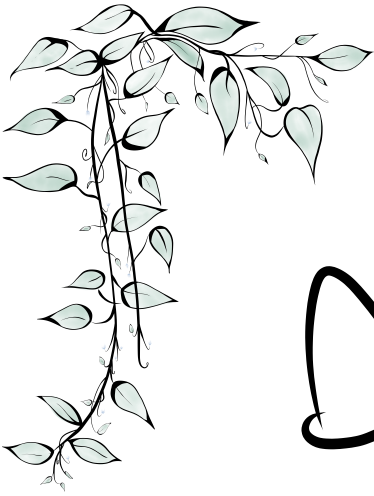
Love,

Rachael xo

John15:9 (ESV)

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

I decree and declare that there is great grace to seek His face and to love your children throughout today. As you remain in Him, and remain connected to the hearts of your children, they will remain in Him also.



Dear Mama

As I am sitting down to write to you, the sun is pouring into my office, and I am reminded once again of what it means for Him to be Emmanuel.

This may be a good time to put on an instrumental playlist and take a breath. Let's invite the Holy Spirit to come and minister to our hearts right now as we take this time together.

If your life is anything like mine, your to-do list is longer than your day, your sense of destiny is bigger than your ability, and your hunger or need for Him is greater than the time you have to offer. BUT EMMANUEL...HE. IS. HERE.

I have found so often, in these places of tension, that rest is the last thing on my mind, and I just want to fix things, to get 'unstuck' and move forward. I start to scurry on the inside and towards the Lord - subconsciously thinking that my haste would quickly move Him into action so that things can shift and peace would come. As the scurry intensifies, and the tension builds in me, I sense His nearness...I wonder: 'Is this the moment for me to get the answer, the big reveal of all I need to do and become?' I start to slow down in anticipation of the answer, I breathe and brace for the 'next step' as He makes his way towards the goal I have set. He sits down...'No, no Lord. This is not time to sit, this is a time for action, a time for change.' He gestures towards me and then pats the seat beside Him now asking me to be with Him. My thoughts buzz around my head, my mind giving me all the reasons why this is not the right thing to do, thinking that there must be a better way than simply 'being'.

How often do we feel like we need to be more accomplished, or we simply do not have 'enough?' Desperate circumstances bring us to a need for big intervention; overwhelming needs pulling us in every direction. Of course He wants to intervene; faithfulness is his nature,

but His intervention is in our connection. The Lord desires closeness with His friends, His children, His Bride. He wants to meet with us. Why? Because he knows the power of His presence, Jesus knows what 'him-with-us' can do.

The living God is with you. What an amazing thought. He is not in a hurry, and he is not anxious about what is to come. He confidently looks ahead not just because He knows the future but because He is the future. He has set into motion all that the earth is and yet he holds you in the palm of His hand. This amazing thought is thankfully not just a great idea, but it is reality. He is more real than anything that is physically around you.

I had a season in my life where I was burned out. I had been scurrying around trying to do everything that I thought I was supposed to do and be everything I thought I was supposed to be, I think deep down I was just terrified of not being enough. And I think somewhere deep down in my subconscious, me not being enough meant that I would be rejected. I didn't believe it in the forefront of my mind, but my actions showed that I had succumbed to the earthly pressure that many of us as women can feel - to be everything and make it look easy.

Growing up in the church I was well aware of all the virtues I was supposed to uphold as a Godly woman, and I truly tried. I love God and I have loved Him all my life, but I struggled to rely on God. I thought God wanted to 'use me', like a tool in a tool shed, and honestly to be 'used of God' sounded right to me, it made sense to my human mind. But here's the thing, a human mind didn't think up this marvellous plan that we are a part of. No human mind conceived this divine story we have been folded into - so why would it make sense?

In my time of burnout, God began to do a deep work in me, He began to unravel all the protections and beliefs that were insulating me from the deepest truth - His steadfast love that had been poured out for me. God's plan was not for His son to die so that we could be a marvellous tool in His hand, one that He would choose when to use and choose when to shelve. God's plan, from the very beginning, was for us to be a vessel that He would come and dwell in. And that everything He dreamed for us to accomplish would be accomplished in the most beautiful intimacy and connection.

Our King of Glory, calls you His home, His resting place. Every facet of the Christian life, the one that Jesus calls us to, is designed to be empowered by God himself. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead - the person of the Holy Spirit - lives in you. This truth is not

simply a gesture of value but an invitation into a holy grace and a powerful authority to live a life that relies on Him to be everything you need.

As I began to surrender to this truth, I began to see God rightly and therefore began to see myself rightly. The weight of what I needed to be was now eclipsed by His ability to be everything I needed. I began to have a Romans 12:1 revelation: As I gazed on the beauty of the Gospel (God's mercy) I began to realise that what was truly required of me was to simply 'offer myself as living sacrifice'. I am not the fire, He is the fire. I am simply the offering. I come and bring myself, gazing on His grace and He puts the passion, the endurance and the drive in me. I started to encounter the Holy Spirit in a new and fresh way, I began experiencing His presence and power in a way that undid me. I was being transformed. The potter had his hands on me and was doing work that only He could do.

In John 14 and John 16 Jesus comforts His disciples by telling them that He is going to send them the 'helper', the Holy Spirit. In fact, in John 16 Jesus tells them that 'it is to their advantage that He goes'. How could it be to their advantage that Jesus Christ leaves them? They have seen the most extraordinary things while walking with Him, they are with the Son of God in the flesh! But He comforts them by introducing their comforter, their helper, the power of the God and the great revealer. The one who can be with each of them even when they are scattered across the globe. This Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God that fell on the disciples in the Upper Room lives in you and rests upon you. Taking on every burden and enabling you to run the race that has been set out before you. He is no respecter of persons and does not operate in hierarchy, He is simply looking for a yielded heart to come and rest upon. That heart is your heart. You are the perfect resting place for Him. Not for one day, but for now. He isn't waiting for you to get better at cooking, or more proficient in the word of God, He's not waiting for you to believe in yourself more or get more qualified. He is not hesitant towards you, in fact it is the opposite - He is eagerly waiting for you to invite Him into every area of your life, especially your weaknesses.

Your weakness is the perfect spot for Him to set up camp and show the world just what He can do. You don't have to perform for Him because He is confident in His ability to transform you - it is simply who He is. He is the one who changes us, who takes our anxiety and gives us peace, who takes our ashes and makes them beautiful. I don't understand it but my understanding isn't a necessary ingredient

for this masterpiece, He just wants me. He just wants you. You are His beloved, His first choice. You are the one He wants, and His eyes are on you, every second of every day. He longs to partner with you, not because you are perfect but because you are His.

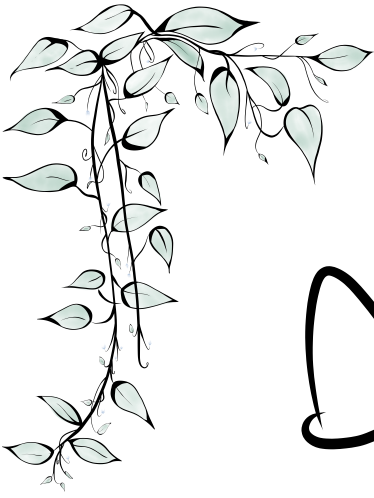
He wants to help you in everything you do, He wants to empower you to fulfil every ounce of your call, because He called you and who He calls, He fills and enables with Himself.

What kind of King is this that we serve? He is beyond our wildest dreams and more than we could ever imagine. He loves you with a reckless love, that will risk it all for you. He wants to fill you, to cover you and to lift you up. He wants to speak to you and lead you into green pastures and beside still waters. He wants to touch your marriage, love your children and shepherd every area of your life into fullness.

He is Emmanuel. He is with you. He is enough.

With Love,

Hayley Braun



Dear Mama

I would like to encourage those of you who are in the midst of raising young children right now.

The Lord would want to encourage you today that you are enough for your children. Yes YOU, little ol' imperfect, want to do your best for your kids but sometimes feel like it's not enough, YOU. How do I know this? Because you are reading this book. Those who spend time seeking out content on motherhood or parenting are ones who love their kids and honour the gift of motherhood they have been given. So let the fact that you are reading this book right now encourage your heart that you are a good mother, not perfect, but good and wholeheartedly enough.

A lot of our time as mothers can be spent worrying about our children, worrying about their future, meditating on questions that go through our minds like: '*Are we raising them right?*', '*Are we doing enough to train them in the ways of the Lord?*' Many times, we can find ourselves overwhelmed and clouded with feelings of condemnation and anxiety and even offering up prayers as Job did out of a place of fear. Our lifestyles are at such a hectic pace in this age, and it can leave us at the end of the day feeling like it was a blur igniting feelings of anxiety that whisper to our hearts that we just aren't capitalizing well enough on imparting the Lord into our children in these precious years that fly by so quickly.

BUT THE LORD SAYS THERE IS NO NEED TO FEAR MY BELOVED MOTHERS

Proverbs 31:21 (AMPC) says: '*She FEARS NOT the snow for her family, for all her household are doubly clothed in scarlet.*'

Snow can be a prophetic symbol of the harsh elements that life throws at us such as temptations, testings and trials. As parents we have

lived life long enough to know that life never throws us a perfect story. We have all walked through some blizzards of life. Because of that we can fear for our children's future. *'How will they handle the trials of life?' 'Will they be ok?' 'Will they continue to choose God over the world?' 'I don't want them to make the same mistakes I did and suffer because of those mistakes.'* Does this sound familiar at all, or am I the only one who gets taunted by these thoughts?

The SCARLET garment speaks of the redemption of Christ. Christ is the scarlet garment. The double refers to a double layer bringing extra warmth and comfort, protecting from the harsh elements of the cold. This double layered garment may be referred to the double garments Isaiah 61:10 speaks of, namely the garment of salvation and the robe of righteousness. We receive righteousness as a gift through receiving the gift of salvation.

Raising our children in the understanding that Christ is their righteousness as their identity and establishing them in this truth will enable them to walk through the harsh winter seasons of life that present a lack of warmth and comfort from the external elements. Simply put, they know they are enough because Christ is enough, not because of what they can do or can't do. Not because of who they are or who they aren't but because of who HE is. When we guide our children to find their identity in Christ alone, not guiding them to build their worth and value in their achievements or failures, we are wrapping them in the double scarlet garment that will help shield them from the elements of the cold seasons of life.

When everything is going great and life is favourable, symbolically this can be referred to as summertime. Success acts as warmth and our hearts are joyful as a result of the season. We can find comfort, value and worth in how life is responding to us. But if this is the case and our worth and value isn't found in the fact Jesus was good enough, then we will find ourselves very unprepared for the winter seasons that offer no response and no reward, and no sign of life and no reaffirmation in who we are. In fact, winter seasons challenge the very core of our worth and our self-value. In other words what we believe about ourselves really matters, because Proverbs 23:7 says as people think in their hearts (believes to be true) so they will be, (my paraphrase). So, if we place our value and our worth in how people and life respond to us, and train our children accordingly, then our and our children's core identities are not built upon that which is sure and lasting but upon what is frail and temporal.

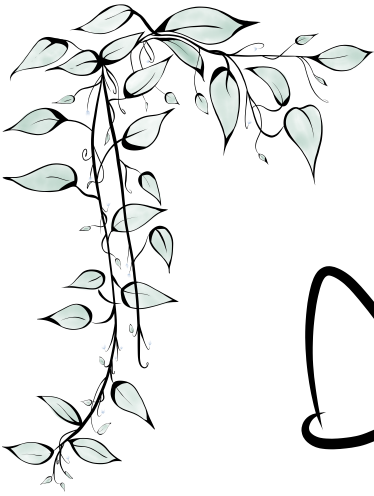
However, if we wrap our children in Christ, they will be ready for whatever season life may throw at them. Christ will be their portion in all seasons as they know He is the source of their identity, all provisions and answers they need for any situation they may find themselves in. Building your child's identity in Christ equips them to face future challenges successfully and enables them to walk by grace (His ability) in all seasons of life.

I INVITE YOU INTO THIS PRAYER OF THE SCARLET GARMENT:

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of my beautiful children. Thank you for the grace and the ability to train these ones in the ways of the Lord. Open my eyes and cause me to see every opportunity that presents itself before me to speak Christ and His ways into their lives, whether it be driving them to school, sport, around the dinner table or putting them to bed. May you open up divine conversations that will allow me to plant, sow and impart Christ and weave His kingdom into the fabric of their hearts. May you place the right words into my mouth that drip with Godly instruction and wisdom. May these words and instructions wrap their hearts in SCARLET, preparing them for whatever this world would want to throw at them. Through life's temptations, testings and trials, may my prayers and teachings never leave them and act in those times as a double scarlet garment of warmth, shielding them and bringing comfort. May they truly know the gift of salvation that has bought them their righteousness. May they walk with you all the days of their lives in the name of Jesus.

Blessings,

Anita Alexander



Dear Mama

As a mother, it seems like the work is never done...and it isn't. But God has actually designed us for a purpose. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do good works which he has prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)

Part of these good works are the daily tasks of nurturing and caring for our families. For me personally, some of this work can become daunting, overwhelming, tedious, to the point where I just want to give up. The enemy sees the fatigue and comes in slyly whispering lies 'you can't do this...you'll never catch up...you're not a good mother if this doesn't come naturally to you...' But the truth is, God knows you. God has given you specific gifts. God has supplied you with supernatural ability and strength in Christ to do all these works, even if you're not naturally gifted at everything.

Ephesians 2:10 in The Passion Translation says, 'We have become his poetry, a re-created people that will fulfil the destiny he has given each of us, for we are joined to Jesus, the Anointed One. Even before we were born, God planned in advance our *destiny* and the good works we would do to *fulfil* it!'

Even before we were born, he knew the husband he would give us. He knew the children who would join our family. He knew exactly what mother these children would need, and he chose you to raise them. Your children would not be better off with someone else, because God gave them to YOU. You are the best mother for the job. We are working together with the anointed one to raise our children, to care for our families, and to joyfully finish the tasks on our to-do list.

I can say that I absolutely *love* being outside and spending time adventuring and playing with my three amazing boys. However, the housework looms over me. For some it might be the opposite,

housework comes easily, but the ability to just rest and be present and play with your children, knowing that things need to get done, is very difficult. For all of us, there is a beautiful truth: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, Philippians 4:13.

I love The Passion Translation version of verses 12-13:

'I know what it means to lack, and I know what it means to experience overwhelming abundance. For I'm trained in the secret of overcoming all things, whether in fullness or in hunger. And I find that the strength of Christ's explosive power infuses me to conquer every difficulty.'

All too often I allow the deceiver to whisper to me, sometimes it sounds like he's even screaming, what I am *not*, rather than allowing the Lord speak truth about who I *am*. The voice of the enemy may seem so loud and in your face, but the voice of Truth, the voice of our sweet Jesus, is able to cut through the noise and cause those lies to break. Where I feel I am lacking, he speaks abundance. Where I feel I have failed, he tells me that I am more than a conqueror. When I wish I were different, the Father gently reminds me that he created me uniquely and perfectly, without mistake.

When I am feeling overwhelmed by it all, I ask myself "how can this be transformed from a daunting duty into fruitful abundance? How can the mundane actually become marvellous?" The answer is relationship.

I am someone who loves quality time. I would rather fold laundry with a friend, do dishes while someone is sitting at my kitchen table having a chat. I have started to envision Jesus standing beside me drying the dishes, and I engage in conversation with him. Sometimes the sweetest revelation comes to me in a moment alone at my sink or while stirring a simmering pot of soup on the stove.

In the quiet surrender, I find strength. In these moments of communion, I find joy. The enemy would have us toil and work and be filled with stress and worry, but the Lord says, 'give me the mundane, and I will make it marvellous.' What is more marvellous than spending time with the Prince of Peace? What is more incredible than receiving an encouraging word from the Holy Spirit as we serve our families? Or to look back and realise that the beautiful mountaintop of encounter was here all along, in the everyday moments of life?

I believe that the Lord wants us to invite him into everything we do. He wants not only to come to the table once the meal is ready, but also to

sit in the kitchen while we prepare it. He wants to come along on the adventures we take with our children, so that when we see a beautiful flower, a budding tree, or a perfect and unique snowflake landing on our mitten, we can point our children to Jesus and say, 'Isn't God's creation amazing?'

God has shifted things for me. Some might say to work as if you're working FOR Jesus, but I say to work as if you're working WITH Jesus...because you are! He does not come into our homes asking for perfection, like some high and mighty ruler expecting celebrity treatment; he comes to meet with us.

Christ is honoured more by a PB&J made in the secret place than he is by the five-star, picturesque feast made by striving.

Pray with me.

Thank you, Jesus, that I can do all things through the strength you give. Thank you that you have created me perfectly for the work you have prepared for me to do. Thank you that you do not ask for or perfection, you just want me. Shift my mindset to work *with* you, the Anointed one who brings life and peace and joy into all things. Amen.

With Love in Christ,

Rebekah Bartels



Dear Mama

'When Jesus saw what was happening, he became indignant with his disciples and said to them, "Let all the little children come to me and never hinder them! Don't you know that God's kingdom exists for such as these? Listen to the truth

I speak: Whoever does not open their arms to receive God's kingdom like a teachable child will never enter it.'" Then he embraced each child, and laying his hands on them, he lovingly blessed each one.'

Mark 10:14-16 (TPT)

In 2019, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me about the return of the sons and daughters back into deep fellowship with their heavenly Father. He explained that in this new era, sons and daughters would begin to flood back into the body of Christ covered in His glory, moving in power and with the fullness of the Spirit. He also carefully explained that they would carry His glory in miraculous ways, but they would be looking for the spiritual mothers and fathers to walk this walk of faith WITH them. Many will need the love, wisdom, and encouragement of wise Mothers and Fathers. They will be aching to find those that will allow them to stand on their shoulders to reach higher and deeper into the realms of His Spirit and His glory. I sat with this word for months. The weight of it was something else. As I began to ask more questions, the Holy Spirit began to explain that a **moment** in the presence of the Father has the ability to release, set free, heal that which has been amassed over many years. Just a moment with Him can do and undo what has held his precious sons and daughters captive for years. I believe, dear Mama, that we will see this in our lifetime. I believe, dear Mama, that it has already begun. And I believe that the hearts, arms, and feet of the Mothers are being prepared and strengthened to welcome, hold, and walk with these glorious ones, these children of His glory. And I believe this is you, dear Mama.

It's extremely exciting to receive a word like that and to see the pictures of His glory that is to come. As the weight of this revelation

rolled around in my spirit for months on end, I began to wonder what this would look like in my everyday life. While this sort of encounter with the Lord definitely shifted things within my heart, there were still everyday struggles around me that felt far from glory. I would whisper my questions to the Holy Spirit from deep within my heart. 'What do I **DO** with this, Lord? How can I engage with this word with my children right now?' His response was plain and simple, like it often is. 'Lead them into my presence. Trust me to encounter them with my presence. When you lead them into my presence, I will do what you cannot. I will reach where you can't. I made them, beloved. Trust that I know exactly what their hearts need. Trust me with them.'

A few months later our family entered into a time of massive transition. After following the Lord's prompting, we uprooted and moved our family to an entirely different city leaving behind the place we called home for the last 9 years. The shifting and change had caused quite a few emotions and beliefs to flush to the surface, like all good bouts of transition will do. This particular day I found myself sitting on the floor of our homeschool room, consoling our oldest daughter, Lainey, who had melted into a puddle of tears. I asked her what was wrong and I wasn't expecting to hear the answer that followed. "Mum, I just don't know if I believe that Ava is healed." I didn't see that one coming.

A few years prior to this moment, our daughter Ava had been diagnosed with a neurological condition known as PANDAS and it had significantly impacted her growth and development. Ava has battled hard, and we have battled alongside her for healing, recovery, and miraculous growth. We have seen so much of His presence and promises coming to fruition, but there's still quite a way to go. The walk at times has been very long and arduous, and our children have not been spared from fighting the good fight of faith. They have cried with us, prayed with us, believed with us, triumphed with us. And at times, if I'm being honest, their faith and the purity of their childlike trust has strengthened my feeble knees more times than I can count.

So, dear Mama, here we were. In this moment, my precious Lainey was sharing her heart with me and was allowing herself to be seen in the place of such tender vulnerability. I knew I was going to need to proceed with wisdom, grace, empathy, and well...I needed the Holy Spirit to give me the words that would comfort her the most.

What happened next is one of my absolute favourite moments with Jesus. First, we talked about the story of the father and his son

who had been fighting epilepsy in Mark 9. Jesus let the father of the boy know that He was interested in what life had been like for them day after day when He asked, "How long has your son been tormented like this?" The compassion of Jesus allowed the father of the boy to bring his struggle and unbelief to Jesus. I pointed out how the boy's father cried out for help and instead of rebuking Him for asking, Jesus did what Jesus does best. All of this was encouraging and helpful, but I could still see and feel the sadness and concern that surrounded my daughter. At this point I remembered the words I'd heard over a year prior. "Bring them to me, Courtney. I will reach where you cannot."

I took in a big breath and told the kids, "Okay, we're going to ask Jesus what He wants to show you about all of this." I encouraged each child to get comfortable and close their eyes. I began to pray, blessing our devotional space and our eyes. I asked Jesus to show each child where He was sitting in the room with us. I watched quietly as my children's faces began to relax and light up with joy as they began to interact with Jesus in their spirit and imagination. I slowly guided them through this time of activating their faith and engaging Jesus in prayer. I reminded them to pay attention to the special details that Jesus would want them to notice by speaking out some questions they could ask as they prayed. "What is Jesus wearing? What is he doing? What is he showing you? What is he speaking to your heart?" Tears slowly began to dry and smiles began to brighten my precious Lainey's face once again. The heaviness began to lift and joy pushed out every inch of discouragement as the risen King showed himself strong on behalf of my children.

Excitedly, the kids began to unpack all that Jesus had shown them and all that he had spoken during their time together. My joy turned to tears of thankfulness as they began to recount their experiences. They spoke of things that I had often seen in my own secret place with Jesus, but had not yet shared with them. Their hearts were comforted and faith was planted, watered, and was growing. This was more than just a moment of devotional prayer, dear Mama. This was an encounter with the living God. What happened in this encounter was one of deliverance from heaviness and deep comfort flowing to places of grief. It was perfect love casting out fear. The children saw Jesus bringing them various tools symbolizing what he was up to in the spirit and in the physical, and they encountered his encouragement and permission to embrace patience as He works on behalf of our family.

As we wrapped up our time in prayer, His presence remained like he does. His presence wrapped our family with tender joy. He

had done just what He said he would do. He touched places of His children's hearts that have been designed by Him and for Him, and in the process He ministered to my own dear mama heart. This type of healing, encouragement, and permission is a hallmark of the presence of the one who draws the children into his arms (Mark 10:16 TPT). This is the Father's heart for the sons and daughters that He is drawing unto himself, and this is His heart for the children we hold within our arms.

The Father's design for His children is one of presence and family, encounter and faith. The Father's love has a way of beautifully marking those that receive it. It is a substance, a presence. It is a love that is covered in grace and permission. The type of love that flows from the Father's heart to the hearts of His children is something, dear Mama, that cannot be explained fully with only words. Very simply put, this love of the Father must be experienced. His children, our children, have been designed for His presence. As we learn what it means to walk as spiritual and natural mothers to the sons and daughters that he draws to us and brings through us, let us remember, dear Mama, the power of His presence. Let us lead them into the place of encountering and experiencing His love so that He can do what only He can do in the hearts of our children.

In Grace,

Courtney

Father,

Thank you for the heart of this dear Mama. Thank you for the children that you have blessed her with, both in the natural and in the spiritual. Thank you that you have made her to be one who walks powerfully from the place of your presence and your love. Strengthen her hands, make firm her knees as she walks forward carrying the love and wisdom to guide those whom you draw to her. Bless her eyes to see, her ears to hear, and her voice to lead those precious ones deeper into the place of encounter and presence with your precious Holy Spirit. Bless her with the wisdom to walk with these children of glory as she walks hand in hand with you, Jesus. In your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.



Dear Mama

You are stronger than you think, wiser than you realise and ENOUGH, just AS YOU ARE.
You are AMAZING!

You have exactly what your child needs to grow up into the strong and fearless warrior in this New Era, that your Father in heaven, has called them to be!

Imagine for a moment, that your 'personal faith journey' will become the catalyst and inspiration, that your child will continue and one day TAKE ON!

Yes, it's true, just like Abraham and Isaac's 'faith-filled journey', an example of a life of faith well lived, you and your little ones in your generation, in His faith, will come –SHINING THROUGH!

Your sons and your daughters their offerings they bring, will walk in their royal inheritance, as a CHILD OF THE KING!

Here are a few thoughts, from the Father's heart to yours, my hope is, that it will bring refreshing and blessing and empower you TO LIVE!

Mama, keep it simple and real....!

It's okay to be working out your faith steps, in front of children, even at times you may feel you are weak and are standing on –slippery ground!

You might be surprised to know that your children really do understand, as their 'God given awareness' –is all around!

They love and adore you, haven't been given this grace,
to help you navigate through these difficult places!
Mama, please trust when I tell you, they really are okay
–with your 'faith-journey's –PACE!

A child's heart is made so pure –believing is easy for them!
Many times, when you find yourself struggling, your child will
often have the very answer you need, through a word of
encouragement or that bear-hug and snuggle, that simply melts
away all your doubts, fears, and troubles!

Psalms 18:32 (GNT) declares...

'He is the God who makes you strong,
He makes my pathway safe.'

Mama, come to Jesus –JUST AS YOU ARE!!
Come to Him with all your weakness, sins, and mistakes!
He is your load bearer, who heals, forgives, and strengthens,
the One who makes –YOU STRONG!

It's okay to let Me and others see your need and weakness,
you are a child of the King, and IN ME, I only see –COMPLETENESS!

Like empty jars before Me, just waiting to be filled,
I am eager to feed you daily, TO EAT and DRINK OF ME, and –LIVE!

Instead thank me for your weakness, because it teaches you
to depend on the One who really loves you and will defend
you –to the end!

I am the One who makes your path safe and secure,
I have promised to keep you and to make all your
–ways sure!

Keep talking to Me daily and I will walk beside you closely,
as I have promised to never forsake you, to always lead
and guide you –SHOW YOU THE WAY!

Mama, remember, your child's faith is a gift from heaven above,
but still it needs to be watered, nurtured, and sheltered,
through the care of FATHER'S –GREAT LOVE!

So, remember to sow daily, the Lord's Goodness, testimonies,

and truth, and they will never forget or turn back even IN THEIR YOUTH!

As the wisdom of **Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)** declares:

'Train up a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old, he will not depart!'

Are you raising a thinker??

My daughter is full of questions, and she is a real PROBLEM SOLVER!
She is full of good answers and solutions and when necessary,
even A DEBATER!

She's an independent thinker, confident in her say,
these are attributes God given, not rebellion –in any way!

But it's her love for truth and discovery of new things
each day, is simply an expression of the things needed,
for HER JOURNEY –ALONG THE WAY!

When she asks those amazing questions, a 'light bulb moment'
of truth-clicks on; these 'independent thinkers' they are simply
growing their roots in God's wonder –DEEP AND STRONG!

Mama, you are raising a 'warrior of righteousness and truth',
the Word you sow now, will keep them secure –AND RESOLUTE!

Mama, may I also encourage you, to not be quick to solve all
their problems, but allow them to explore, question,
and even stumble along the way!

It's all a part of their 'faith journey', that they will one
day praise and thank you, on that very –SPECIAL DAY!

Mama A Word from Father's heart to you!

My child in this New Era, your children will grow in their faith MUCH
MORE!

This year is important, to FEED on HIS WORD and STORE!

For as they do, Holy Spirit will highlight His gift to them and more.
They will be His 'Defenders of His Word, His Truth and Love –FOR SURE!

They will not waver or doubt –but stand in firm conviction,
their faith strong in Jesus and in HIS RIGHTEOUS HAND
and SUBMISSION.

They will have a powerful tongue, and many will hear
the Word of the Lord, even JOSIAH'S ANOINTING will
be upon them and DEBORAH'S MANTLE of WISDOM and SWORD!

As they hear your mighty declarations, that fill the late-night air,
they too will echo their own proclamations HIS WISDOM THEY
WILL DECLARE!

They will prophesy His salvation message in dry and arid places,
many will become leaders of COMMUNITIES, CITIES and EVEN NATIONS!

THE TIME IS NOW –this NEW ERA has come, 'FAITH WARRIORS' ARISE
take your stand before YOUR OWN –GOLIATH'S!

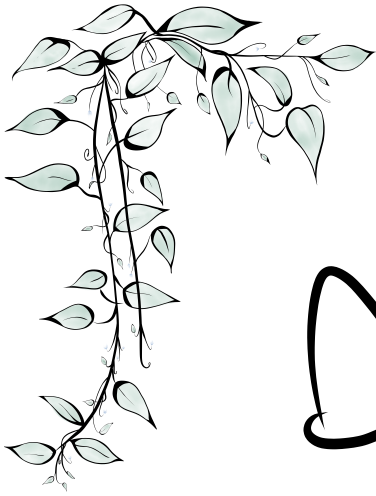
Declaring themselves in their own generation 'Who are you to defy the
armies of the Lord's holy convocation!?

The might and strength of David will come upon your children's heart,
to carry Christ's strength, to lead armies of righteousness throughout
nations!

They will be marked as Overcomers, valiant to the end,
my Lord I often wonder, of Your awesome and mighty plan!!

Much love,

Annette xxx



Dear Mama

I would like to start with the scripture, 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears has not been made perfect in love' (1 John 4:18 NIV). Fear is something many, many people in the body struggle with, especially in these last few years. Fear also can be generational. I come from Hinduism, and I know for a fact that fear runs generationally and culturally. I saw it first hand growing up, the irrational fears, believing worst-case scenarios and having panic attacks regularly. From my childhood I carried fear into adulthood and realised it came with me even after I was born-again. I was paralysed in it after I believed just a few lies from Satan. One example was one time where I was in an amazing place worshipping and praying to God, and I heard, 'you are going to die young'. I thought at the time this was from God because I was in His presence, and even though people around me told me it was the devil, I didn't believe them. For a year after that I was thinking of how I was going to die: paralysed in fear, heart racing, panic attacks, sweating and had many more fear-driven symptoms. I even remember on our honeymoon I couldn't do the scuba lesson in the pool in Aruba, to go down just 10 feet in the ocean because I was afraid the mouthpiece would come out and I would drown. My husband enjoyed seeing the beautiful bottom, while I snorkelled on top, but looking back I missed out on seeing the gorgeous reef that God created because of fear. How many times does the enemy rob us, mama? How many times do we make decisions based on fear? Maybe it's a fear about something that might happen with the kids, or if something happens, we immediately feed worst-case scenarios and invite more fear, not realizing what we are doing to ourselves? How many of us parents with our first born would call the paediatrician in the middle of the night because of a sniffle? Then by the time we have our third, we asked ourselves, 'how did our paediatrician put up with us for the many calls we made over nothing?' I have learned that fear has no power unless we give it power. Also, that fear and

control go hand in hand. Control is something that Satan dangles before us continually and the more we bite the bait, the more we get comfortable in it. Before we know it, we are back in that bird cage with the door shut and lock ourselves out of God's beautiful freedom of flying untethered across His undiscovered paradise (or His will for our life). I am reminded of the lyrics from the song, 'Oceans': 'Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders, let me walk upon the waters, wherever You would call me, and take me deeper than my feet could ever wander, and my faith will be made stronger, in the presence of my Saviour.' Maybe it's a prophetic act of having someone do a trust fall with you. Just doing it over and over and over again until you say, 'ok Lord, I'm surrendered, I've let go.' The key though is to continually guard your heart and mind with His truth, because the devil will try and rob that place over and over again until he realises it has no power over you anymore!

One of the best things we can do for our children is to 'be made perfect in His love'. Its purpose comes two-fold: it gives us that agape love so that we can give that amazing love to our children, yet also naturally drives out the fear. A few lyrics from the song, 'No longer slaves', come to mind: 'You split the sea so I could walk right through it, I am no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God, my fears are drowned in perfect love'. A scripture from Romans 8:15 (NIV) also comes to mind that maybe we need to meditate on over and over to remind ourselves that we were not made to live in fear: 'The spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you can live in fear again; rather the spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father"'. During a season of having Lyme disease and fighting for my life, the first instruction that God had me do was to do nothing but take a season to receive His love because that truth is one of the most foundational truths of our faith, and something I realised I had to do intentionally. I had been in various leadership roles throughout my Christian walk up to this point, but He didn't want me to pour out to others in this season, but strictly instead just drink from Him. It's ok for you, mama, if you are in a leadership role, to step down for a season should the Holy Spirit lead you to. He always wants to pull out roots, not try and fix a problem with a band aid. 'Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.' (1 John 4:7-9 NIV). Let's take one of the basic principles of His love for us daughters of a King, and let it melt us. It's time to get lost in His love!

I realised I hadn't truly believed (or received) His love for me fully, yet had been a believer at that point for merely fifteen years. I would take scriptures on His unfailing love for me and meditate on them throughout the day, until He soaked my innermost being with His love. I would stand in front of the mirror, saying, 'God loves you, Jonali' over and over again, and sometimes I would weep uncontrollably being so overwhelmed with this simple, yet profound truth. And then I would immediately speak of His love over Elijah and Priya too, even though they were a baby and toddler at the time, there is so much power in speaking truth over them, and I do believe they understand more than we think even in those precious ages. I would also have more of that unconditional love for my husband as well and those around me. We can't give something that we haven't received first. That love truly fills that void in us and satisfies us which is why we have to be intentional of not being drawn away to the temptations of this world because if we do, we will forsake our first love. It certainly was not overnight, but it was months of soaking in this beautiful truth over and over again. Even if we have been believers for years, mama, we need to continually check our foundation to see if there are any cracks or holes, because if we don't, we will keep building on a faulty foundation, and eventually, our (spiritual) house will fall down.

Mama, if you struggle with fear, focus on receiving His love. Don't try to get rid of the fear, because we need to replace it with something, and that is love, so simply focus on that. If He has the ability to break off generations of fear off my family line, starting with me, He can certainly do it for you, and for your children so that they don't pass it onto their children. If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you (Matthew 17:20 NIV). You know what happened as the cracks of the faulty foundation that I had built started to fill in with His love? Boldness and power from simply believing that He loved me started to come forth. So during the sickness, when the enemy would say things like, 'this is it for you' or 'it is going to get worse' or even taunt me with, 'Priya has gotten the disease through your breastmilk', I would start to laugh and proclaim the truth. 'I will not die but live and will proclaim what the Lord has done' (Psalm 118:17 NIV). And also, 'And we know that all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose' (Romans 8:28 NIV). Do you know what happened? When I actually believed what the scriptures said while I was speaking them outloud, the decades of fear melted away and boldness began to come over me. Through relationship, during that season He was dealing with the roots of the problem (fear and anxiety) and suddenly,

the sickness just started to disappear. God showed me a picture of how easy blowing leaves off of a sidewalk with a leafblower is, the leaves were easily moved, and the power (God) from the blower was far stronger than the light leaves (circumstance).

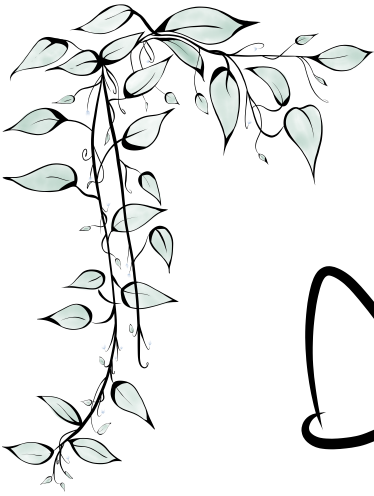
We were created to be bold as lions. The opposite of fear is faith and we need to strengthen those muscles, especially as mamas in this generation. That way, when our kids have a nightmare in the middle of the night, or say they are scared in a situation, we can share with them about God's love and be confident in the scripture that we quote so much as parents, 'For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind' (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV). I tell my children all the time that there is a difference between 'knowing God' and knowing 'about God'. We can't just know about Him so that it is not mere religion to our kids, but should get to know Him more and more, so that what we say has power, as our actions become louder than our words. We need to know Him for ourselves, mama, as our children watch our lives closely as they are our first audience. We must be the same person constantly, at home or in public, so that our children don't grow up in hypocrisy and then turn away from God later in life. Our relationship with Him must be authentic and real, we must drink from His well. Maybe some of these words are revelation for you and the Holy Spirit is talking to you. Don't let condemnation steal what He has, but simply repent and ask God to help you create time to get to know His heart and character, as He promises, 'Draw near to Me, and I will draw near to You (James 4:8 NKJV). As you get to know Him and hear His voice, you'll be able to distinguish His voice versus the enemy's. I always share with people, filter your thoughts through John 10:10 'The thief comes only to kill, steal and destroy, I have come that they might have life and have it to the full'. Does the thought or voice 'kill, steal or destroy'? Or, does it 'bring life?' The enemy only has power if we give him power, let's feast on the word of God, so that when that annoying fly tries to pester us lions, all we have to do is stand, and that fly will just buzz off. My husband had a picture when I was battling the disease, a bunch of flies pestering a lion. God showed me through that picture that I was letting the flies bother me as a lioness. They were killing me slowly because I was allowing their annoyance to overtake me, forgetting my true identity in Him. The flies became my focus and had paralyzed me in fear before I started to stand up, but mama, 'greater is He who is in us, than he who is in the world' (1 John 4:4 NIV). Let's not let those aggravating pests continue to bother us, it is now time to stand up, lioness!

I pray that you, fearless mama, would be confident in your identity

in Jesus, 'I pray that out of his glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God' (Ephesians 3:16-19 NIV). And I want to also remind you, mama, 'that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.' 'Shall trouble or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:35-39 NIV). May these scriptures be the core of who you are and that you, your children, and your children's children will become bold as lions!

With His unfailing love,

Jonali ♥



Dear Mama

Do you ever sit and watch your children? Just listen to them play? Sometimes I sit and listen to my children play. I listen to what they speak and ask, as I put them to bed. I particularly listen when I ask them each morning 'What is God's Word for us today?'

Children carry such innocence and purity that positions them to hear from and speak the Word of God more than many give them credit for. I remember one of my children writing in her journal and saying 'Mum I'm not sure if this is in the Bible but I feel like God is saying "ask, seek, knock"'. What does that mean?' What an opportunity not only to open God's Word and to show my daughter that God asks us to pursue Him, and keep pursuing Him and that we will find Him, but oh, the privilege to witness our Heavenly Father speaking to her.

This innocence, purity and openness to our Abba Daddy leads our children to a place of such pure faith. Child-like faith. Faith that will move mountains. They live with an expectancy that God is who He says He is, will provide, heal, comfort, and be with them wherever they go. They are ready to receive all He has for them: love, mercy, grace, acceptance, forgiveness, life.

Children forgive like no other. Their love and trust I truly treasure. And how do they show it? By coming in close. Into the mess of us Mamas when we fall, and they love us. Not always with words, but they love us by coming close, often with a hug. A hug that they too come to you for, Mama, when they have fallen or are hurting. There is no place like a Mama and her child. This place is sacred. It is precious. It is a place where I am reminded that I, too, am a child, a dearly loved child of God.

Children find joy in the mess of muddy puddles in the rain and then squeal with excitement when the new flowers grow from that same

shower of rain. This is wonder. Everything around them brings life and in turn, brings life to me. I see more than ever that 'Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him.' (Psalm 127:3 NLT)

And don't children know how to receive a gift? They don't need to wait until birthdays and Christmas. Children are ready to receive a gift at any time, with joy! Is this how we receive the gifts He has given us? Is this how we accept this mind-blowing love our Heavenly Father has lavished on us?

Can I encourage you, Mama, listen to your child? Listen when they play. Listen when they speak and ask their many curious questions. Learn from them. Learn from their forgiveness and love. Their joy and acceptance. Let the wonder of the children around you leave you in wonder.

Dear Mama, in this world, there are many children who have had their innocence, purity, love and trust stolen. You may be one of them. You may be raising a child whom this is true of. Let me encourage you right here, right now, that though 'the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...[Jesus has come]...that they [and you] may have life and have it abundantly.' (John 10:10 ESV)

Only our Heavenly Father could offer such a gift. A gift that has been prepared since the beginning of time. A gift so precious it is more valuable than anything we could ever want here on earth. It is life. Abundant life. Eternal life. Offered to all who simply believe, with a child-like faith, that God loves them. Loves them so much that He sent Jesus to die for us and rise again to offer us this gift of life. It's wrapped up and ready for us to receive. The gift tag says, 'I love you so much I gave everything for you, choose me' (John 3:16 paraphrase). How will you receive it? Like a child?

'Jesus said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.' (Mark 10:13- 16, NIV)

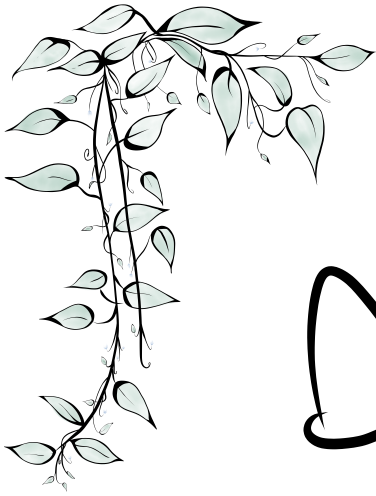
Mama, will you come to Jesus like a little child? Because if you do, He will place His hands on you and bless you. Come like a child, filled with wonder at all He has done. Ask, seek, knock, and wait expectantly for Him. He will speak (John 10:27). His love never fails (Psalm 143:8). His mercy is new every morning (Lamentations 3:22). He forgives and

accepts you right here, right now. Jesus wants you to continue to come with child-like faith, in wonder and awe of all He has done and expectant for what He is going to do. Seek Him in everything, trust in His promises as He speaks to you through His Word. Mama, you may not be a little child anymore, but you are His child and I assure you, Abba Daddy is not finished with you yet!

Children are a gift from God and Mamas are a gift to their children. Whether your children or biological or not, God has chosen you to be their Mama and them to be your children. A Mama's love for their child is so strong, so deep. Sometimes ferocious. So, sit Mama, and watch your children. Listen to your children, dear Mama, and see yourself. See yourself as His child. He is watching. He is listening. Pursue Him and keep pursuing Him. You will find Him. You will find His love for you so strong, so deep. A love that is ferocious for you.

Love,

Kath xo



Dear Mama

You are a treasured gift to your family!

There is a powerful call on your life to raise up your beautiful children in the ways of the Lord. Every day will bring new opportunities for you to sow seeds of life and truth. There will be times when you may feel overwhelmed with the responsibilities that surround you but know this: there is a Secret Place for you to run and hide in the presence of the Lord where He will fill you up and wrap His love, and comfort, and support around you. For as God has a perfect plan for your life, so too does He have a plan for each of your children, and He will be your biggest encourager!

You have no doubt found there are many distractions, and even spiritual opposition that comes to take the attention of your children and steer them into ways of darkness. Your place and influence in their lives has a far greater impact than you realise as you take opportunities to teach and train them in the ways of the Lord. You are not just called to raise your children to survive and get by, but you have the beautiful opportunity set before you to raise them up to be warriors and mighty in the land.

'Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in His commands. Their children will be MIGHTY in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.' Psalm 112:1-2 (NIV)

One of the most powerful keys you have available to you is the Word of God. Psalm 119:130 (NKJV) **'The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.'** Planting seeds of the Word, even from birth, will bring forth much fruit as you read key verses and pray. Even singing these Scriptures over them.

A few years ago, I produced a series of CD'S called Children Arise: God's Word in Song for Kids. 1000's of children began to sing these scripture melodies. More than a generation later, I continue to hear stories of their impact on whole families. The children have now become the parents who are teaching them to their own children. When the Word of God is alive inside you, the Holy Spirit can bring verses back to your remembrance at strategic times. You'll begin to marvel at how memorising scripture will impact your own children and help them develop a Holy fear and respect of the Lord. The kind of fear referred to here is the 'reverent awe' of His Holiness. How powerful is that! We can help them recognise that God is loving and forgiving and at the same time know that He is holy, full of justice and righteousness. Teaching them the scriptures help them to understand that there are important boundaries the Lord has set for us. When you teach your children the Scriptures you are leaving a dynamic legacy that will continue through generations.

Many years ago, when I arrived home with my first baby, I had the sudden realisation that she didn't come with a book of instructions. I will never forget that moment arriving home from hospital with this little bundle of joy and being hit by the realisation that my husband and I were responsible to raise her up. Where do we start? What were we supposed to do? I felt very inadequate. Especially since I was going through my own health challenges at the time. There were several practical books I turned to, but the key book was the manufacturers handbook–The Bible. I searched for verses that would give me wisdom and help on this special journey.

Two of the verses from the Bible stood out to me.

'Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

'These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.' Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NIV)

These verses are instructing us to take the opportunities to share the truths of the Bible with our family as part of our daily life. Keep doing it until it becomes part of your family's lifestyle.

When my children were very young, I began to implement some of the following ideas:-

1. Praise Walks

Most days of the week I would take them on praise walks. These were a great opportunity to look at creation and to thank and praise the Lord for everything beautiful along the way, just as Deuteronomy 6 encourages. It didn't matter whether it was raining, frosty, windy, or sunshine. We would dress accordingly and head off, enjoying this brilliant opportunity to talk about the Lord and His beautiful creation.

I'd encourage you to use these moments and teach your children how to become more 'God conscious'. As they learn to observe the Father's most intricate work in nature, as well as the expanse of His creative design, more aspects of His character will be revealed to them.

2. Bedtime Prayers

It's great to start going into your children's rooms at night and pray for them before they go to sleep. When they are old enough to talk, invite them to pray as well. I walked into my son's room one evening to pray with him and heard him talking to the Lord about his day at kindergarten. He didn't wait for me. He had already begun to establish the lifestyle of prayer and worship. Then, I walked into my daughter's room and began to play my guitar, as I often did, using a simple chord progression. She had her Bible open and, quite spontaneously, began to sing one of the verses in Psalm 27:1 (KJV) "The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?" As she was singing, I could sense the presence of the Lord in the room. This song was ministering life to both of us. That very week, I just happened to be working on Children Arise volume 2, in the recording studio, and was able to add her song to the album. It became her first published song at the age of 7.

If you like the idea of music while you pray (and don't play an instrument), there are a lot of amazing worship albums you can find online.

3. The Prayer Box

As part of our family devotions, we often put a little prayer box on the table. Each one was encouraged to write down their prayer request and file it in the box after we prayed. Then, when the answer came through, we would transfer the card into the 'Answered Prayers' section. This was a great faith building exercise.

'What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope

for is waiting for us even though we cannot see it up ahead.'

Hebrews 11:1 (TLB)

One of the bigger prayer requests myself and the children wrote down was for a 50-acre Ministry Centre. 10 years later, the Lord led us to an amazing 50-acre property complete with numerous buildings, tennis courts and auditorium. The newspapers called it the buy of the century; it was such a bargain! I believe the prayers of the children had great impact and helped prepare the way for a miracle. Never underestimate the power of the prayers of your children. Their faith seems unhindered and uncluttered.

Take time to hear their heart and encourage them to dream big as they write down their prayers.

In closing, I want to encourage you to regularly talk to your children about the Lord and pray with them. When my children were older and bringing their friends home for meals, I found the conversations around the table often turned to conversations about Jesus. Their friends loved the opportunities to ask questions and receive prayer. One teenager said 'we don't ever talk about God at home. I wish we did.'

Your children are a gift from God. They were given to you, not to anyone else. You are the one whom God chose, as the most treasured mother, especially for them. So, Mama, as I pray for you now, I see your home filled with light and life. My prayer is that you would always know your own value and, in the busyness, challenges, failures and victories that are part of parenting, you would take the time to just sit at the feet of Jesus and allow Him to minister His love to you and fill your cup again for another day. You are greatly loved!

With much love

Merrilyn Billing



Dear Mama

You were born for this.

You were created to be alive in this very time.

You were destined to deliver your children into the plans of God.

You were called to birth these babes and parent these souls in this very moment.

You have been positioned for purpose and placed on this planet *for such a time as this*.

Make no mistake, you haven't missed out, you are not left behind, you haven't missed the opportunity and you haven't lucked out. This is a very specific and strategic time to be deployed upon the earth, in this life, at this very moment, and you are purposely here for a very pertinent and powerful reason.

I know, it's a difficult time. The world has been turned upside down, fear is raging rampant, the future is so unknown and we can wonder why our children have been born into this moment of history. But it is for this very reason, that God has first called and created you to be here now and to bring these people into and up in this world. Yes, *this world*. With everything going on, with all of this happening. It was destined to be.

Some days we may wonder why it has to be us, why it has to be now, why we can't go back to when it was simpler and easier, when we didn't have this heaviness in our hearts over our world and future. But in those moments of discouragement and despair, we must remember that His plan is perfect. He has positioned you here, for a reason, now, *for such a time as this*.

You may feel as though you don't have the strength or capacity to get through this time, let alone parent and lead your children when you yourself feel so much fear and have so many unknown variants circling through your mind and heart every day. But you do. You do, because you have been prepared for this time. You may not feel like it, but as you take a moment to look back and reflect, I am certain you can see how God has set you up for this specific time, how He has shaped and moulded you for this very moment, how He has pruned and prepared you for this very purpose. Ask Him to show you more, ask Him to speak to you and reveal how He has led you perfectly to the place you are in now, *for such a time as this*.

Not only are you perfectly positioned for purpose in your home, your family, your community, your church, your city, your nation, the world and the Kingdom, but He has fully equipped you and empowered you with everything you need, in Him and through Him, to step into your identity and step out in the authority He has given you through Jesus. You may feel defenceless, clueless, hopeless, especially in the realm of motherhood, trying to navigate these times with your children. But God doesn't call us without equipping us. He doesn't position us without empowering us. And He doesn't place us on the frontline without resourcing us.

The truth is, there's an army of mothers arising right now. There's a remnant of women stepping up as warriors. There's a regiment of His daughters rising up in conviction, waging warfare with the one true enemy, interceding in prayer and worship, standing in the gap of the world and our children and declaring with a vengeance '*Not on our watch*.'

There are mighty mothers taking their fears and turning them into weapons. Taking their convictions and turning them into actions. Taking their visions and implementing them into reality. It's time to take a stand. It's time to band together, it's time to arise in our womanhood as warriors and take a bold, courageous step of faith, together, onto the battlefield as we intercede, intervene, and come between what is, what could be and what can happen by the power of God.

The future of our children is not in *our* hands, but in His. As we yield to Him daily, as we surrender our fears and failures, as we step out in obedience and selflessness, He will pave the way forward on this difficult and narrow path. He has called each and every one of your children to be born *for such a time as this*, and He has purposefully positioned you to be their mother, their defender, their activist, their

intercessor, their teacher, their trainer, their model and example. Do not despise your humble life—your days are not empty, your tasks are not futile, your place in the home is not powerless. You are strategically being used each and every day for *them*. For *their future*. For *their world* they will be living in. For *their freedom*. For *their call and destiny*.

Rise up valiant Mama. Put on all your armour, everyday. Lift your eyes and turn your head toward Him. Put on your battle boots and find the courage to do it for them. Unleash the Mama Bear, release the Lioness, gather your chicks as the Mother Hen and rise up on wings of an Eagle. You are strong, valiant, courageous, bold and you have the power and authority of the living God within you. He has already conquered it all and now you can fight from that place of victory that was purchased at Calvary.

You are called, created and positioned for purpose, *for such a time as this*.

Lots of love,

Nat xxx



Dear Mama

Downtime is essential for my sanity.

Before marriage and family, I would've insisted I was an extrovert. God, shockingly, redeemed my life in my teens. I found my life in Him. At the age of twenty, I was living alone, and I enjoyed opening my home to people on the weekends for the glory of God. I once partied hard in the world. Then my home and life were all for Jesus! Hosting worship and prayer sessions and meals, and leading Bible teachings, was a delight. The fast pace of going to Bible college, staying fit, leading in my workplace, and being at church every time the doors were open was exhilarating. There was no striving—I was in love with Jesus and full of energy. 'Fill my house and use me for revival,' was my prayer.

Hosting the presence of God released an aroma that caused a particular young guy to attend my worship nights. Was it the prayer and worship, the food, or the spunky, Jesus-loving fireball who attracted him? Only he can answer that, but soon he won me over and became my husband.

When the Thriving Became Striving

We married, continued in ministry, saw revival on the college campus, and mentored young people in our home. We had our first daughter right away. I was a mama, wife, and revivalist, living the dream. People packed the house; there was little silence. But as the years went by, the tight schedule of church, kids' activities, work, ministry, and pressure of expectations shifted my joyful exhilaration to stressful frustration. I'd wanted to take the world for Jesus and have a family, but I hadn't asked for all the pressure, and why couldn't there be more hours in a day? Feelings of failure crept into my once-elated soul. What had happened to the dream? I had become gobbled up in busyness. Thriving became, at best, surviving the juggling act of expectations.

Crashing in bed late each night was my way of shutting down, which was not good for intimacy in my marriage. I wanted to be left alone. My husband wondered where the spunk had gone and why the Jesus-loving fireball had become more like an annoyed porcupine. I just wanted time to read my Bible and pray. Was that too much to ask? Prayer happened as I drifted off to sleep and in the night hours, but it felt more like pleading with God for forgiveness—for failing Him and my family—than a desire for intimacy. ‘Speak to me, Lord. Help me. I just want you. Something has to give!’

On Sunday mornings, my husband and I would argue on the way to church because of the stress of getting everyone there on time. We felt the pressure of fitting the mould of the perfect ministry family. I would go to the altar and cry out for Holy Spirit to encounter me and fix our less-than-ideal family. Again, this was not the dream! We were supposed to be living revival together. Instead, I would feel the Lord, hear Him, and hunger for Him, and He would use me in mighty ways, but I continued to feel trapped in feelings of failure. I hadn’t lost my fire, but I’d lost my joy.

I would try to start my day at 4 a.m. to pray and write, but I couldn’t sustain that schedule long term. As a stay-at-home, homeschooling, ministry mum of three little girls, I was exhausted and moody by 5 p.m. each day. Trying to align my schedule with the needs of everyone, I’d swing the pendulum the other way and try staying up late after everyone went to sleep instead. Then my husband would feel neglected.

The Joy of a Wise Friend

‘I just want to do what God placed in me to do. Is that too much to ask? Just a little me and Jesus time, please!’, I’d say with tears streaming down my face.

Mum life changed me. The once fiery dreamer and ‘host with the most’ became anxious, frustrated, and eventually borderline depressed. But I knew there was more. I did love being a mom but didn’t know how to enjoy each moment. I was caught up in the doing and had never considered *being*.

One day a friend visited. As the kids were playing outside, we sat chatting about revival, worship, and the glory of God over a warm cup of coffee—all our favourite topics. She seemed so carefree. She would travel, leading worship at the drop of a dime and bringing the entire family along. She was a prophetic worship leader, a pioneer,

and part of the traveling ministry I led. She always had time to dream with God and walk in peace. Her kids were homeschooled, but she didn't feel pressure. She didn't seem to live under the internal demands I did. Sipping her coffee, she looked at me with that prophetic glimmer in her eye. I knew she was about to say something from the Lord: 'Tammie, are you okay?' I said yes, as I always did, and began to tell her about the next worship endeavour that I was planning. (I'm a spiritual warrior of sorts. I think I'm okay even when my limbs are spiritually blown off, and I'm bleeding out. I'm super resilient, not aware that I need a break. Rest was a curse word to me then, and I am numb to my pain at times. My friends know this about me.)

She looked straight through me, disregarding my answer. I burst into tears and said, 'No, I'm not! I just want to be with Jesus. I have too much on my plate, and I can't seem to get any time alone! The kids, the house, the husband, all the things are shouting at me.' I was so tender. I honestly wanted to run into a cave alone for a few months, though my hiding place would look a little beachier than Elijah's.

To drop the spinning plates would have been shameful to me. There was a time when spinning was my forte, but I was bleeding out and asking for healing. But Holy Spirit was pressing me into a new way of doing life with Him. I felt like the woman with an issue of blood. If only I could touch the hem of His garment, I could be whole. But why did He feel so out of reach?

Even as I type these words, I can feel the tears welling up. I realised that God created me with a deep need for Him in every facet of my existence, but my old way of communion with Him was gone. I was no longer a twenty-year-old single woman with an empty apartment. I needed silence with Him, but every attempt to compartmentalise my time from the chaos of the day ended in hope deferred.

My dear friend spoke rest to my bleeding soul.

'You only need to be still. He is with you in the noise. He is speaking to you when you are with the kids and doing the laundry. He is pleased with you. You are learning how to walk with God in the whirlwind. Simply find the eye of the storm, lean in, and learn how to be in Him.'

Tears gushed forth from somewhere deep within. It was like a well in me had gone dry, but these words caused hidden water to burst like a geyser through my belly and out of my tired eyes. My friend held me

and prayed. I could hear the children's laughter. It was His joy I was missing. His revelation hit me: 'You only need to be still.' (see Exodus 14:14)

The Healing Balm of Stillness

Being still in the Lord is how we find rest. We melt into Him and block out all the noise, and when we grasp this truth, we can learn to be alone with Him even in a crowded room. He is giving us permission to move in sync with Him in every situation.

My friend's words didn't transform me instantly, but the healing began there. Drivenness is part of me. I get in my head too often, as I'm one who feels and thinks deeply. I'm a prophetic reformer and strategist. How could I pioneer worldwide revival, write books, and raise powerful kids without a set schedule and long hours of downtime to pray and study? I didn't even know what 'resting' or 'being still' meant.

Revelation must go deep within, causing us to repent, change the way we think, transform us, and allow our mind to renew. Death to the old makes way for the new. Exodus 14:14 (NIV) speaks of this stillness: 'The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.'

Interestingly, *Strong's Concordance* says the word 'still' in Hebrew in this verse is *hāraš*, meaning 'to plow, cut in, engrave, or be silent.' It's a verb. When we are still, we are participating in the action of being branded by the Lord, preparing our ground for planting, and holding our peace. We are coming to know the ways He fights for us as we abide in Him. In being still, we are in no way inactive or passive. On the contrary, we actively go deeper in Him as we submit our soul to His Spirit. We pioneer with Him in an eternal way of living—one in which He supernaturally takes on the fight and wins.

Maybe you are not like me. Perhaps you love to hear the words 'wait' or 'be still'. I congratulate you on that; teach me your ways. But for those of you who think someone telling you to wait is like putting a wet blanket on your fire, listen to me. Waiting on the Lord is not quitting; it is not ceasing activity. It is renouncing pressure to perform. It is telling your soul to be still and enjoy the moment. Quieting your soul is permission to say no, even when your plate is not overflowing yet. It is leaving wiggle room for fun, joy, peace, and even messes.

A Holy Waiting

Learning to live life entwined with the Lord is not forgoing quiet time alone. Jesus went away to be alone with the Father; He needed silence and alone time. He knew that the urgency of the hour required connection with the Father. Jesus only did what He saw His Father doing (see John 5:19), so He rose early to pray. The people would remain in need as He took His time to be with the Father because He knew kindness and compassion could only flow from heaven. We all need this time alone without feeling guilty.

I thought rising early meant hours before the sun rose, but ten minutes early works. And if you have a baby or toddler, pray while you feed or during naps. Even short, thirty-second prayers in the bathroom throughout the day work. You are in a conversation with your Father, not doing a religious duty. Practically, take short moments to be alone and you'll see a supernatural increase. Learn to be alone in silence and within a crowd of people, even with the tiny people. The panic can wait. Boundaries are holy and pure when submitted to Christ.

Jesus knew how to linger.

Our Bridegroom does not live in a state of hurry. When word came to Him that Lazarus was sick, He took three days to arrive because He loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus so profoundly. He responded to the situation this way in order to bring the most dramatic impact for the sisters and the kingdom of God.

'At this time, a man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany, the village of Mary, and her sister Martha. (Mary, whose brother Lazarus was sick, was to anoint the Lord with perfume and wipe His feet with her hair.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one You love is sick."

When Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, on hearing that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was for two days.' (John 11:1-5 BSB)

Did you see that? Jesus loved...so he stayed where He was for two days. His response directly opposes panic and pressure to perform. He

was moved by the voice of His Father, whom He learned to perceive in the company of differing opinions, pressure, and His probing disciples. Sister, we are invited to dwell in Him with harmony in our souls. This originates with learning to trust His watchfulness.

The Best Kind of Sacrifice Fills Us

Initially, I could not comprehend how to practically do life with kids, a husband, and God, and live my calling as a pioneer. The dream felt more like a nightmare because I had to learn a new way of thinking and living. I equated caring and serving others at the expense of my well-being as service to the Lord and family. I considered it a noble sacrifice.

Beloved, living under the thumb of need is never the Lord's primary desire. Need is never ending on this side of eternity.

Speaking of sacrifices, Jesus had a different perspective on what mattered.

Take in Matthew 26:6-13 (ESV):

'Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor." But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.'"

Being with Him is never a waste. He created time, so you can't lose it when you are with Him. Responding with an intuitive slowness when the pressure to perform is hot is an act of faith. The currency of heaven is faith. Victory belongs to Jesus; He reigns and we get to join in the song. Who can stand against Him? He is a great defender. There is more for us to give away than stale crumbs. When we pour out our all to Him, He pours back into us abundantly, and out of that, we can give away.

'A thief has only one thing in mind—he wants to steal, slaughter, and destroy. But I have come to *give you everything in abundance, more than you expect—life in its fullness until you overflow!*' (John 10:10 TPT). Abiding in Christ, living full of the Holy Spirit, and stripping away everything from our thoughts and life that does not look like the kingdom of God is the pathway to abundant life. 'For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.' (Romans 14:17 BSB)

God was with us in those early years. My kids learned to pray, love others, and love Jesus; we lived in His righteousness; we saw revival and burned for Him. But something was missing—peace and joy. Jesus knew the victory was in our grasp over the constant storms. We were learning to do life with Him, not only for Him. He's so good at waiting.

Jesus Waits and Weeps

The shortest verse in the Bible is 'Jesus wept' (John 11:35). Though a powerful verse, Jesus did more than shed a tiny tear. Jesus was groaning with compassionate intercession. He bore His friends' grief and was indignant with the injustice of death. In this weeping, He was caught up in the mandate to bring justice to the earth. He wasn't feeling failure at His arrival at Lazarus's tomb but authority, power, and the longing to end the effects of sin—death, hell, and the grave. He would weep and turn loss and pain to joy and peace, but He was still as He deeply experienced the moment with the family and the Father.

'When Mary finally found Jesus outside the village, she fell at his feet in tears and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus looked at Mary and saw her weeping at his feet, and all her friends who were with her grieving, he shuddered with emotion and was deeply moved with tenderness and compassion. He said to them, "Where did you bury him?"

"Lord, come with us and we'll show you," they replied.

Then tears streamed down Jesus's face.' (John 1:32–39 TPT)

His tears directly connected to Mary's. Her weeping pulled deep empathy and groaning out of Him. Her and Martha's tears awakened a holy, authority-filled declaration that brought Lazarus out of the

grave. Jesus felt mourning, pain, and injustice. He saw His friends' ashes and heard their accusations of His tardiness. He was not angered by them or hurried but moved inwardly with compassion. He saw the deep chasm between life abundant and destitution, and He responded. From His intercession, joy and life were released. The glory of abiding in Christ is seeing life spring from death and joy flow from pain.

“So you must remain in life-union with me, for I remain in life-union with you. For as a branch severed from the vine will not bear fruit, so your life will be fruitless unless you live your life intimately joined to mine.

“I am the sprouting vine and you're my branches. As you live in union with me as your source, fruitfulness will stream from within you—but when you live separated from me you are powerless. If a person is separated from me, he is discarded; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire to be burned. But if you live in life-union with me and if my words live powerfully within you—then you can ask whatever you desire and it will be done. When your lives bear abundant fruit, you demonstrate that you are my mature disciples who glorify my Father!

“I love each of you with the same love that the Father loves me. You must continually let my love nourish your hearts. If you keep my commands, you will live in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands, for I continually live nourished and empowered by his love. My purpose for telling you these things is so that the joy that I experience will fill your hearts with overflowing gladness!”
(John 15:4-11 TPT)

Mama, Jesus is deeply involved in your life. He has set up residence in your soul. You are His sanctuary. In His presence is fullness of joy. He longs to carry the heavy burden with you. He weeps with you and rejoices with you.

Maybe you feel like Mary and Martha. Have you been confused by His response to your striving to get to Him? Why does He delay? Why hasn't He changed things? It feels like death because something old has died to bring great joy. Your season has changed and the new is springing forth like a well, deep within.

He is speaking to your soul to be still. He's leading you to trust Him. Hidden in the safety of His love, He's inviting you to trust His heart and intentions. Listen intently. He will guide you through these many hills

and valleys of life.

It's time to renounce and reject the accusation against you that you are behind, failing, or missing Him on the days that being a mum is all you can do. Life is breaking through the ashes of weeping. Your promise has arrived. Will you let Him lighten the load? With great guarantee comes great responsibility, but His yoke is easy, and His burden is light, so let Him carry this with you. He is about to cause your heart to overflow with gladness! Simply, all you need to do is be still.

Tammie Southerland



Dear Mama

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
(Romans 8:1)

Have you ever got to the end of a day, one of those long days, and just wanted to hide under a blanket and forget about it all? To forget all the plans that went astray; all the words you spoke that tore down instead of built up; the moments where you looked to other Mums and found you didn't measure up. And yet, hidden away under that dark, heavy blanket you see the faces of those beautiful children of yours (either present or in times past, when they were young) and you see the sting of your words, you feel the hurt that pierced their tender hearts; and you hear a voice that accuses 'you failed', 'you broke them a little today', 'you are not a good mum'.

We fall asleep hidden away here. We wake the next, bright day and see the joy of a new day in the faces of our children and yet we still carry a weight. We are carrying that heavy blanket called 'Mama guilt'. It weighs us down, impacts our decisions, clouds our judgement and makes judgements: 'you are a failure', 'you are not good enough'. Left unchecked, this blanket of guilt becomes a covering of shame, a burden that gets heavier the longer we carry it. A burden that sticks and tries to become part of us.

Oh dear Mamas, this is not who we are! We were not born to carry this burden. We do not have to carry this burden. We do not need to carry this blanket any longer.

Through Jesus '...we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God...in the new way of living in the Spirit.' (Romans 7:6 NLT)

Mamas, there is a NEW WAY where guilt does not lead to shame. We

find ourselves hiding, saying 'The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate...I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.' (Romans 7:14-19 NLT) Sound familiar? Oh, how familiar this struggle is as my racing mind battles within me.

But Paul encourages us that '...if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.' (Romans 7:20 NLT) The struggle is real. The law is good. Sin is living in me, but sin is not me. This is not who I am!

Who am I then? Who can bring me freedom from this guilt before it covers me with shame? What is this NEW WAY? 'Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Romans 7:25 NLT)

Mamas, when you find yourself hiding under that dark heavy blanket, look for Jesus. Invite Him into that dark, hidden place, and allow Him to lead you from guilt through repentance to freedom because, dear Mamas, '...there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.' (Romans 8:1-2 NLT). This NEW WAY of living in the Spirit comes with power. It is by the power of this life-giving Spirit that we are free. And living free is a cover that is light. We can wear it like a beautiful cape through our day and it reminds us that we live led by the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit and '...letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.' (Romans 8:6).

Yes, we will find ourselves under the blanket again as we '...groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope...' (Romans 8:23-24 NLT) And as we wait in hope, let me encourage you, dear Mamas, invite Jesus in, this is where He longs to be, this is where he will show you the NEW WAY, the power of the life-giving Spirit that leads to freedom, life and peace.

Jesus is in heaven, '...sitting in the place of honour at God's right hand, pleading for you.' (Romans 8:34 NLT). And because there is no condemnation of us who belong to Christ Jesus, God says you are blameless. You are faultless. You are guiltless. This is what you carry. Mamas, this is who you are.

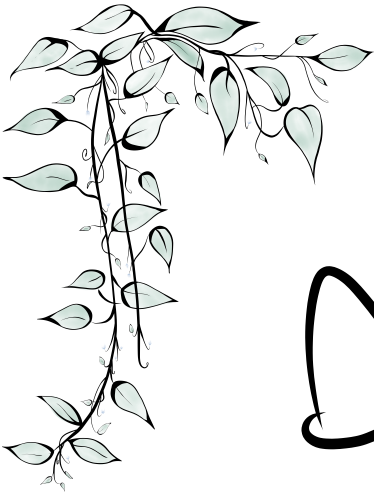
Freedom. Life. Peace. This, I can carry.

So then Mamas, ‘...If God is for us, who can ever be against us?’ (Romans 8:31 NLT). Can failed plans, hurtful words, the disapproving eyes of others, our own failed expectations, leave us wanting...guilty? ‘Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love?’ (Romans 8:35 NLT) Through my own journey, inviting Jesus in, being led by the life-giving Spirit that brings freedom, ‘...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 NLT)

We, Mamas, are loved more than we could ever imagine. Our children are loved more than we could ever imagine. More than we could love them ourselves! Let us throw off the blanket of ‘Mama guilt’ and be led by the power of the life-giving Spirit that brings freedom. As we carry this blanket of freedom, we will point our children to our beautiful, wonderful, gracious, kind, Abba Father full of grace and mercy. A God of forgiveness who has given us the seal of His Holy Spirit to say we are His. There is no condemnation here. There is no guilt. There is family. There is life. There is peace. There is love.

Love,

Kath xo



Dear Mama

Are you feeling tired? The Lord wants to refresh you today. Not the kind of refreshing that a holiday brings—although that is wonderful, but the kind of deep rest that resets you from the very core of your being.

For a moment, I want you to stop and imagine with me. Sit in your favourite chair, your favourite drink in hand, take a few deep breaths and imagine the Lord is about to minister to you right now.

I want you to come with me in your mind to the healing rooms of Heaven.

This is a place I have gone to many times in my spirit, ever since I was a little girl. Now, at first, it may seem strange, but I have a deep conviction that when Romans 12:2 states, 'Be transformed by the renewing of your mind', it also means to be transformed by renewing our imagination.

And oh boy, doesn't our imagination need to be renewed? We so quickly think the worst about ourselves and the world around us. But the Lord wants to give us new eyes, to see things from the high places, just like He does. That place that sees all, not just a brick wall, or dirty dishes, or piles of washing, or...{insert pain point here} :).

It's time to stop imagining the worst in your situation....

It's time to stop thinking about all the things you have done wrong as a mama, wife, or friend....

It's time to feel renewed in places so deep within you as you turn not just your heart but your mind and imagination towards Heaven and see with spirit eyes.

So, if you will take a moment....I want you to imagine. As you close

your eyes and pause in your busy day, the Lord is about to take you on a journey...

He is standing in front of you right now, and He is speaking to you. As you read these words, feel the invitation to come to the healing room...

Hear what He is saying today:

*Come to me, my child
I know your body is tired and in need of healing
Your soul and spirit sometimes feel ripped to shreds.
I want to extend a special invitation to come
Come to somewhere very special to me
It is called my healing room.
It is a real place!*

*You may not be aware of it or have been able to hold the vision in your mind's eye:
So, I will describe it to you, and let my invitation be the map that leads you there.*

Close your eyes and enter in...

*Your journey begins by walking down an ancient path.
Made of stones the colour of onyx blue
There are mountain ranges in the distance—of which you are walking towards.
It is silent here because this is a journey you must take alone.*

*Finally, you arrive at a small house-like structure leaning into a rolling hill.
Knock on the door.
I am expecting you, and so I will always answer.*

*Tired from your journey, you collapse into my arms—It's ok—I've got you.
Inside is a comfortable yet bare room.
It's compares to a hospital room, yet there is no sterility here.
It is a place of peace and rest, and you immediately feel stillness overcome you.
I hand you some plain robes, and you change from your pilgrim clothes, your clothes of heaviness into the light linen fabric that smells like home.*

There's no need to tell me what is wrong, for I am the great physician,

and I know all things. All I need is for you to be here and trust me!

I lead you to a big, soft bed. As you pull back the covers, you feel feathers envelope you like a cloud.

Clean sheets that smell like they have been aired where the wind gently blows, and a spring sun presses its fingers into the cloth and leaves its imprint.

As you slip between the covers,

I begin reading scriptures to you.

It is like medicine—leaking into your very pores!

Then I give you a drink.

I lift a golden chalice to your lips, and the icy water quenches the dryness from your walk. This water is from the river of life, and it does more than fill a physical thirst.

So, my child, keep drinking until you are satisfied!

Now, it's time to sleep.

I pull the covers over you, and you lay your head on pillows like clouds. Don't worry; I will not leave you—I will continue to speak my words of life over you as you rest.

Let go and fall into a deep, rejuvenating sleep.

My love for you is drawing out the poison—you don't have to do a thing! In the night, I am ministering to you!

Eventually, the sun peeps over the horizon, and it is morning.

'Awake, O sleeper!' I whisper in your ear.

You gingerly stretch your limbs and yawn.

Something is different. You notice it straight away.

You feel refreshed, full of energy and life...

You are no longer pulled down by the weight of the past, the burden of illness or the pain of regrets.

Because when you come to me, I WILL HEAL YOU.

Now, child, it's time to go back to your work.

But no need to drag your feet—my mercies are new every morning.

As you have leaned into me, I have recalibrated you and reminded you of your purpose.

You are always welcome here.

If you're tired, or you're burnt out on religion, If your body fails you, Come to my healing room—I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Now, friend, it's time to take a few deep breaths. As you go about your day, know the Father is continuing to not only heal you but empower you as you do all that is placed in your hands.

I decree and declare over you today that you would be full of peace. You will walk in his new mercies that are new for you every morning. I declare that the abiding presence of the Lord would continually refresh you. He is empowering your every step, and together you will be able to fulfil every mandate and promise over your life!

Roma XX

Romans 12:2 (TPT) 'Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you, but be inwardly transformed by the Holy Spirit through a total reformation of how you think. This will empower you to discern God's will as you live a beautiful life, satisfying and perfect in his eyes.'

Matt 11:28-30 (MSG) 'Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.'

Is 26:19 (TPT) 'It's time to awaken and sing for joy, you dwellers in the dust!

As the glistening, radiant dew refreshes the earth, so the Lord will awaken those dwelling among the dead.'

Lamentations 3:22-24 (MSG) 'God's loyal love couldn't have run out, his merciful love couldn't have dried up. They're created new every morning. How great your faithfulness! I'm sticking with GOD (I say it over and over). He's all I've got left.'



Dear Mama

Dear Mama,

In the hour of these present uncertain times, fear would seek to find a home in your heart when it comes to the future of your children. The Lord's encouragement to you, beloved mama's, in this hour is do not fear for the future of your children.

In fact, the scripture promises us that we can rejoice over the future of our children.

Proverbs 31:25 (AMPC)

'Strength and dignity are her clothing *and* her position is strong and secure; she rejoices over the future [knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it!]

I used to fret over the future of my children and realised it effected the way I would parent and engage and interact with them. Imparting God into their lives came from a place of fear, even correcting, training and disciplining them was driven from fear. I feared for their future. I feared they wouldn't walk in the ways of God and they would make wrong choices amongst a whole bunch of other dreads and concerns I had for their lives. I realised the desire I had for my children to love the Lord and walk with Him all the days of their lives was so intense it turned into an anxiety. This may sound weird to some of you, but possibly there maybe some of you who can relate? Something had to break, something had to change. This anxiety was robbing me from the joy and delight of motherhood. Motherhood became such a heavy burden that at times I felt like I was crushing under its weight. Then I heard God's voice. Praise God for that! Can anyone else raise a Hallelujah for when God speaks! He said to my heart: 'Anita, you are eating from the wrong tree!' I'm like, 'Wait what?' Then I saw it. The fruit that was being produced in my life was anxiety, turmoil, fear,

worry, overwhelming feelings of failing in my mothering etc., etc., etc. He revealed to me that whatever tree I am eating from will produce the corresponding fruit. He showed me that eating from the tree of life ALWAYS produces peace and hope no matter what pressures or concerns we face. Well by George I got it!!!! The tree of life is FAITH. It is TRUST. The tree of knowledge of good and evil is worry, concern, striving, fear, anxiety, pressure, despair and hopelessness.

So I chose to switch diets and start eating from the tree of life. I chose to first trust God with my children and ask for wisdom instead of freaking out, staying up hours and hours during the night trying to work out other ways and solutions to help them. The Lord even showed me that when I thought I was praying I was actually really worrying. I was talking to a friend once regarding one of my sleepless night episodes over one of my children. I said to her, 'Yeah I was up last night praying for' The Lord so lovingly interrupted me and spoke to my heart and said, 'Um, actually, you were up all night worrying. I didn't hear any trust or faith filled communication on my end.' I was shocked, stunned even! I thought wow, that is so true, what I thought was prayer was actually worry. Then the Lord proceeded to tell me that if I just spent as much time in prayer over the concerns for my kids as I did worrying about it or trying to solve and fix it/them, then I would see major shifts and breakthroughs in my life and theirs. How true He was!

PRAY FOR YOUR KIDS – DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM

This verse in Philippians 4:6-7 (AMPC) is now my go to and has proven to totally defuse all fear and anxiety when they try to take hold of my heart.

'Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God. And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.'

Philippians 4:6-7 (AMPC)

We don't realise how much of our time we sow into fear, anxiety and worry. And we probably only spend a small percentage of that in

prayer. We pray for 10 minutes and think well nothing is shifting. Well, I would say JUST KEEP PRAYING!!!! If you can spend hours worrying, you can surely spend hours praying!

If I feel worry and anxiety grip me over my kids regarding something they may be facing or going through, I now take it to prayer immediately. There is nothing too small to pray about. Sometimes it's the little things that cause worry and concern because we harbour that problem and spend time trying to work out solutions, instead of casting the care onto the Lord as 1 Peter 5:7 says to do.

Notice in the abovementioned scripture (Philippians 4:6) it says to pray in EVERY circumstance and in EVERYTHING. So that doesn't mean just big things it means in ALL things. I guarantee you it will shift the anxiety and worry in your heart and give room for wisdom and solutions to come. Some of those solutions could be how to pray, other solutions may involve what to do or say. Nonetheless when our hearts are heavy with worry, we are not able to properly discern the heavenly wisdom needed. The Bible even says in 2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV) that God has not given us a spirit of fear but of love, power and a sound mind. Therefore, we can read it like this: 'Without fear we are able to think properly and make sound and wise decisions with our tongues and our actions.'

Recently, one of my children was encountering a situation at school that was a burden and stress to her. Hearing my child's distress, I could feel my emotions beginning to rise. I just wanted to fix this situation, I just wanted to take away this stress and pain from her heart. In those moments it is so easy to respond emotionally. However, I just heard her heart and comforted her in the moment, offering no real wisdom or insight at that point until I had time to calm down and wait on the Lord for how I could help guide her in this time. It wasn't until later that night when putting her to bed, I had calmed down and had a totally different perspective on the situation. I said to my child how about we pray about this situation together.

We held hands and I began to pray Romans 16:20, that the God of peace would come and crush Satan under our feet. We asked that the God of peace would crush all demonic work and activity of fear, intimidation, accusation and whatever else was going on in that situation. We asked that the Lord's peace would bring alignment and truth and as we spoke peace over the problem it was like a weight just lifted off my child's heart. We didn't have the solution or know what to do next but trusted the Lord would work it out, and He did.

I encourage you to cast the care and concerns you have for your children and their future to the Lord. Saturate their lives in prayer no matter how young or old they are and see the Lord's joy enter your heart enabling you to rejoice over their future. From this joy will come forth declarations of hope, promise and prosperity. Your promise is Deuteronomy 1:11, that the blessing of the Lord is upon your seed and the generations to come. So, God said it, it is done. Let's pray.

Father in the name of Jesus we come to You, the source of truth, love and peace. We ask that the God of peace would surely crush under His feet every work of the enemy over our children's lives and every fear, worry and concern that tries to harbour and find a home in our hearts. We choose to trust You with our children and repent from sowing into worrying over them rather than praying for them. Today we choose to eat from the tree of life and abide in Your peace that surpasses all understanding by casting every concern we have for their lives upon You. Today I choose to pray over my kids and no longer worry over them. Lord, we ask for wisdom in all things concerning raising our children and thank You for Your perfect plan and promise for their lives that are thoughts of peace, to give them a hope and a future. Thank You for being able to turn around any situation that seems impossible and hopeless. Thank You that You are the repairer of the breach, and You raise up the desolations of many generations. Thank You Lord that nothing is too broken that You cannot fix and that all things are possible to us who believe.

Many blessings,

Anita Alexander



Dear Mama

A scripture comes to mind in starting this chapter and its, 'You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You' (Isaiah 26:3 NIV). How encouraging that it is very possible for us mamas to have perfect peace, in the midst of sleepless nights, breaking up another sibling fight, cleaning up messes, folding a pile of laundry, cooking while holding a baby and making sure our toddler doesn't get hurt, the emotions of a daughter, or telling our son to slow down, need I go on? In this scripture, it comes with a condition, which is having a steadfast mind in trusting God. If we live in fear or have anxiety about a situation, it will rob us of that 'perfect peace' that is promised to us as believers in Christ. How do we keep our mind steadfast? Through relationship with God. Relationship is not just having thirty minutes of quiet time a day to check a box, however it is continually talking to God throughout the day, listening and obeying his voice, wanting to read his scripture and allowing it to shine light in the dark places of our lives. Last time I checked, a mum with young kids rarely has long periods of quiet time throughout the day. We need to be intentional about keeping an ear open during our busy days because He will speak to us if we are listening. I remember crying out to God one day, when I had a baby and toddler pleading for quiet time with Him because I didn't have any extra time, even if it was just thirty minutes. I remember Him gently responding with, 'Jonali, I can do more with you in five minutes than with a few hours.' This stuck with me forever, especially in having a third recently and starting all over again. God also uses our children to teach us, especially in the area of character development, can I hear an amen? It might look something like, we have an outburst with one of our children, and then have conviction about it. We repent before the Father, asking for His help to change, and then asking our child for forgiveness. Or, we are exhausted from waking up with a baby all night and trying to keep our toddler entertained while making dinner at the end of the day, and we simply ask Jesus for the strength to keep going. Sometimes

it's shifting our focus or thoughts of motherhood being 'so hard' to instead, getting overwhelmed by His great love for us. I've been to too many mums groups where the focus was how hard it was being a mum. Shouldn't it be easy, in Christ, because we are continually giving our burdens to Him? Through fixing our eyes on Jesus, our earthly circumstances become smaller, just like the lyric in the song, 'turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full at His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace'.

A few years ago, I would call the hardest season of my life I have had to walk through. It was raising a baby and toddler while fighting for my life being clinically diagnosed with Lyme disease. We all know what it's like to be sick and care for little ones, but this was a few years for me. It was so bad that I thought about a funeral and told my husband to find a Christian wife to raise our children, thankfully, death wasn't in His plan for my life. With every symptom in the book including mind fog, dizziness, back pain, fatigue, vision blurriness, sound sensitivity, food sensitivities, weakness, chills in my brain, and many other symptoms, I had to somehow care for my baby, Priya at the time, and my toddler, Elijah while my husband was at work from about 7am to 6pm. I could barely function, yet had to still be a mother and care for my precious kids. Not to mention all the fear and anxiety that I had struggled with my whole life coming straight to the surface, especially when the sickness that wasn't going away began to really take hold over my body. Let me tell you, mama, if I got through that season, you can get through any season that comes in life. If you have Jesus, you have the answer, the keys and hope to turn your situation upside down! What was the key to that season? Unwavering focus of fixing my eyes and mind upon Jesus. I had to learn how to not focus on my body (earthly circumstances that were very real) but instead, on Christ and His unseen promises. It was not an overnight answer to prayer, however a few years of standing when not seeing the promise right away. He took me through an incredible season of transformation in renewing my mind which ultimately led to my physical and emotional healing. 'For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace' (Romans 8:6 KJV). Derek Prince says, 'Now, you know whether you're spiritually minded or not. If you have life and peace, that comes from being spiritually minded. If you're still anxious, troubled, tormented and uncertain, you haven't yet moved into your inheritance. You're entitled to it but you haven't come into it.' God taught me complete dependency (like a newborn is dependent on their mother for everything) during this season and having a baby in that season made the parallel very real. I would have to pray for the strength to make a peanut butter and jelly

sandwich for my kids, or drive a car, or take a shower. In this season, I took my life about five minutes at a time and learned how to be very intentional about staying focused on hearing His voice, meditating on His word, singing worship and speaking out His truth. I had no other choice to believe in the unseen versus the seen. I remember Him speaking to me in this season, 'Jonali, I want to show you more with your eyes closed than your eyes open.' And this truth set me up for life beyond that two-year season. God also used Elijah and Priya to help keep me going, and to teach me they are not a burden, but instead a privilege and joy to care for. They brought so much life and love, not realising or understanding the struggle I was going through. How many times have we had to do that as mamas? Whether we have just experienced a miscarriage, or a death in the family, or another life-changing circumstance where we had to stay strong for our kids? But the secret is to find our strength in God, because He makes all things possible to those who believe (Mark 9:23). We were not meant to do it on our own (Read John 15)! Jesus taught me an unwavering or militant-like focus and dependency on Him in this season and set up some of the very foundations that I needed for life. He showed me how to fix my eyes upon My Father, and not on myself. His strength in me would be stronger and stronger each time I obeyed God whether in deed or thought, to the point where I was completely healed. It also got to the point where I wasn't focused on the healing anymore, but on Jesus, and then the symptoms just slowly started to disappear (Matthew 6:33). If you are having a wilderness season, mama, don't turn from Jesus or temporary fixes because He is the only answer!

So back to, how do we focus on God with the many distractions of motherhood? We have a continual relationship with Him, throughout the day, not a religious checkbox of one quiet time per day. Practically, what does that look like? It could be getting out of bed in the morning as your child is waking up speaking out something like, 'Jesus, thank You for today, and that it will be an amazing day in You, give me the strength to go above and beyond with my children today.' Hitting play on a worship playlist so that you are worshipping Him and focused, as you get your kids ready for the day. Maybe starting with a breakfast devotional, where you go through a few scriptures with your children. As the morning continues, taking pauses thanking Jesus for who He is and praying for a situation that is not yours, maybe salvation for a loved one or for a situation on the other side of the world. If you're able to use your kids nap time or if they have a quiet time, for time with Him praying, or in His word, instead of cleaning, or cooking, or doing one of the many things we need to do throughout the day. Towards dinnertime, maybe checking in with the kids to see how their day was

and praying or repenting together. I would talk about Martha and Mary, but that is probably a whole chapter or book in and of itself! Let's not get burnt out with our children, but instead be who God called us to be as nurturers for them. We were never made to feel like we are 'losing control' of our kids because we were never meant to be in control in the first place, but instead surrendered. The devil wants us to focus on 'me', as it is a very self-driven culture, when instead, we were made to actually die to self, and live unto Christ: I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me (Galatians 2:20 NIV).

I pray that you, amazing, wonderful and beautiful mama, would learn how to possess that 'perfect peace' in keeping your mind steadfast on Him, because you trust in Him (Isaiah 26:3). May God, in all of your circumstances, help you to have an unwavering focus on the unseen, not the seen in all parts of your life so that He may be glorified. Mama, hang onto His promises through relationship, and watch them unfold one by one. May you teach your children, through your actions, how to live a surrendered and holy life in Jesus, in the midst of motherhood busyness, so that they would grow up to want to follow Him also. Jesus says that His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). May God's strength perfect you in weakness mama, so that your children and those around you will be a witness of how powerful, wonderful, and miraculous your Father in Heaven certainly is!

With His unfailing love,

Jonali ♥



Dear Mama

'At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

"Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me." When Naomi realised that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.' Ruth 1:14-18 (ESV)

The story of Ruth and Naomi has come to mind so much recently. I love the beautiful relationship, born out of grief and loss. I love the selflessness of Naomi, trying to do what she thinks is best for her daughters-in-law, urging them to go back to their families after they have all lost their husbands. But I am in awe of the faithfulness of Ruth, the one who stays and clings to Naomi as a sign of her devotion and loyalty.

In the verses following this passage, Ruth and Naomi return to Bethlehem, and the scripture says 'the whole town was stirred when they returned. The town may have been shaken by the losses of the three men in their family, but perhaps they were stirred because it was a little shocking to see that someone would follow their widowed mother-in-law to her home, when she could have very well found another husband in her own land.

The Lord has been showing me just how important true community is. Not just the kind that you see once a week and exchange pleasantries. Not the kind where you have to get dolled up and go meet at a trendy coffee shop and pretend like everything is going great. Not the kind where you feel like you have to spend hours upon hours creating some

kind of Martha Stewart-like appearance in order to invite them to your home. God is encouraging us to find our Ruths.

In a world where comparison and performance and success as a mother is rampant, God wants us to find the ones who will say 'where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.' As mothers, we need a support system of women who won't judge us and won't leave us, even when we try to push them away.

Recently a dear friend of mine, I'll call her Jenn, and her husband were called to pick up their family and move across oceans to pursue the 'new' that God has for them. The other day when I was planning to sit down and write this entry, I got a phone call from her asking for help packing up her kitchen, as she was pressed for time, and renters were moving in. Knowing this was possibly the last time I would see her before they left, I closed my computer and drove to her house. Another friend arrived, we put on the coffee, and got to work. We packed dishes, folded laundry, cleaned out the fridge, and wiped down almost everything in sight.

I knew that this was a divine appointment. It was not only a blessing to see Jenn one last time, but a picture of what I was to share. These are some of my Ruths. They are the sweet, faithful sisters in Christ who show up in the messes, the hardships, or when we need to get away for an evening and remember that we exist outside of packing lunches and vacuuming up a thousand crumbs.

These are the women who dropped everything and came over to hold me and pray after my miscarriage, who rock my babies when I just need to sleep, and who come into my mess, grab a broom, and chat while I wash dishes. Your people, my people. Your God, my God. Your mess, my mess. Your grief, my grief.

I also feel like the Lord is saying, 'You are not alone.' You may feel like there is no one like this in your life, that you have been on a very lonely journey of motherhood. Ask God to bring you a Ruth (or a few!). I was in a season where I was going it alone, and the Lord brought someone to mind that I hadn't thought of in a very long time. I cried out to the Lord, 'If only I could reconnect with her!' Within weeks of that prayer, God amazingly pulled all the pieces together, I found out she (now my best friend) lived in the same city, and we were getting a coffee together!

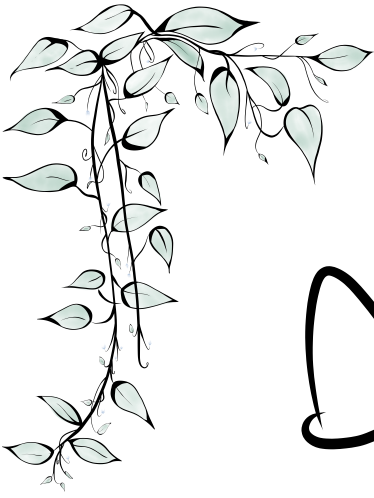
The last thing the Lord highlighted was when Ruth and Naomi travel back to Bethlehem, where Ruth worked in the fields of Boaz. He eventually takes Ruth as his wife, redeeming both women back into the family line. I believe the Lord is opening our eyes to the 'Ruths' who we are to lead to Jesus, our kinsman redeemer. There is a harvest coming, and we can love people into the family of God through beautiful, authentic, faithful, Jesus-filled friendships that will cause entire towns to be stirred.

Prayer:

Father God, reveal to us who our 'Ruths' are. Bring us those you intend for us to do life with. Proverbs 12:26 says "The righteous choose their friends carefully", so we ask for wisdom and your Holy Spirit to guide us. Give us grace to be faithful friends so our relationships will be open doors into Your family. We declare that we are not alone, for YOU will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.

With Love in Christ,

Rebekah Bartels



Dear Mama

Are you feeling guilty or conflicted because you feel so fulfilled as a mother yet feel like there's something missing? Do you love being a stay-home mama yet have a longing in your heart to start a business? Do you feel called to entrepreneurship, but guilt and a spirit of religion have stepped in to tell you that you can't have both and you shouldn't want both?

Maybe this stems from your upbringing, or maybe it's the culture and society around you that says you can't have it all. In fact, it says that to be a good mother means you must give up 18 years of your life or more depending on how many children you have. It tells you to focus solely on raising children and suggests wanting to do anything more is wrong even sinful. You feel guilty even thinking about your desire to do more, but deep inside your heart you know you were created for more, purposed for more here and now, but you find yourself fighting this internal battle wondering if you're just being selfish.

Does this resonate with you? Are you caught in this tension of being incredibly grateful for your season of motherhood yet feeling a strong tugging for entrepreneurship?

If that's you I want to encourage you with this...

Being a mother is a beautiful gift. Truly the greatest honor a mother has is to raise children for the Lord. Yet the Lord has put the burning desire for entrepreneurship inside of you for a reason.

I once heard a wise person say something along the lines of, 'God does not connect us to dead end dreams. He gives us dreams so they may be fulfilled.'

That vision you're pregnant with is yours to birth and fulfill. You are

not selfish for wanting to pursue all that God has created you to do and has purposed for you to do now. Never feel guilty or ashamed for that. You are no less of a mother for wanting to raise children, build a kingdom business and make massive impact in people's lives inside and outside of your home.

In fact, there are women in scripture who were wives, mothers and also entrepreneurs. A prime example of that is the Proverbs 31 Woman. She was a wife, a mother, and an entrepreneur who employed others to fulfill household duties so she could do the things she was born to do! She took care of her household while buying and selling fields, turning a profit. The heart of her husband trusted her and boasted about her. Her children would rise up and call her blessed. She was spiritually strong, gave to the poor, and laughed at the days ahead.

She didn't have to choose between being a good mother and being a profitable businesswoman, and neither do you.

So...if you have been trying to ignore and suppress the dreams and vision in your heart because someone or something told you it was wrong to want more while raising children, then I want to liberate you with these two words...PERMISSION GRANTED!

You have permission to dream with God! Permission to pursue the vision and the mission the Lord has put inside of you to fulfill!

You have permission to be an incredible, loving and nurturing mother and wife, while also building a legacy and making massive impact through entrepreneurship!

You have permission to silence the voice of the enemy that says you can't have it all and attempts to paralyze you with guilt!

You have permission follow Holy Spirit into your God-given calling and purpose; to rise, run and become the woman He created you to be!

Yes, there is a season for everything. Sometimes there's a season of waiting and sometimes there's a season of laying things down, but there's also a season of Him saying, "Daughter, the time is now."

No need to wait until all of your children are all grown to step into your purpose. It's time to come alive!

There's no limitations mama! Go and joyfully step into what He's leading

you to do! There's people waiting on the other side of your yes that will be touched and blessed by your obedience.

Father, I pray for this incredible mama who has a deep desire to raise children, to build legacy and make impact in and outside of her home. I pray for the boldness and courage to overcome fear and crush the lies that she can't do it all because the truth is she can do all things through Christ Jesus!! I pray peace and divine wisdom over her. Give her a wise and understanding heart to discern rightly as she goes on this journey with you. I pray You increase her gift of faith to trust and confidently rely on You to direct her steps and guide her through all the "How's". I pray you release to her the strategies and the blueprints from heaven for how to build business and take care of her household with even greater joy! I pray her husband would boast about her and her children would rise up and call her blessed!

I thank you Lord for removing the shackles of false beliefs and limited thinking, and for setting her free to do what you've purposed her to do! I thank you that as she steps out in faith You will bend time on her behalf, You will expand her capacity and You will give her the grace to do all you've given her to do and flourish! I thank you for this Proverbs 31 Woman, this purpose-driven, kingdom-centered, Jesus-loving mama who's on a mission to change the world! I bless her, her household, and everything you've given her to birth, build and steward in Jesus Name, Amen!

Lyly

'A capable, intelligent, and virtuous woman—who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far above rubies or pearls.

The heart of her husband trusts in her confidently and relies on and believes in her securely, so that he has no lack of [honest] gain or need of [dishonest] spoil.

She comforts, encourages, and does him only good as long as there is life within her.

She seeks out wool and flax and works with willing hands [to develop it].

She is like the merchant ships loaded with foodstuffs; she brings her household's food from a far [country].

She rises while it is yet night and gets [spiritual] food for her household and assigns her maids their tasks.' (Proverbs 31:10-15 AMPC)

'Her children rise up and call her blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied); and her husband boasts of and praises her, [saying];' (Proverbs 31:28 AMPC)

'Her sons and daughters arise in one accord to extol her virtues, and her husband arises to speak of her in glowing terms.' (Proverbs 31:28 TPT)



Dear Mama

I want to speak these words over you that I felt from the Father's heart to you. 'The best is yet to come'. I want you to feel the expectancy and excitement in those words. I want you to feel the hope God is releasing to you in those words. They are words that don't chain you to the past, they release you from the past and catapult you into a space of incredible possibility. You are not defined by your past, you are not defined by 'what was', you are not defined by mistakes or what you mean deem as a 'failure' in raising children or being a mother, you are defined as a daughter of the King of Kings. You are radically and ferociously loved by Almighty God, the Perfect Father. He adores you! You are the apple of His eye, you are His delight and He has a future brimming with hope, and good things for you and your children, and family.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) says 'I know the plans I have for you. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you and to give you a hope and a future'.

Dear Mama, Dear precious Mama, I want you to hear the Lord's heart for you today. There are great things ahead in Christ for you and your family. He has big dreams that He wants to fulfill in your lives and there are days of recompense, restoration, healing, freedom, thriving, flourishing and blossoming ahead of you. The Lord has seen all the concerns and cares, and you have carried the weight of concern so heavily, but Jesus wants to remind you today that His burden is easy and His yoke is light. (Matthew 11:28).

You are entering days with Him where you will encounter Jesus and His heart in such deep ways that is going to bring such refreshment and rest to your soul. The Lord has seen those deep weary places of your heart and He is shining His light and His love into the crevices of those parts of your heart and causing a flourishing of life and hope

to abound.

I hear the whisper of His heart over you that is echoed in Ephesians 3:20 (TPT):

‘Never doubt God’s mighty power to work in you and accomplish all of this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination. He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energises you.’

The Lord has a bountiful harvest for you in the coming days. He has promises fulfilled in your life as a Mama and the lives of your children and family that are going to cause you to fall deeper in love with Him, to see His faithfulness in ways you’ve never imagined and to see the power of God manifested in your life to bring forth that which He has promised, in unprecedented and exponential ways.

The Lord wants you to know that what YOU have been dreaming about personally, what is in YOUR heart, YOUR desires as a Mama, have not been forgotten or overlooked. YOU, have not been forgotten or overlooked. The Lord has incredible surprises planned for you that will cause your heart to be glad. You will overflow with gratitude at what the Lord has done and can do. The deeper reawakening to His power and His faithfulness is upon you. The deep groaning cry that comes from the place of seeing God move in power and fulfill that which He has spoken will birth a deeper cry within you ‘There is NOTHING that God cannot do’.

I see Him bringing you deeper into the well of revelation of His love, precious, dear Mama. He wants to overwhelm you again with His love for you. His love that burns deeply for you and will fill you and baptise you afresh again, setting you free from deep seated fears and foreboding and seeing you arise with HOPE and JOY looking to the future.

‘Bold power and glorious majesty are wrapped around her as she laughs with joy over her latter days’ (Proverbs 31:25 TPT)

‘Strength and dignity are her clothing *and* her position is strong and secure; she rejoices over the future (the latter day or time to come, knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it)!’ (Proverbs 31:25 AMPC)

There are depths into the revelation of His love that await you dear

precious Mama. Ask Him, cry out for the fire of His love to baptise you afresh, because it's bursting forth from His heart to you, to baptise you afresh in His ferocious love for you.

'Then by constantly using your faith, the life of Christ will be released deep inside you, and the resting place of his love will become the very source and root of your life. Then you will be empowered to discover what every holy one experiences - the great magnitude of the astonishing love of Christ in all its dimensions. How deeply intimate and far-reaching is his love! How enduring and inclusive it is! Endless love beyond measurement that transcends our understanding - this extravagant love pours into you until you are filled to overflowing with the fullness of God!' (Ephesians 3:17-19 TPT)

God has so much more for you precious Mama. There are greater things ahead. Bigger than you can imagine. He is going to outdo your wildest imagination. I want to encourage you, hand the disappointments to Him, let Him take them and bring healing to your heart. Ask Him to step into those places where disappointment has lived, and ask Jesus to speak His truth into those spaces to bring His healing. Then watch His fire ignite the places within your heart to dream again and to dream with Him in greater ways than you ever have.

Ask Him to reveal those dreams inside you, those desires, those long-awaited promises, and watch Him bring them to life.

The best is yet to come. It's a new day and the SON is rising over your new season releasing hope, revelation, healing, strength, joy, passion and greater fire of His presence and love.

Arise Dear Mama! A new day awaits where your heart will be glad in greater ways, in all that the Lord has for you. There are deeper revelations and secrets of His heart He wants to share with you. Draw close, linger. Listen. He is going to show you more of His heart and plans for you than you ever imagined.

Adventure Awaits!

'There's a private place reserved for the devoted lovers of Yahweh, where they sit near him and receive the revelation-secrets of his promises' (Psalm 25:14 TPT)

Lana xx



Dear Mama

My daughter...

Do you know who wrote Proverbs 31? It's that chapter in the bible that speaks of a woman of unsurpassed beauty and ability. That was me! I wrote it, and when I wrote it I had you in mind! You read of a woman who's deeds mostly go unnoticed, but they are not unnoticed by me. Please don't say that you don't measure up to that extraordinary woman! You do!! I created you and you are extraordinary and your love for your children and for me is truly extraordinary. Proverbs 31 isn't simply a list of accomplishments and it's definitely not a bar that you need to jump to be a beautiful and godly woman. It's an expression of the love of her heart and how that love flows so powerfully into her family. Your love is doing infinitely more than you can see, but I can see it. It's going infinitely further than you can understand, but I can understand it. Your love is eternal and that's exactly the way I designed it to be, and every single time you love you are doing something eternal.

I've watched you sow so deeply into your children. I've watched you try new things, adventure into new things, and love like only you can do. No one has loved your kids like you and even in writing this letter, through tears, I want you to know how proud I am of you. Never more so than today my daughter. You are shining with the love that I seeded within you long before you even wondered if you'd have children.

There are days ahead of you when you will look back on these moments and know that each day builds into the next and as it does you take with it each lesson you've learned. You will begin to see them as days where you have celebrated each connection that you have made with each of your children. Some of those connections have been simple and some have felt like they are hard fought for. Each one is building your children to be all that they are designed for, and

often, completely the opposite of what you received as a daughter. I have seen the moments where you have made decisions to give your children what you did not receive, and I know the courage that you had to step out and make those decisions. Some of those decisions have been made at great cost to yourself that no one, other than myself, has seen. Generations are being healed by the love that you carry and so freely pour out, generations forward and the generation behind you. Your parents will be affected and changed by this love. You see love is designed to grow and not to be contained. Each time you love your family grows and changes and you, my daughter, carry this love.

This love is me, and it is unchanging. I know that some days you feel like David when he was walking through the dark valleys of Psalm 23. These are the days that you have just crawled into bed believing that you haven't been present with your children, or that you lost your temper when you shouldn't have. You said things that you wished you could take back and you've wondered if you've messed your kids up. These days are not as difficult as you might have been tempted to believe. Each moment that you have called a failure is a moment that I have called something entirely different. It is a healing moment, for you and for your children. Each mistake is a moment for your family to grow, and you are discovering these moments in the valley. Even after these moments I have watched you get up the next morning and love each of your children uniquely and powerfully. You have not given up, rather you have given out to each of them. Much like with David, you too will find me in that valley if you look for me. You are not alone, and you have not been abandoned. I am there as much as I am with you as when everything is going so well.

You, my daughter, are creating a new Psalm and like David's Psalms, yours is real and authentic. Yes, your story speaks of the valleys of darkness, but it also speaks of the moments by still waters and at the feast table. Your story is a growing expression of God's goodness and mercy following you all the days of your life. So, take heart in these days, for these are the days of wonder. As you look into the heart of each child, may you be given eyes to see beyond the veil into the depths of who they are. I have put words into your heart and on your lips to impart to each of them. As each child is different, so will your words be different for each of them. Call them by the name that I know them by, and by the story that I have birthed them into. They are an extension of all that I have birthed within you. Look to see the beauty within them and you will also begin to see more of the beauty that I have placed within you. You have never been more beautiful

than you are right now.

So here is a Psalm for you:

(To be sung to the tune 'Jireh' by Maverick City)

So many days you've woken to meet the sun as it rises,
And you've met it with a silent prayer that is laced with hope
and power.

There have been days where doubt and despair have warred
for the hope that you carry.

This hope is eternal, as you are and as your children are.

No act of love has silently escaped my eyes, for my eyes have
always been on you.

No tear that has been shed has fallen to the ground without my
own tears falling with it.

Selah

You have been created to love, and my daughter, you have lived
within this creation moment.

You have been created to be wild and free, and my daughter,
you are discovering what it means that I didn't create you to
tame you.

You have been created to be loved, and my daughter, it is the
desire of my heart to love you every moment of my life.

Selah

My daughter, these are the days of wonder.

Look to the present and you will start to see the future.

Each of your children is uniquely made, loved and uniquely and
empowered.

You can see my design in each and as you do, lift a mirror and
see the design that I have placed in you.

They carry your life, they share your blood and they are
empowered by our love.

My daughter, I've listened to the prophecies that have flowed out of
your heart as you have spoken to your children. You have been my
voice in helping to know who they are and all that they are capable
of doing. I've listened as you have taught them about me, shown them
how to see me and led them in believing in me. I've marvelled at the
way you teach them to trust me, to hear me and to love me. I have

never been more proud of you than I am today.

It's in these unseen moments, by so many, that you are most seen and known by me. Each sandwich you have made, each mess you have cleaned up, each wound you have tended to, each loss and heartbreak and every tear that you have dried has not been unnoticed. Each success and each artwork that makes it onto the fridge is remembered. Each evening when you collapse into the couch and long for the beautiful silence of the room to enfold you and transport you into Eden. No one has seen all of these moments, but I have seen what all of these moments add up to. I am watching a generation learn to love through your love. I am watching a generation grow through the lessons that you have learned. I am watching revival stir within the heart of your family as this love goes beyond the walls of your home and moves into the neighbourhood. It may not always be as pretty as you hoped, but it is glorious and brilliant to me.

Put simply, I love you. I see you. And I trust you. My daughter.

Your Papa

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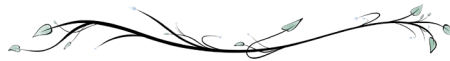
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Published by Lana Vawser Ministries Incorporated
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