

Finally Sweet **16**

**16 REFLECTIONS FOR
DAUGHTERS @ 16 & BEYOND**

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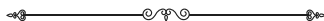
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DEDICATION



To the six precious girls, JWAKIN.
Because you matter,
our hearts and minds melted down to this book.
Live simply, purely and eternally.
May (y)our stories conspire to inspire many.

Finally Sweet Sixteen!



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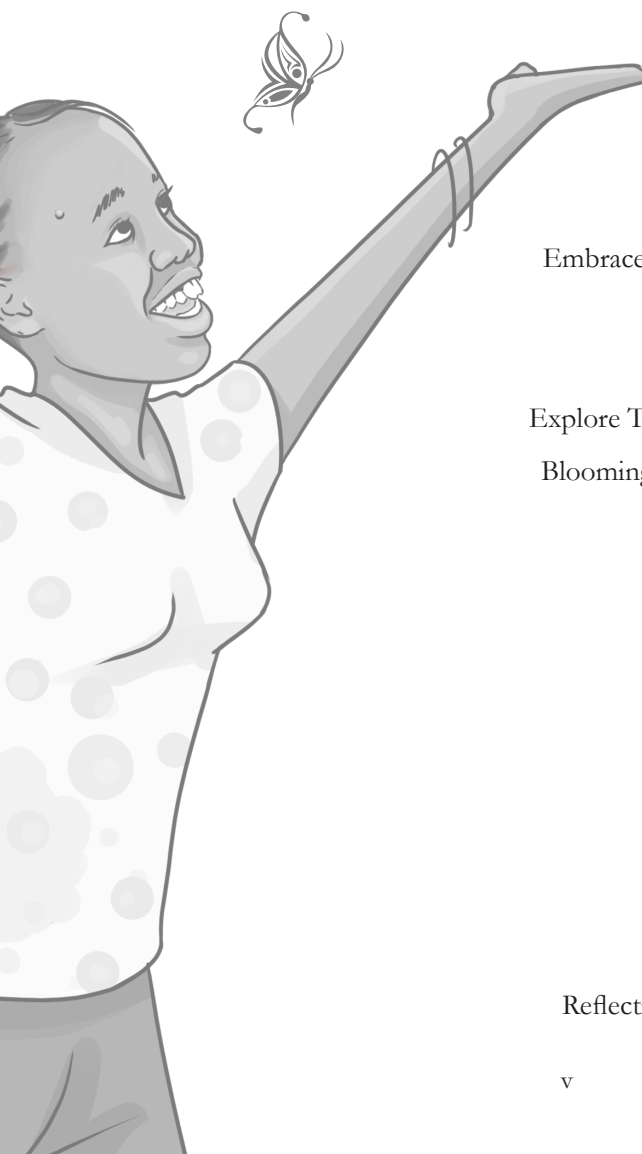
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Finally Sweet Sixteen!

Dear _____,

As you celebrate this milestone birth-year, it's worth taking moments to reflect on how you got here and what it all means. Sixteen years of growth, learning, laughter, and maybe a few tears — all of it shaping the incredible person you're becoming. Actually, ladies are said *never* to leave this age. It is like a fulcrum year where a *girl's* life balances at!

On this special birth year, it's essential to remember that your worth isn't tied to what you do or how others see you. Your value is anchored in the One who created you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made — a truth penned in Psalm 139:14, *"I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well."*

Life can sometimes feel like a whirlwind — like everything is spinning fast, and it's hard to find your footing. But having a strong center of gravity — a sense of who you are and whose you are — can keep you grounded. Hebrews 6:19 says, *"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."* Let your identity in Christ be that anchor.



As you step into new life chapters ahead, know that every part of you matters — your thoughts, your dreams and your struggles. You have a purpose that is uniquely yours. Lean into God's love and let Him guide you. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight"* (Proverbs 3:5-6).



Sweet sixteen is just the beginning of an exciting journey ahead, even into forever! That is why we purposed to put together these reflections for you as a foundational reference point. The truths in here are from our hearts to yours.

16 REFLECTIONS for DAUGHTERS @ 16 & BEYOND

May the years ahead be filled with deeper discovery, unshakeable faith, and endless joy?

Happy Birthday, _____!

Sincerely, _____



WHAT TO EXPECT? GOOSE AND SPEED BUMPS!

Sweet Sixteen is a milestone that comes with its own unique blend of excitement, curiosity, and questions. It's a season of growing independence, new experiences, and discovering more about who you are and who you're becoming.

Before you dive into these reflections, let's talk about two things you may already be familiar with: *goosebumps* and *speed bumps*. They will give format on how to ponder the reflections.

Goosebumps happen when you feel something so intensely — whether it's excitement, fear, or the thrill of the unknown. Maybe it's that shiver you feel when your favorite song plays, when a special memory surfaces, or when you meet someone who sparks flames of charm. Goosebumps remind us that we are alive and fully human, with feelings that sometimes overwhelm us.

Then there are *speed bumps* — those humps in the road designed to slow us down. In life, they show up as moments that make us pause and think before rushing ahead. They help us catch our breath, think clearly, and make choices that are true to who we want to be.

In these reflections, you'll find a mix of both — moments that give you *goosebumps* and moments that act as *speed bumps*. There will be times when you feel a rush of excitement and other times when you need to slow down, reflect, and consider the path ahead. Both are normal. Both are valuable. All in all, read for transformation, not information. That is our prayer.

As you read, give yourself space to feel and think. Let these reflections speak to your heart. Some might challenge you, some might comfort you, and some might simply make you smile. Wherever you find yourself — excited, nervous, hopeful, or a bit unsure — know that it's all part of the journey. The road to growing up is filled with bends and turns, but it's a beautiful ride.

Happy reading *lovely* Sweet 16!

With love,

FOUNDATIONS



Whatever goes up must start from below.
All that grows, rises from the ground.
Yet, in time, all that rises must descend.
So, nothing is as vital as the foundation.

The base is where all is anchored.
The foundation is where strength is placed.
It is the irreducible minimum.
In the end, all things return to the ground.

As you move forward, you may feel adrift.
Thoughts may swell and distort your course.
Winds may toss and test your vessel.
Only firm foundations withstand the storm.

Be open, yet remain grounded.
Explore, but hold onto your roots.
Seek truth, but never lose sight.
Above all, stay steadfast and whole.



UNDERSTANDING FOUNDATIONS

The next four reflections focuses on foundations spread into four key topics.

As you enter the critical 16-26 age window, your core beliefs—values, attitudes, principles, and habits—will be challenged like never before. The testing will come from within and without. Anything loosely held will be shaken off. Your mind will argue back and forth, questioning what you’ve seen, heard, and learned. How will you arrive at your conclusions?

This section is meant to anchor you, to remind you of what must remain solid. Your imagination, reasoning, and decisions must rest on a sure foundation. And what is that foundation? It is the unchanging nature of the omnipotent God—His words, His wisdom, and His revealed truth. No foundation is more secure.

Dig deep.

1



"IT IS VERY GOOD"



In the beginning, there was nothing but God. Then God spoke, and everything came into being. The visible and the invisible, the tangible and the intangible, all emerged at His command. He looked upon His creation and declared:

"It is good."

Every day, after speaking new life into existence, He repeated it:

"It is good."

Then came the sixth day. God went a step further. He called upon the Trinity:

"Let us make man..."

It was time to create a being in His image, after His likeness. And so, man was

formed—male and female.

God placed them in the Garden of Eden, giving them dominion over creation. The picture was now complete. Then, for the first time, He said something different:

“It is very good.”

THE EROSION OF “VERY GOOD”

That original “very good” design has been under attack ever since. Humanity, in its lost state, has attempted to redefine and “improve” the blueprint. But instead of restoring the original beauty, we have only strayed further from it.



*Some who
are Eve now
say they feel
like Steve.
Huh!*



In the “very good” state, Adam was Adam, and Eve was Eve. Male was male, and female was female. Now, confusion reigns. Many, without knowledge of the Creator’s script, have rewritten their identities. Some who are Adam feel like Eve. Some who are Eve say they feel like Steve. Some even claim to shift between identities as they please. And to avoid “judging” anyone, society allows endless self-definition—nothing seem absolute anymore. Categories multiply, creating a maze of confusion. You may have come across or heard of the acronym LGBTQIA++. The plus signs mean you can add your “new discovery”. The “very good” no longer seems enough.

If this is not the epitome of being lost, I don’t know what else it is!

THE UNCHANGING TRUTH

Daughter, foundations don’t change. From 16 to 61 to 106, your DNA remains the same. You were born with XX chromosomes—a biological fact that no feeling can alter. Boys are XY. Beyond that simple distinction, countless differences separate the two genders.

The utopian illusion that one can “become” the opposite gender is just that—an illusion. The core material that makes you is unchangeable.

Do not fall for the lies.

The “very good” pronouncement of your Creator is the safest truth to build your life upon. Nothing else will offer the peace and fulfillment you were made to enjoy.

STAND FIRM IN THE TRUTH

As you move into and beyond the excitement of youth, your identity may be questioned. Your beliefs may be mocked. You may be tempted by “new” ideas that sound convincing. If that happens, do not panic—it is natural to wonder and to question. But do not be swayed.



*Look at self
through science,
biology, and
medicine. But don't
forget theology.*



Keep your feet on solid ground. Re-examine the truth. Look to science, biology, and medicine, but do not forget Theology—the knowledge of God’s original design.

The world may sell you many ideas, but they cannot hold together in the end. When the Creator declared “It is very good,” He was speaking of a perfect, whole, and distinct male and female. There is no merging of the two, no blurring of identities—each was complete, intentional, and holy.

For true fulfillment, stay within the original design. You are a beautiful female.

Period.

2



THE FAITH FACTOR



Hey! Did you know that everyone lives by faith—whether they realize it or not? We all make choices based on what we believe in, whether it's ourselves, other people, science, or something higher. In a way, we're all guided by what we trust.

Think about this: When you sit on a chair, you trust that it will hold your weight. You believe in the designer who made it, the people who built it, and the strength of the materials. You probably don't even think about it—you just sit down. That's faith.

But biblical faith goes beyond what we can see or prove. First, biblical faith is supplied by the Source of all, God. He who is Omniscient knows all that pertains everyone and everything and makes it known for eternity. Whoever

chooses to live by that simple fact becomes a subject of living by His revelation and inspiration. That's what is called faith.

The Bible describes faith like this: *"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."* — Hebrews 11:1.



Secondly, that faith comes when one is exposed to the Word and instruction of the Omnipotent God, who is able to reach and meet every living being wherever and how ever He pleases. It could be in a godly home or a hip of family mess; in joy and celebration or in anguish; at childhood or old age; in the city or in the village; in peace or at war. The recordings

***The recordings in
the Bible display
a rainbow of how
God showed up to
countless people***



in the Bible display a rainbow of how God showed up to countless people across the 1600 years through about 40 authors to pen down His story of purpose and *faith* through their lives and times. When we read and see the common thread, we are left with awe and conviction that there was a hand that inspired the entire story with one theme – love! When we believe that and start living by the instruction and principles from the best Book, we are living by *faith*!

Sometimes, faith is unreasonable or even foolish to others. Take Abraham, for example. In Genesis 12, God told him to leave his home and go to a place he had never seen before. Abram had no map, no clear destination—just God's promise. It was something beyond his previous experience. Almost none existent. Yet he obeyed, and did it. Off he left to the mind-imaginary land. Eventually, he was highly commended and rewarded for it. The Bible says: *"Abram believed the Lord, and He credited it to him as righteousness."* — Genesis 15:6.

Imagine the courage that took! What if everyone around him thought he was crazy? That's the kind of faith that sometimes stands out and makes people uncomfortable.

GROWING ROOTS IN YOUR FAITH

As you cruise the teen years, be alert that you're in a phase where a lot is changing—your ideas, friendships, goals, and even how you see yourself. It can feel like a roller coaster, right? During this time, your faith will be tested. You might hear things that challenge what you've always believed, or people might think you're out of touch if you hold to your faith.

Jesus knew that having a strong foundation was important. He said: *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."* — Matthew 7:24.

I bet you have heard the Word of God for many years. Keep building your *faith* on that solid foundation, God's Word, so you can handle the storms that come your way. The day you derail, and you end up with shallow or shaky beliefs, all may end up easily falling apart. It is a destination I dread for you and keeps me on my knees.



***You might question if
God is real, if He cares,
or if what you've been
taught is true. That's
normal—everyone
wrestles with doubt at
some point.***



WHEN FAITH IS WEAK

That said, it is good to admit that there will be times when your faith will feel weak or even pointless. You might question if God is real, if He cares, or if what you've been taught is true. That's normal—everyone wrestles with doubt at some point. Moses, Elijah, Peter, and many others in the Bible did. Yes, even Jesus' disciples struggled with faith, and they saw Him perform miracles!

If or when that happens, don't be afraid to talk about it. Share your doubts with someone you trust—maybe a parent, a mentor, or a youth leader. I pray that whoever you choose will strive to apply the mercy principle: *"Be merciful to those who doubt."* — Jude 1:22.

But more importantly, remember God is patient and loving. He won't turn

away from you just because you're questioning. If you feel like you're drifting, take time to pray, read the Bible, and seek answers. God promises that *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."* — Jeremiah 29:13.

STANDING FIRM

As you navigate these years, sweet 16 daughter, there will be a lot of voices trying to tell you who you should be and what you should believe. Some will try to convince you that *faith* is outdated or irrelevant. But if you build your life on God's truth, you'll have a strength that can't be shaken. Maybe it's time to sing the hymn *On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand* Feel free to pause and indulge as you meditate on the loudest point so far.



***Hold onto
what you know
to be true,
even if it feels
unpopular.***



As Paul encouraged young Timothy to stay grounded in his faith, may it be a great reminder for you too: *"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."* — 1 Timothy 4:12.

Hold onto what you know to be true, even if it feels unpopular. Stay curious, keep asking questions, and keep growing deeper in your relationship with God. He will always be there for you, no matter what. God's instruction and promise to the Israelites was, *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them (the fearful inhabitants of Promised Land), for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you,"* Deuteronomy 31:6. That instruction and promise applies too as long as you have put your faith in God.

IF YOU EVER STRUGGLE

If you ever feel like you're losing your faith, know that it's okay to talk about it. I won't judge you or think less of you. I'll be here to listen, to pray with you, and to help you find your way back. We all go through seasons of doubt—what matters is that you keep the faith, no matter how small, even if as must as a mustard seed.

"The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." — Psalm 145:18.

Through and through, I'm praying for you, that God will help you stay strong, guide your thoughts, and give you the courage to stand firm in what you believe. The Holy Spirit will be with you, helping you live a full and purposeful life.

I love you.

3



FINDING YOURSELF



Let's be real—at some point, we all feel a little lost. It's not a matter of *if* but *when*. We might look like we've got it all together, confidently walking, talking, and acting like we know what we're doing. But deep inside, many of us are searching for meaning, wondering who we really are. We have times when masking off seems a cool game.

Some people dive into books and schoolwork, hoping knowledge will fill that gap. Others find their identity in fashion, becoming trendsetters to feel noticed. Some people try to escape through drugs, alcohol, or partying. While it's not the right path, it's often their way of hiding from the same questions we all face. And then there are those with less obvious escapes—like shopping

to feel better or staying busy to avoid deeper thoughts. We all deal with this search for meaning in different ways because, deep down, we are all searching for who we are.

WHO AM I, REALLY?

Have you seen or watched the movie *Finding Nemo*? Nemo got lost, and his dad searched everywhere to find him. Sometimes, we need someone to look out for us too—especially when we don't even realize we're lost. As is the case the *coin* in the parable of the lost coin.



*Sometimes, we need
someone to look out
for us too—especially
when we don't even
realize we're lost.*



Lauren Daigle's song *You Say* captures this struggle so well:

*"I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough.
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up."*

We all struggle with those voices sometimes, wondering, "*Am I just a mix of my highs and lows? Am I only as good as my last achievement? Am I enough?*" These questions often become the loudest between ages 16 and 20, as you try to figure out who you are and what you stand for.

When this happen to you, please know it is okay to question. It means you're growing. But where will you find the answers?

WHERE TO SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

When you really want to find out who you are, you need to look in the right source or resource. Just like a product comes with a manual from its maker, we have a "manual" from our Creator—the Bible. The best answers about who you are come from the One who made you. The Bible says:



*God sees
you as His
masterpiece—
unique,
valuable, and
loved.*



“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” — Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

God sees you as His masterpiece—unique, valuable, and loved. Your worth isn’t based on what you do, what you have, or what others think. It’s based on the fact that God made you on purpose, and for a purpose. All about you was laid out before time. Be wise and consult the source at the earliest questioning time. Ask those difficult questions to Him. He has dealt with all sorts of such from the oldest like Job in the Old Testament to Jairus whose daughter was raised up again in the gospels.

WHEN YOU FEEL LOST



If you ever feel lost, overwhelmed, or tempted to handle self in unhealthy ways—whether that’s through substances, self-harm, running away, or shutting people out—please know you’re not alone. God understands and cares about your pain, and there are people who care too.

Just like the prodigal son, no matter how far you may or will feel that you’ve strayed, God is ready to welcome you back home.

Jesus told a story about a young man known as the “Prodigal Son” (Luke 15:11-32). This guy took his share of the family money, ran away, and spent it all living wildly. Eventually, he hit rock bottom—broke, hungry, and alone. But then he remembered that his father was still there, still kind, and willing to take him back. When he returned, his father welcomed him with open arms and a huge celebration.



Just like the prodigal son, no matter how far you may or will feel that you’ve strayed, God is ready to welcome you back *home*. The Bible says: *“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” — Psalm 34:18*. You can always come back home. Even literally. Don’t waste anymore.

Remember, the lies that tell you you’re not enough or that you’re too lost to be loved are just that—lies. Jesus said: *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” — John 10:10.*

God's plan is for you to have a life that is full and meaningful. If you ever need to come back to God or need help finding yourself, don't hesitate. God is always there, waiting for you with open arms.

YOU ARE WELCOME HOME

No matter how lost you feel, remember—you can always come back home. To God, to yourself, to your family, to people who care about you. You are not alone, and you are so loved.

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” — 1 John 3:1.

Whenever you need a reminder of who you are, go back to the One who made you. He knows you fully and loves you completely. You are always welcome *home*.

THE GIFT OF GIVING AND FORGIVING



Every human is immensely endowed,
Full of wonders both quiet and loud.
From birth to death, fully bestowed,
With talents, gifts, and seeds to sow.

The purpose of these treasures is giving,
Sharing and serving—true, fulfilling.
Only in release do we receive,
Creating space for more to conceive.

But do we see and act the same way?
Seldom. Rarely. No, not a day!
So often we clash and go astray,
Crossing paths in a tangled fray.

Thus, we must learn to forgive,
Overlook flaws and choose to live.
For if we cling to each mistake,
Our hearts will crumble, bend, and break.



4



EMBRACE GIVING AND FORGIVING



Imagine a mango tree—strong, towering, and rooted deep. Its best offering, its ultimate gift, is a cluster of ripe, golden mangoes hanging heavy on its branches. When harvested, these succulent fruits bring delight to those who taste those—humans and animals alike. Yet, have you ever wondered who benefits least from these fruits? The tree itself. The mango tree’s gift is meant for others—it grows, matures, and ripens not for itself, but to serve and nourish those around it.

“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of another.”
— Charles Dickens.

Dear daughter, the same truth applies to life. Every gift, talent, and ability you possess—and will continue to discover—exists not just for your fulfillment, but for the enrichment of others. When you sit at the piano, feeling joy as

your fingers dance over the keys, those who listen may experience even deeper emotions—peace, inspiration, nostalgia. That is why people are willing to pay for concerts or seek autographs from those who have devoted themselves to mastery. The Bible captures this idea beautifully in Proverbs 22:29: “*Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank.*” Those who nurture their gifts and use them selflessly often find themselves in spaces of great influence and purpose.

SHARPEN THE SAW

As you step beyond the Sweet 16 threshold, one of your most significant pursuits should be to discover your unique “fruit”—what you were created to give. Prioritize understanding your strengths, passions, and abilities. It could be a talent you’ve nurtured since childhood, a sport you began at 10, a subject you once disliked, or even your ability to express thoughts through words—educating, entertaining, and touching hearts.



Every gift, talent, and ability you possess—and will continue to discover—exists not just for your fulfillment, but for the enrichment of others.



Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Outliers*, suggests that **it takes roughly 10,000 hours of practice to achieve mastery in any field**. This concept, known as the “10,000-Hour Rule,” is a testament to the dedication required to excel. Whether or not you agree with the exact number, the idea remains clear: effort, repetition, and perseverance sharpen your abilities until they become second nature. Hours of practice bring growth, confidence, and expertise. Lupita Nyong’o, after winning an Academy Award, famously said, **“No matter where you’re from, your dreams are valid.”** The journey to mastery may be long and challenging, but if you stay committed, your gift can impact the world.

Once you’ve nurtured your talent, share it. Step out boldly. Volunteer for opportunities, take on challenges, and be the person willing to try—even if you’re unsure of the outcome. Each experience, whether a triumph or a stumble, will shape you. Thomas Edison, after countless failed attempts at creating

the lightbulb, remarked, **“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.”** Fear of failure should never keep you from trying. Some of life’s most valuable lessons emerge from mistakes.

SWIMMING UPSTREAM WITH FORGIVENESS

However, as you share your gifts, understand that not everyone will celebrate you. Some may doubt you, criticize you, or attempt to diminish your worth. They may disguise envy with harsh words or cloak their insecurities with subtle discouragement. These voices may come from friends, family, or strangers. Some do this intentionally; others may not even

realize the weight of their words. In such moments, remember the wisdom of Eleanor Roosevelt: **“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”** Learn to let go of criticism that doesn’t build you. That aimed at bringing you down. Instead, keep climbing.



*Learn to let go of
criticism that doesn’t
build you. That aimed
at bringing you down.
Instead, keep climbing.*



Forgiveness, lovely daughter, is essential. It is not just a kindness to others—it is a gift to yourself. Nelson Mandela, after spending 27 years in prison, said, **“Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.”** Holding onto bitterness only weighs you down. Forgiveness clears the mind and creates room for growth, creativity, and peace. It keeps you focused on what is meaningful, not stuck on what is hurtful.

BULLS EYE SHOT!

As you continue to grow, learn to give generously and forgive freely. This balance is how you truly live and find relief. It is how you become the mango tree—rooted, thriving, and a blessing to those around you.

5



SHARPE BY DESIGN



Naturally, plants grow from the soil. Fish need water to live. Birds fly in the sky. Rain falls from above. Any object that drops eventually hits the ground. These are patterns—unchangeable, consistent, and designed. No matter how much we try to resist or redefine them, the order remains. When we attempt to go against these natural laws, it often leads to frustration or destruction.

Daughter, as you step into the complex and exciting phase of blossoming into adulthood, we wish to share a coined human design acronym with you—one that mirrors the natural order but is unique to who you are: By design, you are SHARP with an E! *Ati* what?

You = SHARP + SHAPE = SHARPE

Where: S = Spiritual gifts; H = Heart's desire; A = Abilities; R = Relationships; P = Personality; E = Experiences

Your physical appearance is influenced by the genetics—something outside your control. That's a biological truth with a theological explanation. Similarly, how you unfold into who you're meant to be is rooted in your core beliefs and values—a spiritual truth. Society places immense value on body shape, labeling some as “sexy” and others as “plain.” You'll face pressure to measure yourself against these shallow standards, but I want you to see a deeper truth about who you are. This framework is partly adapted from Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, which I highly recommend you read before your 19th birthday. It's approachable, insightful, and full of wisdom.

Let's dive deeper into what SHARPE breaks down into.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A gift, by its very nature, is given freely. You don't earn it; you simply receive it. Spiritual gifts are similar—they come from God. When someone becomes a believer, the Holy Spirit comes into their life and equips them with specific “tools” to fulfill God's purpose on Earth. These gifts are meant to deepen your relationship with God and overflow into acts of service toward others.

For instance, Mother Teresa had a profound gift of compassion and empathy. She devoted her entire life to caring for the poor and marginalized as a Catholic nun, working tirelessly in the slums of Calcutta. Her actions were a testament to the divine gifts placed within her.

Personally, one of my (Tabitha) spiritual gifts is service. I genuinely enjoy helping others, and even when I'm exhausted, I find the strength to lend a hand.



Your physical appearance is influenced by the genetics—something outside your control. That's a biological truth with a theological explanation.



I've come to understand that this is a part of my purpose—an expression of God's work through me.

What about you, sweetheart? What do you think your spiritual gifts might be? Have you noticed any qualities that come naturally to you—things you do effortlessly, joyfully, and willingly?

HEART'S DESIRE



*Daughter, pay attention to
what moves you deeply—what
brings you joy or frustration.
Those feelings are often signals
from God, hinting at the path
He has set before you.*



Deep within each of us is a yearning to make a difference—a desire that stirs our hearts. For some, it's a passion for justice that leads them to become lawyers or activists. For others, it's a fascination with solving

complex problems that guides them toward research or innovation. If you feel strongly about the well-being of animals, you might consider becoming a vet. These passions are not random; they are God-given nudges pointing you toward your purpose.

In the Bible, Moses felt a strong desire for his people to live freely and harmoniously. When he saw an Egyptian mistreating a fellow Israelite, his anger led him to act impulsively, but that moment was a pivotal point in his journey. It revealed his heart's desire—to see his people free from oppression.

Daughter, pay attention to what moves you deeply—what brings you joy or frustration. Those feelings are often signals from God, hinting at the path He has set before you. Following those feelings, even when they don't make complete sense, could lead you to discovering your purpose.

ABILITIES

Abilities are what you can do—both the simple and the extraordinary. Everyone can walk, talk, eat, and think, but each of us has unique abilities that

stand out. Some people can draw well, while others excel in math. Some can whip up a delicious meal effortlessly, while others struggle to boil water. These elevated abilities are not accidents—they are intentional tools given to fulfill your purpose.

By the age of 18, try to identify your “Big Five” abilities—those things that come naturally to you and bring you joy. These can help guide your career choices and life decisions. For example, one of my (Jacob) abilities is writing, which I thoroughly enjoy. That’s why I enjoyed writing this book—to share a part of myself in a way that feels meaningful and true.

RELATIONSHIPS

There’s a saying: “No man is an island.” We were designed for relationships—with God, with others, and with the world around us. Our connection with God is the vertical relationship, while our connection with others forms the horizontal. These relationships are essential; they help us grow, learn, and understand ourselves better.



***Not every
relationship
is beneficial.
Surround yourself
with those who
build you up, not
tear you down.***



Imagine a soccer match. It’s not just a ball and one player—it’s a coordinated effort of a team, each playing their role. Life works similarly; we all have roles to play, and every relationship adds value to our journey. Identify the right relationship. The kind of relationships you keep show the kind of person you are or you are becoming.

So, be cautious, daughter. Not every relationship is beneficial. Surround yourself with those who build you up, not tear you down. Be wise in choosing friends who respect your values and support your growth. Check out *Proverbs 13:20*, highlight it, memorize it and commit to apply the wisdom in it.

PERSONALITY

Personality is the internal make up of a person. Some people are very noisy while others are quiet. Some people think before they talk while others think as they talk. Which ones do you think we each fall under? Some people have strong feelings while others act like they don't have any at all. Some people like their own company while others are happy when they are loudest. They actually don't mind getting into the noisemakers list. Some people listen so well while others struggle to wait someone finish a sentence.

All the above qualities that make different personalities. None is better than the other, just different. In fact, they complement each other. Imagine a world all people are so serious with life? A world without comedians and jokers? Or the vice-versa! Such would be a horrible place to live in.

Your personality is as unique as your fingerprint. You are special and specially made.

Daughter, you must invest in discovering and developing your personality to your advantage. So that you utilize your special-ness well. Make the most of every opportunity that demands your personality to swing in. make that presentation when the administration asks for a volunteer and you know you love being heard and seen. Seize the moment.

However, manage the negatives that come with you personality too. For example, extroverted people can easily spend lives for others. They can also keep procrastinating issues. They struggle with decisiveness. You must work hard and smart, with lots of support and accountability, to make the best out of your personality.

EXPERIENCES

Life just happens – uncharted and un-guarded. Both good and bad things occur to good and bad people. We rarely have a full understanding of life unfolding. However, the good thing is that no situation lasts forever. Good and bad times come and go, just as shit



***God knows everything
and allows (or stops)
everything.***



drops and dries eventually. By the way, not all shit and shitting is bad. Some end up as great manure for a better harvest or fruitfulness.

Daughter, as you add in months into years, it will be paramount you cultivate the right perspective about life's happenings. Treat all with necessary lightness, even when you feel lightheaded. With a good exposure of theology and history, you will appreciate that nothing happens without God's permission. God knows everything and allows (or stops) everything. If so, therefore, all things come to pass for your good. The problem is that we operate in two different time dimensions: God looks at things from eternal viewpoint while we are tempted to focus on the life-span length at most. May the Lord give you wisdom to look at things like God.

FINALLY

Daughter, I hope this perspective helps you see yourself more clearly—not just as someone growing up, but as someone growing into a purpose. You are SHARPE by design. Learn it. Love it. Live it.

6



FAMILY DYNAMICS



While marriage was the first institution that God formed (Genesis 2:24), the family became the resultant smallest unit of society. Therefore, the family qualifies to be the standard international (SI) unit of measuring society at any geographical level. Anything that touches the family, therefore, has ripple effects across the entire community, nation, continent, and eventually the world. Because of this fact, nothing in the world rivals the family as a target of attack for societal destruction. As the Bible says, *“If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* (Psalm 11:3).

From definition to formation, the family has been torn in many directions. No matter the people in question or the country in focus, the family is riddled

with many wanting puzzles. Evil and devilish ills cut into the family fabric and threaten the unit from the core—marriage. This is because whoever or whatever succeeds in crumbling the family would equally succeed in bringing the world to its knees.

So where do you stand as far as the definition of family is concerned? Is what you believe based on how the Maker of the family defined it?

FACTUAL ABSOLUTES

As basic as it seems, let me remind you that the ideal family comprises a man and a woman, each of mature age and sound mind, who voluntarily agree to marry each other. The two become one (Genesis 2:24) and can decide to have children who

complete the ideal family picture. Unfortunately, there are instances where children are conceived and born out of accidental or even criminal activity—never voluntary. Yet, the most important thing to remember here is: no matter any child's nature or circumstances of conception and birth, no child is ever an accident! *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb"* (Psalm 139:13). All children belong to God and have purpose. A parent's greatest responsibility, therefore, is to communicate all the facts without passing down their own pain to the child.

Where circumstances allow, every child is entitled to access and enjoy open relationships with both nuclear and extended members of the family. This is irrespective of the dynamics of such families. The couple, partner, or parents' issues should never be allowed to bring a separation. Unfortunately, some adults behave selfishly and use children as sympathy or hatred tools. That is sad, foolish, and most regrettable. It doesn't last a lifetime before the children come to see the truth for themselves. Then it turns ugly. Fights with parents out of bouts of anger have been reported in the later years. I do not wish any of such for the last of any daughter reading this.



***No matter any child's
nature or circumstances
of conception and birth,
no child is ever an
accident!***



NEVER TAKE SIDES

Daughter, you are smart enough to know when either your mother or dad is playing with your mind. To make your other parent look worse than he or she is in reality. Of course, he isn't an angel, but neither is he a demon. For heaven's sake, those evil celestial beings that either may be associated with have no flesh! I pray that you will not be dragged nor drugged into the messy froth of your parent's conflicts and challenges. If or when they ever happen. You should never entertain any attempts. Stop the culprit at the earliest point you smell the bad smearing. Determine to keep off their fights and affairs. Don't entertain the temptation to side with one parent against the other. Take care of your mind that you don't get corrupted, whether explicitly or subtly, to fight your mom or dad. *"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you"* (Exodus 20:12). If anything, prayer is your best recourse anytime you see the decay of relationships between the two.

Nevertheless, times come in life when what you really know about family seems a mirage. Your imaginations and dreams feel like a mirage. What you once felt so convinced about is totally dislodged by the realities in your father's house. You start to suffer illusions. You feel confused about what love is. Your earlier images of blissful relationships disappear in thin air. You start gaining more evidence of the fakeness of suggested love. You want to embrace new thoughts and ideas about family. You feel like quitting what you knew. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight"* (Proverbs 3:5-6).

SEEK HELP IF NEED BE

Daughter, if you ever get to that crossroad, be willing to talk it out. Express the dilemma. In the olden days, this is when you would run to your aunts or uncles and scream your head out. Find one who is friendly and open to take in your rumblings without bashing you. Warn them that the first thing you



When the grinding is wearing off, the family is most often the safest place to go. But that doesn't mean you lower your safety checks either. Remain vigilant.



want is just to be heard out—not reprimanded or told what to do. Teach them that the first step in therapy is just letting out to the right person, and you have chosen them. *“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed”* (Proverbs 15:22). As much as possible, let your outlet be a family member. Because when the grinding is wearing off, the family is most often the safest place to go. But that doesn’t mean you lower your safety checks either. Remain vigilant.

Finally, if you are angry with a parent, seek professional counseling to help you uncover and deal with the pain. Take care you don’t get into self-harming habits or depression. Don’t embrace the nasty ideology of joining the “wounded” parent to punish your mom or dad for leaving you. The facts of the conflict and differences may not be exactly as you have come to believe. Seek audience with the absent parent and purpose to listen to his or her side of the story.

Healing starts with pouring out, then listening in, then talking things out. Express every thought and feeling without reservations. Then forgive each other. Because forgiving we must, for the sake of Christ, self, and the other! *“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you”* (Colossians 3:13).

No matter what happens to and in the family, family is and will always be family! We can change many things but never family. No matter what they did or didn’t do, your parents are and will always be irreplaceable—whether sane or insane, free or incarcerated. Family may be sweet or very difficult, but nothing will ever replace it because God designed it that way. Always seek His wisdom to make the most out of it. Pray for family. Always.



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7



EXPLORE TEENAGEHOOD

POSITIVELY



Human lifespan and weather seasons have one thing in common: they change (Erikson, 1968). We all start off at conception till birth. After birth, we enter infancy and then childhood stage. Then adolescence *aka* teenagehood. After that, we enter adulthood. So typically we have three hood seasons: childhood, teenagehood, and adulthood. The boundaries are debatable but generally, the first two decades form the zone for the first two stages (Arnett, 2000). Like the weather seasons, these stages further keep changing as one traverses the terrain of growing years.

I wish to focus on the stage at hand — teenagehood. Not that the past is irrelevant nor the future unimportant. Actually, how each is lived out determines the beauty or the brokenness of the next (Santrock, 2018). I hope your child-

hood has been moderately manageable. Nobody has a perfect upbringing. Nobody. There is always something wished for or missed out. That is just how life pans out.

Here is a major difference: in childhood years, you absorbed every thought and instruction like a sponge; in teenagehood, you ask questions to every made statement (Piaget, 1954). You engage to understand before you agree or disagree. You opine and debate. You no longer just soak in the “truth” from the “know-it-all-perfect” parents. You squeeze out your five cents of imagination. Sometimes in disrespectful outbursts. Oops! That is if you are lucky to have knowledgeable parents who allow for your “thinking.” You are normal to think out of the box, but you don’t have to implement all your thoughts. That is the product of your mental growth spurt, which stretches your thinking capacity to the limits. And off limits sometimes. Be humble enough to expose all your thoughts. Some of them will be outright foolish. Only a sober and caring adult will help you see and avoid the folly (Proverbs 12:15).



Nobody has a perfect upbringing. Nobody. There is always something wished for or missed out.



EXPLORE WITH KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

Daughter, teenagehood is a serious defining moment. You are on an explorative journey to uncover and discover yourself and things. Why am I this way and not that way? Am I enough? Why do people do this or that? Should I do as stated or as I imagine? What will happen if I disobey my parents? Who said I must always say yes? Is risk-taking really as bad as the narrative is sold? Why don’t adults shy away from saying the truth — like sex is good? And why does the church keep quiet



You are normal to think out of the box, but you don’t have to implement all your thoughts.



about many abortions in the neighborhood? Why do people who smoke weed look happy?

Your mind as a teenager is such a busy organ. The brain's capacity is said to attain its peak state in terms of growth and differentiation during this phase (Blakemore & Mills, 2014). That is why you do all those subjects in high school. Your thinking energy levels are also at peak state. That is why you can play five sports and excel in all still. Caution: if you do not channel the brain and muscle power appropriately, you will find yourself in the destination called regret (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

FOCUS YOUR ENERGIES

Teenagehood is the most critical and defining season in life. You must explore your mind and energies with the right people and in the right places. Remember the story of Jesus getting lost at 12? The parents were clueless as to where he was. They searched for him for three days! Then they went

looking in the last place they expected him. When they found him, he was engaging teachers of law on serious topics of personal concern. His questions and answers were loaded and deep. Some sounded rude. "Why were you looking for me?" he asked his parents (Luke 2:49). However, he was lost in the right place. He was in good company. And that is how he lived from 12 till he hit 30.

"And Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Call it an objective, sober, and balanced model of growing. That is what I wish for you, daughter.

You owe it to yourself to keep the right company so that you find the right definitions. There are all sorts of answers and perspectives out there. Between the ages of 16 through 26 years, you will have so many opportunities to make or break. To nose-dive or fly high. To soar smoothly or crash land. To keep floating or sink slowly and steadily. To defile yourself or desist from degrading yourself. To be addicted to destructive stuff or substances or liberated from



***Teenagehood is
the most critical
and defining
season in life.***



foolish escapism.

Daughter, I pray and wish that you live wisely. Seize every opportunity that shows up. Here is a verse I really love in this regard:

“Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is” (Ephesians 5:15-17). Reread it, memorize it and live it!

IF THINGS GO SOUTH

Agreed. Temptations will be many. The urge will be strong to do the forbidden. But strive to swing the urge to the right side rather than the wrong. “Choose life rather than death,” Moses told the Israelites (Deuteronomy 30:19). Remember that the truth and right will never change no matter how much you convince yourself. Often, you will need more than just

personal determination. Divine intervention will mean everything. Make *prayer* your best companion. *Ask for help* from those who have lived longer. *Be accountable* to friends who care about you deeply. I pray your parents remain part of this inner circle party. At the least, one of them.

Above all, may God’s standards remain your standing standard! When all is said and done, check everything against God’s voice and Word. Listen to the Holy Spirit and obey. Stay in step and fellowship with other believers, those committed to “set an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). Where an example lacks, devote to set one.

Esther is a good example of a teen who moved from zero to (s)hero (Esther 2:7). She had all reasons to be stuck at the lowest level of the pile. Her background story is unknown and she was raised by an uncle. She could have excused herself for any misconduct. She could have displayed the orphan card and sung victim tunes. But she chose to live above her negative circumstances. She seized her single opportunity. And favor hovered over her all through.



***Remember that the
truth and right will
never change no
matter how much
you convince
yourself.***



Darling daughter, don't waste any opportunity to become the next (s)hero! Be yourself, stand firm, and stand out. By God's grace and in His mighty power.

8



BLOOMING, BROKEN, OR BURSTED?



In many ways and senses, life is like a flower.

A flower buds off from a branch. It cannot exist without the main stem. The flower flourishes as long as it remains on the tree. And so is life. We only bloom and blossom as long as we remain on the vine—God. Jesus said, *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). Flowering happens at a very specific time and season. The beauty is astounding when all factors mix perfectly. Such is life too. We beam when properly aligned with the Maker’s prescriptions and instructions. When we keep sipping from the source of all truth and love, we glitter and glow. But that is not as easy as it sounds.

TO BLOOM OR TO BLOOM?

The flower called life is planted in a very punishing world. Everything seems aimed at deflowering rather than flowering. The schemes to cut the stems before they even bud are rampant. The soils on which the flowers are planted are soiled. Contamination is rife and grave. The Bible reminds us, *“The whole world is under the control of the evil one”* (1 John 5:19), yet we are still called to bloom despite it all.



*The prayers made
for you since time
immemorial have
contributed to
your standing and
successes this far.*



Nevertheless, blooming is still possible. Because the beauty of the flowers comes from beyond the environment. The Owner of the flower—God—has and is more than able to equip us with all we need to bloom. You are a product of many factors, including His divine love and plan. *“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”* (Ephesians 2:10). The prayers made for you since time immemorial have contributed to your standing and successes this far. Your hard work and discipline have kept you getting better. Your boldness to speak the truth is a plus in the journey to bright-colored flowers. The fight against the harsh weather and environment of your era is not a walk in the park. I know that very well. It will never be. That is why you have to keep hinged to the main stem all through. *“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever”* (Psalm 125:1).

However, there will be instances when some flowers will be cut off prematurely. Maybe they are even plucked off rudely or by accident. A branch or a leaf may be broken by an idler given a chance. Sad, isn’t it? Life happenings are not always predictable. Bad things happen to good people. Life is generally not fair. Only God is faithful. *“In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33). Now, if you ever lose any petals off your flower, don’t forget you remain a flower. Your complexion could be a little off the color chart, but you remain a flower. Just stop the losing more. Let go of the cause of deflowering. Enough said.

BROKEN BUT NOT WITHERED

On the other hand, not all brokenness is bad.

Breaking down can allow the expulsion of toxic substances. Think of a wound infected to the point of forming pus. The body tissue is rotting from the inside. To make it better, you must prick the skin and let out the rotten cells. If your flowers were picked accidentally, by crime, or by abuse, it is okay to break down as you let out the pain. Tears are often the best detergent for a sick heart. *"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds"* (Psalm 147:3). Drain the life-keeping organ of the toxic emotions and feelings. Crying is a divine means to clear the mind and heart of much hurt. Let the teary glands' products flow. When your heart is heavy, be bold to speak things out and wash your cheeks with tears. Sometimes breaking down leads to breakthroughs. *"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit"* (Psalm 34:18).

There will also be instances when you act okay. Everyone attempts that folly. Sometimes you will hide behind beautifully painted masks. You may choose to compensate and cover up heartache with epic performances. You spend all the spare time in practice to make it to the top of the list all the time. Your grades never disappoint. But you know they are a cover-up. I pray you don't hide for so long. Because God may burst your balloon. He loves and cares about you so much to allow you to keep living a lie. It may feel so uncaring. You may feel like falling out of faith. How can God expose me? He wants the best for you, but you can't pace on well with pus on your ankle joint with high boots tied to the knees. *"For the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in"* (Proverbs 3:12).



***Sometimes
breaking
down leads to
breakthroughs.***



***God is very pleased
when we finally
choose to confess
and repent. But He
can equally interrupt
when He sees the
danger of losing us
eternally.***



But God is also gentle and patient. He never forces Himself on us. He waits for us until we are ready to admit our need for His intervention. He is willing to wait as long because He is certain we do see or hear Him. *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me”* (Revelation 3:20). God is very pleased when we finally choose to confess and repent. But He can equally interrupt when He sees the danger of losing us eternally. Be careful you don’t push God to those lengths with hard-heartedness. It can be very messy and excruciating. If in doubt, kindly check with the Bible account of a Babylonian king called Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel. Jonah is another guy to ask. More recently, you can check with writers too! But for God’s grace.

LET GO, AND LET GOD

So, dear daughter, if you have been feeling a nudging of the Holy Spirit, respond quickly. Stop wishing away the voice. Stop mistaking the divine voice for mental meanderings. The dreams you may be experiencing may not be the result of your stress-related overeating lately. They could be warning signs for you to surrender and turn 180 degrees. If you keep persisting in pushing away the loving God, you may soon be busted in broad daylight—just so you don’t lose everything. If anything, you are better off denatured rather than totally destroyed. *“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* (Mark 8:36).

So what now? *Wacha kuwa kichwa ngumu!* Confess things now. Stop concealing stuff. Tell it to Jesus alone. Don Moen sang a consoling song that goes like this:

*“He walked where I walk, He felt what I feel; He understands.
He knows my frailty, stung for my prejudice, He understands!
God with us, so close to us! Emmanuel!”*



***You will only
get healed
when you
confess and
turn away.***



Guess what? You will only get healed when you confess and turn away. *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9). Then you will start blooming again. Because that is the reason you exist: to shine all around, all the time. *“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16).

Wishing you nothing but blooming,

Loving _____.

9



CLIQUEES AND CLICKS



“*Show me your friends, and I’ll tell you who you are.*” Ever heard that before? Or perhaps the saying, “*Birds of a feather flock together*”? These familiar phrases echo a timeless truth: our friends often reflect who we are. But have you ever paused to consider the weight of these words? Maybe you even have a personal story that brings them to life. Care to share?

THE POWER OF CHOICE

Choosing friends is a privilege and a responsibility that everyone has. On a broader scale, the right to freedom of association is legally protected, allowing us to choose who we relate to. Yet, this freedom comes with bound-



*Choosing friends is
a privilege and a
responsibility that
everyone has.*



aries — respecting others' rights while exercising our own. It's like living in a glass house where every move matters.

During the teenage years, the desire to connect and fit in peaks. Suddenly, the approval of peers seems more crucial than the voices within our own homes. Many find themselves entangled in cliques, willing to defend friends — even at the cost of betraying family values. How absurd it is when loyalty to a group demands compromising standards once held dear!

Yet, cliques aren't all bad. Sometimes, our friends reflect shared values and interests from positive environments like family, school, or church. When grounded in integrity and genuine care, these friendships can help us grow and thrive. As Proverbs 27:17 wisely states, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* However, such healthy cliques are often the exception, not the rule.

THE DESIRE TO BELONG

The truth is, no one wants to walk alone through life. We all desire acceptance and belonging. It can be tempting to conform to the crowd, to fit in just to avoid standing out. Sometimes, blending in feels safer, like hiding behind a strong, intimidating figure during a storm of conflict. As Solomon noted, *"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken"* (Ecclesiastes 4:12).



Beware of these digital traps. They may seem harmless, but they can subtly steal your time, attention, and even shape your identity.



Still, there's a fine line between wisely seeking protection and compromising your character. Be cautious when following the crowd. It's not always smart to mimic every move just to fit in. As Romans 12:2 warns, *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

THE ERA OF ONLINE CLIQUES

Today, cliques aren't just found in school hallways; they thrive online. Social media platforms — Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat — create virtual communities where fitting in means more than just a “like” or a “follow.” Hours slip away watching reels, scrolling feeds, and engaging with endless content. Before long, you find yourself trapped in a “click” you never intended to join.

Beware of these digital traps. They may seem harmless, but they can subtly steal your time, attention, and even shape your identity. Jesus warned in Matthew 6:22-23, *“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness.”* The online world can darken your perspective if you aren't discerning.

The smartphone that grants access to the world can also become a gateway to addiction, comparison, and unrealistic standards. It's easy to forget that the smiling faces online may be masks, hiding pain or deceit. What appears glamorous can be hollow, and what seems popular can be poisonous.

GUARDING YOUR HEART AND MIND

Dear daughter, I understand the urge to stay connected, to keep up with what's trending. The world makes it seem like a necessity, but it's not. Those who seem to “have it all together” online may be lost in ways you cannot see. Remember, *“Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart”* (1 Samuel 16:7).



*Not everyone
online is who
they claim to
be.*



Pause and think before you befriend or follow. Not everyone online is who they claim to be. Some may hide behind fake profiles with malicious intentions, protected by privacy policies designed more for profit than your protection. I urge you to be cautious. As Jesus warned about harmful influences, *“Be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves”* (Matthew 10:16).

If you find yourself caught in a negative clique — online or offline — it will

eventually show. What you consume consistently influences who you become. If you fill your mind with trash, don't be surprised when negativity spills out. As Jesus said, *"For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks"* (Luke 6:45).

CHOOSING WISELY

Positive cliques, such as study groups, sports teams, or church communities, can be a blessing. They can challenge you to grow, hold you accountable, and guide you back when you stray. Proverbs 13:20 reminds us, *"Walk with the wise*

and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm." Choose companions who will sharpen you, encourage you, and help you stay on the right path.

Yet, even within good cliques, be selective. Find a few who genuinely click with you — friends who can be trusted, who can correct you in love when you lose your way. A true friend will lead you back to God, not away from Him. *"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity"* (Proverbs 17:17).

A FINAL PLEA

Daughter, the world is full of choices — good and bad. You retain the power to choose the cliques to join, the clicks to make, and the paths to take. The world may try to shape you, but remember *whose* you are. Guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23).

When in doubt, choose the path that leads to wisdom and life — Jesus Christ! The clicks and cliques of this world will fade, but the friendships grounded in truth will last beyond time. Be wise. Choose well.



***When in doubt,
choose the path that
leads to wisdom and
life – Jesus Christ!***



10



HEART MATTERS MATTER



The brain and the heart — two vital organs that define our existence. Biologically, they sustain us, but metaphorically, they carry even greater weight. The heart pumps life-sustaining blood, while the brain orchestrates every movement, thought, and function. Lose either, and life itself ceases. Yet, these two organs aren't just biological marvels; they symbolize much more, especially when it comes to our emotions and decisions.

THE POWER OF THE HEART AND MIND

Our language is packed with phrases that draw from the heart and the brain. *"Use your brains!"* *"Don't break my heart!"* *"He's heartless!"* These expressions reflect the deep influence these organs have on how we think, feel, and interact with the world. Can you think of any others?

While the brain symbolizes logic and reason, the heart often stands for emotions, desires, and intentions. But when it comes to decision-making and navigating relationships, which should guide us? Can we always trust what the heart feels?

THE UNPREDICTABLE HEART

From a biblical perspective, the heart isn't just a symbol of love or affection — it represents the core of who we are. Yet, Scripture warns us about its true nature:

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” — Jeremiah 17:9



*Our words and
actions reflect the
true condition of
our hearts.*



This verse reveals a sobering truth: our hearts can lead us astray. They are unpredictable and capable of both incredible compassion and shocking cruelty. Jesus himself didn't sugarcoat this reality when he rebuked those whose hearts harbored evil:

“For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” — Matthew 12:34

In other words, our words and actions reflect the true condition of our hearts. The harsh comment we made, the jealousy we felt, the bitterness we harbored — all these originate from deep within.

GUARDING THE PHYSICAL HEART

Daughter, your heart — both the physical and the emotional — is a treasure. Physically, it is essential to care for it. Keep it healthy through exercise, proper nutrition, and regular check-ups. Get active! Walk, jog, play sports — do whatever



*Learn to discern
between temporary
feelings and genuine,
lasting love.*



keeps your heart strong. Avoid habits that could damage it. Protect the vessel that sustains your life.

GUARDING THE EMOTIONAL HEART

When it comes to relationships, be wise. Not everyone who enters your life deserves access to your heart. Sometimes, we get swept away by emotions — infatuation, admiration, the excitement of new attention. But remember, true love isn't blind; it sees clearly and chooses wisely.



*God can perform
a "spiritual heart
surgery" to renew
and restore us. Pray
for a heart that
aligns with His will.*



If you find yourself in a relationship that makes you lose your sense of self or compromise your values, step back. Those who love you — family and true friends — may warn you when they see red flags. Listen. A breakup may sting, but it's far better than the lifelong pain of a broken marriage. Learn to discern between temporary feelings and genuine, lasting love.

GUARDING THE SPIRITUAL HEART

The most critical part of heart matters is the state of your spiritual heart. Your heart is the center of your character, decisions, and desires. If it's not aligned with God's will, it becomes vulnerable to deception and destructive choices. Yet, there is hope for transformation:

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." — Ezekiel 36:26

God can perform a "spiritual heart surgery" to renew and restore us. Pray for a heart that aligns with His will. When your heart beats in sync with God's purpose, you find a peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). You gain clarity in your decisions, strength in your struggles, and wisdom in

your relationships.

Make it a daily prayer: *“Change my heart, O God. Make it ever true. Change my heart, O God. May I be like You.”* What is a lovely song.

YOUR HEART MATTERS MATTER

Daughter, your heart matters matter deeply — not just to you, but to those who love you and, most importantly, to God. Guard it like the priceless treasure it is. Protect it from physical harm, emotional wounds, and spiritual darkness. Fill it with truth, wisdom, and grace.

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” — Proverbs 4:23

As you journey through life, facing trials, choices, and changes, hold this wisdom close. Keep your heart anchored in God’s truth, and you will navigate every storm with grace and strength.

With love and hope,

Signed _____

By: _____

Relationship with reader? _____

On _____

11



BEAUTIFUL BY BRAINS



“*B*eautiful” — a word that carries so much weight. A compliment, a label, a perception. You’ve likely heard it before, and I hope you hear it often enough that it doesn’t sway your sense of self or decision-making. Some people use this word to manipulate, to charm their way past your boundaries. It’s crucial to recognize genuine praise from shallow flattery — especially when there are hidden agendas behind it.

TRUE BEAUTY VS. FLATTERY

Before anyone ever called you beautiful, God had already declared it so. You are *fearfully and wonderfully made* (Psalm 139:14). That is a biblical truth that is hard to misquote. That truth should anchor your self-worth, so you aren’t easily swayed by compli-



*Before anyone
ever called you
beautiful, God
had already
declared it so.*



ments designed to manipulate. Just as a gem shines regardless of whether it's noticed, your worth isn't dependent on others' recognition.

There will always be people whose attention you capture simply because of who you are — your kindness, intelligence, and grace. But not everyone who notices you has pure intentions. Learning to discern sincerity from selfishness will save you from heartache and wasted time.

NAVIGATING ATTRACTION AND ATTENTION

As you blossom in beauty and confidence, you'll inevitably catch the eye of others. Classmates, neighbors, friends, even strangers may show interest. Some will be bold; others will be subtle. It's natural to feel flattered — you're human! But remember: *attention isn't the same as affection*, and affection isn't the same as love.



*As you blossom
in beauty and
confidence, you'll
inevitably catch the
eye of others.*



When someone expresses interest, it's tempting to focus solely on them, especially if their words make you feel special. Yet, infatuation can create “mind suspense” — that feeling of being so caught up that reason fades. Many bright futures have been compromised because someone valued sweet words over wise counsel. Keep alert and choose wisdom.

GROUP DATING: A SAFE START

When you think about dating, consider starting with *group dating*. Go out with a group of friends — a mix of dudes and girls. It's a space to socialize safely, learn about each other, and observe people in real-life settings. *Socialize before you specialize, prioritize before you personalize*. As early as dating kicks off, make sure your parents know of the relationship. Reveal the members and offer to bring them home at the earliest too.

While doing this, keep an eye out for *red flags* that can indicate deeper issues. Check out yourself too!

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

1. Controlling Tendencies

If someone insists that things must always go their way, be cautious. They may be insecure or possessive — both of which can lead to unhealthy, controlling relationships. Healthy relationships allow for compromise and understanding, not dominance.

2. Jealousy

A little jealousy is human, but when someone becomes possessive or upset over innocent interactions, it's a warning sign. You deserve someone who trusts you and respects your individuality.

3. Trust Issues

If someone constantly questions your honesty, especially over trivial matters, it reflects their own insecurities. You should not have to constantly prove your integrity or justify harmless friendships.

4. Disrespect

How does this person treat others — parents, siblings, teachers, wait staff, strangers? If they lack respect for others, they will eventually lack respect for you. Watch their manners and the way they speak to those they perceive as “lower” than them. Respect is a non-negotiable foundation in any relationship.

DATING GUIDELINES FOR SAFETY AND WISDOM

When you hit the age for dating, make sure you involve a loving and caring adult in your life. Such person could be a family member, friend or religious leader. Someone you are or can be free with and of your own gender. One who will be more than glad to support you in the dating process. Certainly, prayer should precede everything else and the dude *must* be a born again.

Once the dating is agreed upon and off the ground, here are some few tips that will help in the journey.

- **Share All the Details**

There is no shame in letting your family know who you're with, where you'll be, and when you'll be back. That is on the day that you go out. Your family wants to protect and support you, not control you. Transparency is a sign of maturity and wisdom, not childishness nor weakness.

- **Balance Responsibilities**

Dating is a part of life, not all of it. Prioritize your studies, responsibilities, and personal growth. The right person will understand and respect that. Anyone who doesn't is not worth dating.

- **Dress Decently**

Your clothes should express your personality, not expose your body to draw inappropriate attention. Dressing confidently and modestly shows self-respect and sets clear boundaries. Never step out of the house with bedroom clothes then spend the whole day on the seats or streets trying to act as if you didn't know what you put on. It is ridiculous to act that silly.

- **Date in Public**

Avoid secluded places when you're still getting to know someone. If visiting their home, ensure his parents are present and aware of your visit. You deserve to feel safe and respected at all times. No one is an angel and flesh do flare up fast especially when lust lurks.

- **Plan Ahead**

Think through the logistics of your date — how you'll get there, how you'll get home, and what to do if something feels off. Make sure you *always* have money to pay for your drinks and bites, a charged phone, and a way to leave if necessary. If plans change, communicate with your family immediately.

- **Prepare for the Worst**

Not every date will go smoothly. If you ever feel threatened, uncomfortable, or disrespected, *leave immediately*. Never stay silent out of politeness. Scream, run, call for help — protect yourself. Your safety is more valuable than anyone's opinion.

SELF-CARE AND GROOMING

Oh! Lest I forget, dating or not dating, personal grooming is a must! Your looks matter. They say the first impression last a lifetime. Your first twelve seconds of being seen or heard normally matters the most. Your first communication to the world is often non-verbal.

Nevertheless, lovely daughter, caring for yourself isn't just about looking good; it's about feeling confident and comfortable. Here are a few essential habits to maintain:

- **Personal Hygiene:** Shower daily, brush your teeth, and stay fresh. Keep deodorant, wipes, and lotion in your bag.
- **Sanitary Supplies:** Always have tampons or pads, sanitizer, extra underwear, and painkillers in a discreet pouch. You never know when you or a friend might need them.
- **Confidence Boosters:** Keep your hair neat, your nails trimmed, and your clothes clean and fitting well. Confidence shines brighter than any outfit.



*The world may
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appeal, but true
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BEAUTY WITH BRAINS: WISDOM IN ACTION

Daughter, being *beautiful by brains* means you balance the heart and the mind. It means recognizing your worth, guarding your heart, and using discernment when interacting with others. The world may celebrate beauty for its outward appeal, but true beauty is a blend of integrity, intelligence, and grace.

“Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” — Proverbs 31:30

You are a rare and precious jewel — a daughter of the King. Guard your heart, nurture your mind, and let your inner beauty shine brighter than any compliment could ever describe. Act and live like a princess.

With love and wisdom,

12



MONEY MANNERS

God made money. Man made money. Money made man mad.

I remember that saying from my own teenage years, and the truth in it only grows clearer with time. Money is powerful — it can build dreams or destroy them, connect people or tear them apart. We need money to live, but we should never let it control us. So how do we navigate this delicate balance?

THE REALITY OF MONEY

Money can create friends or enemies in equal measure. Some families have prospered because they managed money well, while others have fallen because of its misuse. It can be a tool for great success or a weapon of self-destruction. Maybe that's why Jesus spoke about money more than heaven and hell combined — it has a unique way of revealing our hearts.

Money isn't everything, but it is something. It can buy comfort, but it can't buy genuine joy, love, or integrity. Don't lose sight of what truly matters while chasing what the world says you need. Be warned: the love of money is the root of all evil. Employ and apply your *love* in the right Person: God and your neighbor.

VALUE RELATIONSHIPS OVER RICHES

Before money existed, people traded through *barter*. The most important things then were relationships and production — knowing someone who had what you needed and offering something in return. Money may have changed the method, but the principle still stands: *value people over possessions*.



***Money isn't
everything,
but it is
something.***



Support those who need it. Buy from the small kiosk instead of the giant supermarket when you can. Leave a generous tip when you receive good service. Respect everyone, from the CEO to the security guard. True wealth is found in how well you treat others, not in how much you have. Use money to make people, not people to make money.

Solomon said a good name is more desirable than great riches, and to be esteemed is better than silver or gold (Proverbs 22:1). Actually the best perfume to ever wear is a good name (Ecclesiastes 7:1). Desire, pray and work to have and keep this virtue.

MONEY COMES FROM WORK

Money is earned, not wished for. Shun the trap of quick-fix schemes like betting or gambling. They create an illusion of “easy money” but can lead to addiction and loss. Real money comes from effort, creativity, and discipline. Work is not a product of the curse that resulted from Adam and Eve dis-



***Use money to
make people,
not people to
make money.***



obedience in the Garden of Eden, only the sweat of the brow was.

Girl, for now, your main job is to study hard. Sweat it out. Soak it in. Oar hard to soar high. The skills and knowledge you gain are investments that will pay off later. Don't be tempted to take shortcuts — they may seem like an easy way out, but they rob you of true worth and growth. Corruption and dishonesty might look like fast tracks to success, but they always come at a cost. You don't want to crash land and ditch just when you thought you were taking off.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO EARN



Start early. Even before you are 18 and on a break, learn to earn your *own* money. You are surrounded by uncounted opportunities. Babysit, help with chores, tutor younger students, or work at a local business. Volunteer at a daycare or teach music to kids. These small experiences teach you responsibility, build character, and, yes,

***That scrolling and
flipping is only
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kill.***



make money. Who said mom or daddy should always dictate the kind of inner wear you have? Getting yourself that cologne is no sin either!

Brilliant girl, be creative. If you have skills — like braiding hair, editing videos, or creating digital art — monetize them. Learn new skills through online courses or YouTube tutorials. You'd be amazed at what you can do with a smartphone and an internet connection. Stop spending endless time doing nothing on social media. That scrolling and flipping is only worthwhile if it leaves you with a new skill to make a kill. Sure, market your products there but don't get carried away by the idiotic content meant to numb or crumble your thinking.

TO SPEND, SAVE, OR INVEST?

Managing money wisely is just as important as earning it. Create a simple budget:

- **Give to God:** Prioritize your giving or offerings.
- **Save for yourself:** Put aside a portion for future goals.
- **Spend wisely:** Meet your needs before your wants.
- **Help others:** Be generous where you can.

Start small. There is always something reachable to do. If you live on a farm, buy a few chicks with your savings and watch them grow. Sell the eggs, reinvest, and learn the basics of business firsthand. Write those poems or short stories consistently. Keep a journal for your personal and family devotions. One day they may turn out as books. Even if it's just a symbolic start, it teaches you the value of growth.

INVEST IN SKILLS, NOT JUST CASH

Beyond money, invest in yourself. Learn to type professionally, code, AI skills, edit videos, or speak confidently in public. Do voice overs if you have that sweet voice or join the choir at your earliest. These are skills that can open doors. Take advantage of free online courses, practice creative writing, and volunteer whenever you can. All these experiences add up to a wealth far greater than cash — a wealth of knowledge and ability.

ENJOYING MONEY WITHOUT WORSHIPING IT

Money is meant to make life a little sweeter. Celebrate your hard work — buy that ice cream, treat yourself to a movie, order that book, get a nice meal with friends. Just make sure these moments are rewards, not habits. Take care of the money-maker — that's you! Balance working hard with resting well. Remember, wear and tear does not apply to machines only. Every bit of us that

move or think need continuous servicing just as a vehicle requires oiling and greasing.

FINAL THOUGHTS

If *time is money*, then money is everywhere if you're willing to use your time wisely. But remember, not all your time should be spent chasing money. As advised above, please ensure you rest, reflect, and recharge — because a tired soul loses perspective.

Daughter, life has a lot to teach you about money, and these lessons will evolve as you grow. Keep a humble heart, a sharp mind, and hands willing to work. When you understand the value of what you earn, you'll never let it define your worth.

Go out there and make good choices. You're capable of much more than just making money — you're capable of living a full, wise, and generous life. May favor and grace abound.

Sincerely,



*When you
understand the
value of what you
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worth.*



13

 **LIVE SIMPLY** 



“Hey Joan! How was your weekend?”

Samantha greeted her friend after boarding the school bus on Monday morning. There was nothing spectacular about the past days — just their usual greetings.

“It was fantastic,” came a hearty response with a beaming smile. “I really enjoyed modeling with play dough.”

“What do you mean? That is childish! How could you enjoy such?” Samantha rebuked her friend with a perplexed and serious face.

“Childish? No! It was childlike,” Joan retorted without catching any feelings.

“I was helping out as an assistant teacher in our Church’s Sunday school. I was assigned to the playgroup children. It was so much fun, I tell you!” she extended a high five, and they laughed out loud.

As aptly put by Joan, *childlike* is not the same as *childish*. Just like *simple* doesn’t necessarily mean *simplistic*! When I say I live simply, it doesn’t mean I am simple. I can actually do very complicated things in a simple way. On the other hand, some people complicate the simplest things. Most natural things are simple in principle, yet we complicate them. Jesus Himself valued simplicity, teaching us to “*consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these*” (Matthew 6:28-29). When we choose to be students of nature, we can create endless combinations of perplexing yet beautiful simplicities.

NATURE’S THE BEST TEACHER

For example, the idea of a bouquet of flowers likely came from a simple yet critical observation of colors in nature somewhere in a forest. Then, the domestication of flowers began. They picked the best over time and reproduced them. Once they had all the varieties, they plucked different types, put them in a bunch, and wrapped it beautifully. Someone else thought of a vase. Then an entrepreneur saw a business opportunity and ran with it. The exporter took them overseas. And the rest is history. From a simple observation, a complex network of relationships and industries emerged.



*When we choose
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Daughter, in everything you wish and set out to do, start simple. Keep simple. Live simple. You have all you need, both within and around you, to make the most of what you must. Your natural hair is beautiful if you keep it neat—whether short, braided, or in dreadlocks. No one should rob a bank for a hairstyle. If you can’t afford that expensive hair treatment, learn to mix egg white with avocado and apply it at the right time. Or check out the Aloe Vera growing in the backyard and get creative with it. Often, we have what we need

within our reach to live happily and healthily. *“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it”* (1 Timothy 6:6-7).

KEEP OFF THE COMPARISON PATH

While living simply, beware of the debilitating bug called **comparison**. It has infested, infected, and crippled many lives. Its venom leads people to use what they don’t have to please people they don’t know, who most often don’t notice or care. That disease is rampant and gnawing. Learn to eat at a café you can afford and prioritize healthy foods. Sometimes, *vibandaski* (local eateries) have the freshest, most affordable meals. That may make more sense when you’re in college anyway. You will come to learn that junk food is not only unhealthy but also unnecessarily expensive. Sadly, those fatty treats could lead you to seek liposuction later. Really, why climb a painful ladder that leads to a series of complicated regrets? *“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones”* (Proverbs 14:30).

Beautiful daughter, you don’t have to join friends who fake hangovers for fun. The weight of their “morning-after” stories is often just lies. They cry themselves to sleep most nights. Be simple and keep sleeping like a baby for eight hours each night. Your skin will maintain such a sheen! *“In peace, I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety”* (Psalm 4:8).


***Keep your
words simple
too. Be known
for your
forthright
thinking and
speech.***

You may be labeled a *simple girl* because of your conservative wear or ear piercing. That you don’t chase the latest fashion trends from movies or city billboards. That you do not have those uncountable earrings that make ones hearing organ look like a telecommunication mast full of transmitters. Don’t bother with their derogatory talk. What they won’t disclose is the source of the dirty money used to buy their clothes. That *sponsor* could be someone’s dad in your class. Imagine meeting your best friend’s uncle with your *fashionista* classmate. How absurd! Unthinkable. Remember *Traditions! Traditions! My Papa! My Papa!* in the



classic movie *Fidler on the Roof*? It makes a lot of sense here! Some traditions are priceless.

EYES ON THE BALL

When you go to college, remember that it's not a place to complicate life but to apply simplicity to create solutions for complex issues. To achieve that, you need a mind free from unnecessary complications or messy relationships. Learn to *keep it simple and sweet* (KISS), like counting 1, 2, 3. If you can count your most important relationships on one hand, you're on the right course. Keep your gaze on your goal, not on fleeting fantasies.

Finally, keep your words simple too. Be known for your forthright thinking and speech. "*Let your yes be yes, and your no, no*" (Matthew 5:37). *No* is a good word to ward off many complicated situations. Choose your *yeses* wisely—the fewer, the better. It is okay to be labeled rigid. "*Don't bother with her. I know she will say NO, which she means all the time.*" Anything beyond *yes* or *no* can lead to webs of unnecessary drama. When an explanation for your position is necessary, share it based on your principles and values. But you don't have to over-explain. State the facts and let the matter lie. Don't argue to win; state to close the matter and move on. Unfortunately, some people thrive on bullying others with lacerating words. Stay away from such. Nothing drains and hurts deeper.

14



LIVE PURE



Contamination corrodes and erodes value. It can diminish the worth of a commodity — just as rust weakens and tarnishes iron. A rusted piece of iron is unattractive and loses its value, and similarly, our bodies, minds, and souls suffer when contaminated by impure influences.

THE ILLNESS WITHIN

Human illness manifests in two ways: sickness and disease. While diseases can often be diagnosed and treated physically, sicknesses — the struggles of the mind and heart — can be difficult to define or confront. It's possible to have a sound brain yet be plagued by a troubled mind or to have a healthy heart that carries a heavy ache. These hidden struggles are often linked to what we now call mental health issues or a lack of inner peace.

As Henry David Thoreau observed, “*The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.*” Many of us carry silent burdens that, though unseen, weigh heavily on our souls.

THE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION

Contamination occurs when our natural, pure selves are invaded by harmful thoughts, substances, and ideologies. This intrusion distorts our true nature and creates inner chaos. No one remains the same after being contaminated.

People can be resourceful in masking their contamination. We devise ways to numb guilt, convincing ourselves that wrong is acceptable because “everyone is doing it.” Consider the normalization of corruption, casual hookups, or pornography. We might rationalize these behaviors, but deep inside, they can leave scars.



Contamination occurs when our natural, pure selves are invaded by harmful thoughts, substances, and ideologies.



Fyodor Dostoevsky insightfully wrote, “*Man has it all in his hands, and it all slips through his fingers from sheer cowardice.*” Often, we compromise our values not out of ignorance but out of fear or convenience.

YOU CAN'T OUTFRAN YOUR CONSCIENCE

You can hide your inner struggles from the world, but you cannot escape yourself. The guilt and shame linger, eroding your peace. As Proverbs 28:13 states, “*Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*”

Living with an outwardly polished appearance while battling inner impurity is exhausting. Even if society accepts certain behaviors, your conscience often knows the truth — a truth that no facade can fully suppress.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO LIVE PURE IN A POLLUTED WORLD?

Not by sheer willpower. We are surrounded by negativity and temptation. Contamination targets us through our senses — what we see, hear, and experience. Even when we try to stay clean, a war rages within.

Paul captures this internal battle in Romans 7:19, *“For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing.”* This tension between our desires and our actions is a universal human experience.

Yet, Paul does not leave us in despair. He exclaims, *“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* (Romans 7:24-25).

Our only hope lies in surrendering to God’s will and grace. Purity is not achieved through self-reliance but through God’s power working within us. As C.S. Lewis noted, *“Relying on God has to begin all over again every day as if nothing had yet been done.”* you must learn and determine to make it a daily business to rely on God.

THE PATH TO PURITY

Darling, we may live in a world filled with smoke and darkness, but we don’t have to remain there. Surrender to God is the first step out. As our minds are renewed by His Word, our thoughts, words, and actions gradually transform. The power of God reaches the deepest, most hidden parts of us, cleansing and restoring.



*As our minds
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When you choose God, it becomes possible to live a sexually pure life, free from addiction and destructive habits. The world’s temptations will still come, but with God’s strength, you can stand firm. It is not nor won’t be easy at all. But it becomes more imaginable and attractive to attempt. As James 4:7 urges, *“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

THE COST OF IMPURITY

Gorgeous girl, impurity carries a price. It may bring fleeting pleasure, but the consequences are lasting — guilt, brokenness, strained relationships, and sometimes irreversible damage. As Ravi Zacharias reflected, *“Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.”*

The ultimate consequence of impurity is separation from God. Romans 6:23 warns, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

MY PRAYER FOR YOU

May the Lord help you live a pure and uncontaminated life. When the world’s noise tries to drown your spirit, may you find the strength to choose the path of purity — the path that leads to genuine peace, wholeness and fruitfulness.

Live pure, dear daughter, not by your strength but by God’s grace. *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”* — Psalm 51:10

15



LIVE BACKWARDS



Graduation, holiday, and summiting: what do these three have in common? Pause for a moment and list as many similarities as you can think of. yes, pause and jot them just along the margin of this page.

Chances are, your list includes words like happiness, celebration, and victory. These are moments of achievement — destinations reached after a long journey.

However, no journey in life is completely enjoyable or predictable. Life often surprises us, bringing joy and hardship without warning. It's a humbling reminder that the most meaningful moments often aren't the ones we meticulously plan for.

I had one such experience in 2024, a year that began with hope but took an unexpected turn. My heart was set on a year of reconciliation and restoration, a theme I even inscribed on an artistic wall hanging. Then, just half-way through January, a court summon shattered my optimism — my wife had finally filed for divorce. We had been separated for three years.



*Life often surprises
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warning.*



I was crushed. My mind raced with confusion, denial, and a desperate urge to fight for my marriage. I spent two weeks gathering evidence, preparing a thorough defense. I was determined to prove my innocence, not just for myself, but for the sake of our five daughters, who might one day read those court records.

When I presented my defense to my lawyer, David, he listened patiently and then gently challenged me. “Jacob, you’ve done a great job. You have a strong defense. But why fight so hard? Your wife has already made up her mind. Who are you to stop her? Besides, no judge wants to be blamed for a worse outcome by denying a divorce. Let it go. Set the record straight, yes, but don’t get entangled in a prolonged court battle. You don’t know what good God is preparing for you.”

His words struck me. There was wisdom in letting go, in releasing control and trusting God’s greater plan. I chose to focus my energy elsewhere — on rebuilding my life and pursuing my purpose.

THE SOLO RIDE

That February, while trying to learn professional skills in my new found career in the real estate sector, a lingering thought engulfed my mind again: implement the Read to Lead Centre vision born in 2016. Eight years later? The mission had been buried under years of busyness, but now it resurfaced with an undeniable urgency. Read to Lead Centre vision was born as we joyfully served as a missionary family in a village called Mang’u, Nakuru County.

Within that season, we were working under an organization called Navigators Kenya and had adopted a school called Mema Secondary school as our ministry platform. We were involved in students discipleship and mentorship.

By mid-March, I knew I had to act. I mapped out the details, mobilized resources, and prepared myself for a daunting challenge: a solo 835-kilometer bike ride from Nakuru to Malindi. It was both a personal reflection journey and a fundraiser for the center.

On March 29th, I began my ride. The first leg to Gilgil was fantastic, my mind sharp and my spirit high. Yet, during a brief break, doubts crept in. “Jacob, what are you doing? Will you really make it to Malindi? Why go through all this pain?” The questions felt silly, but they were real.

I reminded myself that this was a promise to God, my girls, and self. It wasn’t just a ride — it was a mission to establish a space where children could read, learn, and grow spiritually. I also needed to hear God on the appalling divorce matter. There was no turning back.

The days that followed were a mix of joy, pain, and unexpected blessings. I rode through rain, fatigue, and doubts, but the vision and the mission kept me pedaling. I drew strength from friends who followed my journey through a WhatsApp group, but ultimately, I knew my greatest companion was Christ. Every pedal, every drop of sweat was a prayer and a commitment to the mission in focus.

When I finally reached Malindi, I was overwhelmed. The ride was complete, the mission was accomplished, and the Read to Lead Centre had taken its first steps toward reality. My mind was well furthered on matters marriage and family. That ride was epic and initiated a series of thoughts that gave birth to the idea of the term *Living Life Backwards* — keeping the end goal in mind to navigate the present challenges.



***Take a moment to
imagine yourself at
your own funeral.***

***What would you
want people to say
about you? What
kind of legacy do
you wish to leave
behind?***



WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING?

My focus on seeing the ocean kept me moving through difficult times. Even when riding across the 70km through the Tsavo national park, where I half-hoped for a dramatic encounter with wildlife, I kept my eyes on the destinations. Fortunately or unfortunately, I did not see any game as I traversed the beautiful park. I wondered whether God spared me trouble or simply denied me a bit of adrenaline-packed excitement. Either way, I enjoyed the flat terrain as I sang and whistled along the winding road. I look forward to my next ride to God knows where!

Daughter, life will test you. You will face moments of exhaustion, confusion, and heartbreak. You will wonder if it's all worth it. Stress and doubt will knock on your door, and memories of past mistakes may try to hold you back. In those moments, remember that you are not alone. Jesus himself asked for the cup of suffering to be taken from Him, yet He embraced it, knowing the purpose behind His pain.

When faced with decisions — friendships, education, relationships — think of the end. Picture your graduation, your future career, your family, your legacy. Will your choices help you reach your goals or derail you? Will they draw you closer to God or pull you away?

Take a moment to imagine yourself at your own funeral. What would you want people to say about you? What kind of legacy do you wish to leave behind? Are there choices you need to change now to shape that future? You remain with every opportunity as you breath.

Live life backwards. Keep the end in sight, and let it guide every decision, every step, and every breath.

16



LIVE FOR ETERNITY



“*L*ife is a Dash” by Andre Simmons presents the thought-provoking idea that our lives are defined by what we do — or fail to do — between the dates of our birth and death. That small dash on a tombstone symbolizes our choices, our impact, and our legacy. Yet, the essence of life goes beyond the grave; it stretches into eternity.

PURPOSEFUL LIVING: BEYOND THE HERE AND NOW

Throughout these reflections, we’ve emphasized living with purpose — not merely achieving goals, but ensuring those goals align with deeply held convictions. It’s about prioritizing what lasts beyond fleeting pleasures. As C.S. Lewis

insightfully wrote, *"Aim at Heaven and you will get Earth 'thrown in'; aim at Earth and you will get neither."* Our desires can either breathe life or slowly consume us.

Left to ourselves, our lives would be as transient as a breath, easily forgotten. Yet, those who live surrendered to God recognize that there is more — a call to live for something eternal. As Jim Elliot, a missionary martyred for his faith, declared, *"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."*



*As Jim Elliot, a
missionary martyred for
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what he cannot keep
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lose."*



DYING TO LIVE

To live for eternity, we must first die to ourselves, just as a grain of wheat must die to produce a harvest (John 12:24). The act of surrender is not a loss but a transformation. Our lives gain purpose when we submit to God, allowing Him to reshape and use us for His will.

When Jesus called the disciples, He said, *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"* (Matthew 4:19). This invitation marked a turning point. Over three years, they walked with Him, listened, learned, doubted, and yet remained. Even after denial and failure, their encounter with the resurrected Christ ignited a fire that could not be quenched. They embraced the Great Commission — *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..."* (Matthew 28:19) — a mission that surpassed their lifetime.

Despite persecution and even martyrdom, the disciples remained faithful. Their legacy endures today because they chose to live for eternity, not merely for themselves. As Hebrews 11:4 reminds us, *"And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead."* A life lived for God echoes far beyond the grave.

THE CALL TO LIVE FOR ETERNITY

Great daughter, remember that anything we do for God has no expiration date. As Paul writes, *“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain”* (1 Corinthians 15:58).



***Great daughter,
remember that
anything we do
for God has no
expiration date.***



Living for eternity does not mean abandoning your daily life. Instead, it transforms how you engage in life's daily tasks and relationships. The Great Commission is not a task for a chosen few; it is the calling of every believer. Whether among family, friends, colleagues, or strangers, there is always a platform for the gospel. Even if God leads you to unfamiliar lands, your mission remains to share the gospel with love.

Wherever God places you — in your career, relationships, or community — live out the gospel. Preach the Word *“in season and out of season”* (2 Timothy 4:2). Store God's Word in your heart and let it overflow through your life. As Saint Francis of Assisi is often credited with saying, *“Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words.”* As John the Baptist prayed, *may He (Jesus Christ) increase, as you decrease* (John 3:30).

A LEGACY THAT ENDURES

Living for eternity means living a life whose impact outlasts your time on earth. Success in this mission will not be measured by accolades from academic, career or entrepreneurial accomplishments but by the souls who come to know Christ through your faithful witness. Paul expressed it beautifully: *“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord*



***Living for eternity
means living a
life whose impact
outlasts your time
on earth.***



Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

As you navigate life's journey, consider the mission statement that became part of our family's commitment in 2016 through the Navigators:

"To advance the gospel of Jesus and His kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost."

Make this your personal mission. Let it be a guiding light in every choice you make and every path you take.

MY PRAYER FOR YOU

May the Lord give you the courage to live not just for today but for the life that extends beyond your lifespan on earth. May He help you to prioritize the gospel, investing in what will truly last. Here is a good quote to consider: *"Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."* — C.T. Studd

Live for eternity, beloved daughter. Your dash on that tombstone can mark a legacy that points to Christ and echoes through generations. May God's mercy and grace maintain and sustain you all the way into eternity.



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REFLECTIONS SECTION



“Kⁿowledge puffs up” and “of the increase of books there is no end.”

These are statements by Paul and Solomon, the greatest missionary and wise man respectively.

Considering the timeless truth relayed, the aim of this book is not knowledge, and not just adding to the library shelves. Hence, this section aims at helping you take the content from head to heart and finally to hands for action. Wisdom is positive application of lessons learnt from reading or experientially, whether directly or indirectly. Make it your goal to soak with understanding, search self, so that you soar higher.

Consider the reflections slowly. You are not in any competition nor comparison. Ponder on the items as long as you need. Pause to a later time if you must. Make sure you sip all possible sap from the juicy thoughts. May their byproduct rinse and wring all the dirt off you. I pray you come out clean and refreshed.

Date your reflections and write on all the spaces available in the pages. Make it personal.

Make this section as dirty as possible – with all the highlighting, underlining, circling, scribbling side notes, questions..... Such active interaction with the content make things stick! Transfer the thoughts and feelings onto your journal. Come back to it in five years’ time and see who you will have morphed into.

Enjoy every bit.



RS 1: IT IS VERY GOOD



1. Reflection on Creation: God's Original Plan

 **Bible Passage:** Genesis 1:26-31

“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...’ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”

 **Reflection:**

- From the beginning, God created male and female intentionally and with purpose.
- Being made in God's image means we reflect His wisdom, creativity, and love.
- When God declared His creation **“very good,”** it was a perfect and complete design.



Application Questions:

1. What does it mean to be made in God's image?
2. How does knowing God's original design help shape your identity?
3. How does God's declaration that creation was "very good" impact how you view yourself?

2. Navigating Confusion: Standing Firm in Truth



Bible Passage: Romans 12:2

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."



Reflection:

- The world may present confusing ideas about identity, but God's truth remains unchanging.
- Culture often shifts, but the foundation of God's design does not.
- Our identity and purpose come from God, not from feelings or societal opinions.



Application Questions:

1. What are some messages from the world that challenge God's truth?
2. How can you renew your mind to stay anchored in God's design?
3. Who in your life can support and encourage you to stand firm in God's truth?

3. Living in Truth: Walking in Confidence

 **Bible Passage:** Psalm 139:13-16

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

 **Reflection:**

- God formed each of us with precision and love.
- Your identity is secure in Him—there is no mistake in how He made you.
- True joy and peace come when we embrace who God made us to be.

 **Application Questions:**

1. How does knowing that God created you with intention affect your self-worth?
2. What are some practical ways to embrace and celebrate God’s design in your life?
3. How can you encourage others to see themselves through God’s eyes?

FINAL THOUGHT & PRAYER

 **Prayer:** “Lord, thank You for creating me in Your image. Help me to embrace Your design and stand firm in Your truth, even when the world presents confusion. Give me wisdom, courage, and confidence to walk in the identity You have given me. Amen.”



RS 2:THE FAITH FACTOR



1. Understanding Faith: The Foundation of Life

 **Bible Passage:** Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Reflection:

- Faith is not just a religious concept—everyone exercises faith in daily life (e.g., sitting on a chair, trusting a bridge, or following a GPS).
- Biblical faith goes beyond logic or material evidence; it trusts in God’s promises, even when we can’t see the full picture.
- Abraham’s journey (Genesis 12) is a perfect example: he obeyed God without knowing where he was going, and God blessed him for his faith.

Application Questions:

1. Can you think of a time when you had to trust in something you couldn’t see?

2. What makes faith in God different from faith in everyday things (e.g., chairs, technology, or people)?
3. How can you strengthen your confidence in God's plans, even when they seem unclear?

2. Challenges to Faith: Standing Firm in Storms

Bible Passage: 1 Peter 1:6-7

"In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold... may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."

Reflection:

- Faith will be tested—through doubts, difficult situations, peer pressure, or unexpected struggles.
- In **God's Not Dead**, the main character faced criticism and opposition for his faith, yet he stood firm.
- Your beliefs may sometimes be labeled as outdated, irrational, or unpopular. That's okay—faith often looks foolish to the world (1 Corinthians 1:27).
- The key is to stay grounded in God's Word and remain connected to the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us in hard times.

Application Questions:

1. What are some challenges that could test your faith in God?
2. How can you prepare yourself to stand strong when your faith is questioned?
3. Who are some people in your life who encourage you in faith, and

how can you build those relationships?

3. Growing in Faith: A Life of Trust and Action



Bible Passage: James 2:26

“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”



Reflection:

- Faith is not just believing—it’s about living in a way that reflects that belief.
- Abraham didn’t just *say* he trusted God; he *acted* on that trust.
- Feeding your faith means immersing yourself in prayer, scripture, and godly friendships.
- Even if you stumble or have doubts, God is always willing to guide you back. **You are never too far from His love.**



Application Questions:

1. What are some practical ways you can grow and act on your faith daily?
2. How can you encourage others who may struggle in their faith?
3. If you ever feel distant from God, what steps can you take to reconnect with Him?

CONCLUDING PRAYER



Prayer: *“Lord, help me to trust in You completely, even when I don’t understand everything. Strengthen my faith, give me courage when challenges arise, and remind me that You are always near. Guide my thoughts, decisions, and actions so that my faith is not just words, but a way of life. Amen.”*



RS 3: FINDING SELF



1. The Search for Identity: Who Am I?

 **Bible Passage:** Psalm 139:13-14

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

 **Reflection:**

- Everyone, at some point, struggles with identity—who we are, what defines us, and where we belong.
- Society often tells us our worth is based on our achievements, possessions, or popularity, but God says we are valuable simply because He created us.
- True identity is found in **knowing and believing** what God says about us, not in seeking approval from people or temporary pleasures.

Application Questions:

1. Where do you often look for validation—friends, achievements, appearance, or something else?
2. How does knowing that God formed you with purpose and love change the way you see yourself?
3. What can you do to remind yourself daily of your God-given identity?

2. The Struggle of Being Lost: When Life Feels Empty

Bible Passage: Luke 15:17-20

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father...’ So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

Reflection:

- Like the prodigal son, many people try to **find themselves** by chasing freedom, experiences, or things they believe will make them happy.
- But when those things don’t satisfy, life feels empty.
- God never abandons us in our lost-ness. Even when we drift away, **He is always ready to welcome us back with love.**

Application Questions:

1. Have you ever felt “lost” in life? What led to that feeling?
2. What lessons can we learn from the prodigal son’s story?
3. How can you remind yourself that no matter how far you stray, God’s love remains?

3. Finding Yourself in God: The True Answer

 **Bible Passage:** John 14:6

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”

 **Reflection:**

- The world offers many **false** paths to finding identity—popularity, success, relationships, pleasure—but **only Jesus** gives true purpose.
- Instead of running to harmful escapes (like addiction, rebellion, or self-harm), run to **God’s truth, His love, and His plan** for you.
- When you know who God says you are, you don’t need to seek validation elsewhere.

 **Application Questions:**

1. What are some false places people look to for identity?
2. How can you personally deepen your relationship with Jesus so He defines your life?
3. What steps can you take to surround yourself with voices that remind you of your God-given worth?

FINAL THOUGHT & PRAYER



Prayer:

“Lord, I know I will sometimes feel lost, but You are always there to guide me. Help me to find my identity in You, not in the world. Remind me that I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and that Your love defines me. Whenever I feel distant, give me the courage to return to You, knowing that You always welcome me with open arms. Amen.”



RS 4: EMBRACE GIVING AND RECEIVING



1. The Gift of Giving: You Were Made to Bless Others



Bible Passage: Acts 20:35

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”



Reflection:

- Just like a mango tree bears fruit for others, **your gifts, talents, and skills were meant to bless the world.**
- God has placed unique abilities in you—not just for your own benefit, but to uplift and inspire others.
- True joy comes when you share what you have, whether it’s your skills, wisdom, or even your time.



Application Questions:

1. What are some talents or skills you feel passionate about?
2. How can you use these gifts to serve others?
3. What fears or doubts hold you back from sharing your abilities?

2. The Courage to Give: Overcoming Fear and Critics

Bible Passage: Proverbs 22:29

“Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before obscure men.”

Reflection:

- **Excellence requires practice**—great people don’t happen by accident; they put in the effort.
- Fear of failure or criticism should never stop you from **stepping out and trying**.
- Some people may discourage or criticize you, but **God’s purpose in you is greater than their words**.

Application Questions:

1. How do you handle criticism or setbacks?
2. Have you ever been afraid to share your talent? How did you respond?
3. How can you start developing your skills with discipline and patience?

3. The Power of Forgiving: Freeing Yourself to Give More

Bible Passage: Colossians 3:13

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

Reflection:

- **Holding onto hurt limits your ability to give freely.**
- Forgiveness **frees your mind and heart** to be productive and creative.
- Letting go of offense allows you to focus on what truly matters—your growth and impact.

Application Questions:

1. Is there someone you need to forgive?
2. How do you usually respond when hurt by others?
3. What steps can you take to let go and move forward with peace?

FINAL THOUGHT & PRAYER



Prayer:

“Lord, You have given me gifts and talents not just for myself, but to share with the world. Help me to develop them with patience and excellence. Give me the courage to step out despite fear or criticism. And teach me to forgive quickly, so my heart remains light and free. Thank You for the opportunity to give and receive in life. Amen.”



RS 5: SHARPE BY DESIGN



Opening Reflection: The article “SHARPE BY DESIGN” uses the acronym SHARPE — Spiritual Gifts, Heart’s Desire, Abilities, Relationships, Personality, and Experiences — to describe the unique way each person is designed by God. As you go through this guide, take time to meditate on each question and honestly reflect on your gifts, desires, and experiences.

Scripture References:

- Romans 12:6-8 — *“We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.”*
- Psalm 37:4 — *“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”*
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 — *“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.”*
- Proverbs 13:20 — *“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”*
- Romans 8:28 — *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”*

PART 1: DISCOVERING YOUR SHARPE DESIGN

Reflect on each part of the SHARPE acronym — Spiritual Gifts, Heart's Desire, Abilities, Relationships, Personality, and Experiences.

- What are some of your known spiritual gifts? If you're unsure, consider asking trusted friends or mentors.
- What desires or passions stir your heart deeply? How might these be connected to your purpose?
- What abilities come naturally to you, and how have you used them to bless others?
- How do your relationships — friends, family, mentors — influence your growth and decisions?
- What parts of your personality do you think God can use for His glory?
- What significant experiences (positive or painful) have shaped your life? How might God use them?

PART 2: ALIGNING WITH GOD'S DESIGN

Considering the concept of a natural order, think about how your SHARPE design aligns with God's purpose for your life.

- Are there any gifts or abilities that you've neglected or undervalued?
- How might understanding your heart's desires help you make wise choices for your future?
- Do your current relationships support your growth or hinder it?
- What aspects of your personality need growth or management for God's purpose to be fulfilled?

PART 3: LIVING OUT YOUR SHARPE DESIGN

Reflect on how you can practically live out your SHARPE design and honor God with it.

- What are some specific ways you can use your gifts and abilities to serve others?
- How can you be more intentional in building meaningful relationships?
- How can you embrace and grow in your personality while managing its potential weaknesses?
- How can your past experiences, both good and bad, be a testimony to others?

Closing Prayer: *Father, thank You for creating me uniquely and purposefully. Help me to understand my design and live it out in a way that honors You. When I face criticism or failure, give me the grace to forgive and learn. May my life be a reflection of Your love and purpose. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



RS 6: FAMILY DESIGN AND DYNAMICS



SECTION 1: GOD'S DESIGN FOR FAMILY

Key Passage: Genesis 2:18-24

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.' ... That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."

Reflection:

1. According to this passage, why did God create the family?
2. How does this passage define marriage and family roles?
3. What does this teach us about the importance of unity in family?

Meditation & Application:

- Reflect on how God's design for the family impacts your view of relationships.

- Write down one way you can contribute to unity in your family this week.

SECTION 2: HANDLING FAMILY CONFLICTS WITH WISDOM

Key Passage: Ephesians 6:1-4

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise— ‘so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Reflection:

1. What does this passage say about the responsibility of children and parents?
2. How can honoring parents bring blessings?
3. Why is it important for parents to be careful in how they treat their children?

Meditation & Application:

- Think about a recent conflict in your family. How could you have responded differently in light of this passage?
- Pray for wisdom and patience in dealing with family challenges.

SECTION 3: HEALING THROUGH FORGIVENESS

Key Passage: Colossians 3:12-14

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

Reflection:

1. What does this passage teach about how we should treat family members?
2. How does forgiving others help in personal healing?
3. What are some obstacles that make forgiveness difficult?

Meditation & Application:

- Identify someone in your family you need to forgive or seek forgiveness from.
- Ask God to help you release any bitterness and replace it with love.
- Write a prayer of forgiveness and healing.

CONCLUSION

Family relationships may not always be perfect, but God calls us to build them with love, respect, and forgiveness. With His guidance, we can make the most of every situation and experience healing and restoration.



RS 7: EXPLORING TEENAGEHOOD POSITIVELY



SECTION 1: BALANCED GROWTH AT TEENAGEHOOD

Key Passage: Luke 2:52

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Reflection:

Teenagehood is a critical phase of self-discovery and personal growth. Like Jesus, you are meant to grow in wisdom, in physical development, in social relationships, and in your connection with God. Your experiences, choices, and mindset today set the foundation for the kind of adult you will become. Just as seasons change, this phase will pass, but how you live through it determines the shape of your future.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to grow in wisdom, stature, favor with God, and favor with people?
2. How can you actively pursue growth in each of these areas?
3. In what ways can you follow Jesus’ example in your teenage years?

SECTION 2: MAKING WISE CHOICES IN A CHALLENGING

WORLD

Key Passage: Ephesians 5:15-17

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”

Reflection:

Life presents many opportunities and challenges, especially in teenagehood. Every decision you make contributes to your future, and unwise choices can lead to regret. The world is full of temptations, but God calls you to live wisely, seeking His will above all else. Surrounding yourself with the right people and setting the right standards will help you navigate this journey successfully.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can you discern between wise and unwise choices?
2. What are some practical ways to make the most of every opportunity in your teenage years?
3. How can you seek and understand God’s will in your daily life?

SECTION 3: COURAGE, FAITH, AND STANDING OUT

Key Passage: Esther 4:14-16

“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

Reflection:

Esther was a young girl with every reason to feel inadequate—an orphan raised by her uncle, living in an unfamiliar palace. But she chose to rise above her circumstances, trust God, and seize her opportunity to make a difference. Her courage and faith not only elevated her but also saved an entire nation.

God often places us in situations where we can make a difference, and when we step forward with faith, He empowers us beyond our limitations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What challenges or circumstances in your life could be opportunities for growth and impact?
2. How can you stand firm in your faith and make a difference like Esther?
3. What fears or insecurities do you need to surrender to God so that you can fully embrace His plans for you?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, thank You for this season of teenagehood. Help me grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with You and those around me. Give me the courage to make wise choices, resist temptations, and seek Your will in all I do. Like Esther, may I recognize the opportunities You place before me and step forward in faith to make a difference. Fill me with Your Spirit so that I may live as a shining example of Your love, truth, and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.



RS 8: BLOOMING, BROKEN, OR BUSTED?



SECTION 1: REFLECTION

Read the following scripture passages and reflect on how they relate to the message of blooming in challenging circumstances.

1. John 15:1-5 - Jesus describes Himself as the vine and His followers as the branches. Reflect on how staying connected to Jesus (the vine) influences your ability to bloom in life.

- a. In what ways do you feel connected to the vine in your daily life?
- b. What specific struggles or challenges have you faced that made it difficult to stay connected?

2. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 - Paul speaks about weakness and strength in Christ. Consider how your perceived weaknesses or brokenness can lead to a deeper reliance on God's grace.

- a. How does understanding that God's grace is sufficient change your perspective on your struggles?
- b. Can you identify any "thorn in the flesh" that might actually lead to God's power being made perfect in you?

3. James 1:2-4 - This passage encourages finding joy in trials. Reflect on your current trials and how they might contribute to your spiritual growth.

- a. How can you shift your perspective to view your current challenges as opportunities for growth?
- b. What steps can you take to find joy amidst your trials?

SECTION 2: ACTION

Commit to actionable steps based on your reflections and meditations.

1. Daily Connection - Make a conscious effort to stay connected to the vine. Consider setting aside a specific time each day for prayer and scripture reading (Read Mark 1:35).

Action: Write down a specific time in your schedule this week dedicated to spending time with God.

2. Embrace Vulnerability - Identify a trusted friend or family member with whom you can share your feelings of brokenness and struggles. Remember that it's okay to seek support.

Action: Reach out and set a time to talk or share your challenges with someone you trust.

3. Joyful Perspective - Develop a practice of gratitude to shift your focus from struggles to blessings. Every day, write down three things you're thankful for, especially in the midst of challenges.

Action: Start a *gratitude journal* dedicated to acknowledging God's goodness, even when life feels tough.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for the reminder that we are beautifully made and rooted in You. Help us to bloom in our lives, even amidst brokenness and challenges. Teach us to rely on Your strength, embrace vulnerability, and trust Your perfect plan for our lives. Amen.



RS 9: CLIQUES AND CLICKS



PART 1: THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIPS

Key Scripture: Proverbs 13:20 – *“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm.”*

Reflection:

1. The message says, *“Show me your friends and I’ll tell you who you are.”* How have your closest friends influenced you—positively or negatively?
2. Why do you think God emphasizes choosing the right friends?
3. Have you ever been in a friendship that pulled you away from your values? How did you handle it?

Action Step:

Make a list of **your closest friends** and write down **one positive trait** from each. If you notice negative influences, ask God for wisdom on how to navigate those relationships.

PART 2: DIGITAL DISTRACTIONS — ARE YOU IN CONTROL?

Key Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:23 – *“I have the right to do anything, but not everything is beneficial.”*

Reflection:

1. Social media and online platforms can be useful, but they can also lead to distractions. How much time do you spend online, and is it helping or harming your growth?
2. The message says, “*Before you know it, you are officially a member of a clique you never intended to join!*” Have you ever clicked on content that led you somewhere you regretted?
3. How can you set healthy boundaries for your digital life?

Action Step:

Track your **screen time** for the next three days. Identify any unhealthy habits and make a plan to reduce wasted time (e.g., setting app limits, scheduling offline time, or choosing enriching content).

PART 3: MAKING WISE CHOICES

Key Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:33 – “*Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals.*”

Reflection:

1. The message warns that “*some company is not worth keeping at all.*” Have you ever been tempted to compromise your values to fit in?
2. How do you recognize the difference between a friend who builds you up and one who leads you astray?
3. What are some ways you can strengthen your faith while still being a light to those who don’t share your values?

Action Step:

Identify **one friend** who encourages your spiritual growth and **one person** who might need your positive influence. Pray for wisdom on how to nurture both relationships.

FINAL CHALLENGE:

Make Proverbs 13:20 and 1 Corinthians 15:33 your **guiding verses** for friendships. Write them somewhere visible as a reminder to **walk with the wise**.



RS 10: HEART MATTERS MATTER



Here's a **Three-Part Bible Study Guide** to help you reflect on and apply the lessons from *Heart Matters Matter*. Each section includes key Scriptures, reflection questions, and practical applications.

PART 1: GUARDING THE HEART — A PRECIOUS TREASURE

Key Scriptures:

- Proverbs 4:23 – *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”*
- Jeremiah 17:9 – *“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”*
- Matthew 12:34 – *“For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”*

Reflection Questions:

1. Why does God place so much importance on guarding the heart?
2. What are some things that influence the condition of your heart (music, social media, friendships, etc.)?

3. In what ways have you experienced your thoughts and words reflecting what is in your heart?

Practical Application:

- Make a list of things that positively and negatively affect your heart. Decide what needs to change.
- Memorize Proverbs 4:23 and use it as a daily reminder to be intentional about guarding your heart.

PART 2: RELATIONSHIPS – CHOOSING WISELY

Key Scriptures:

- 1 Corinthians 15:33 – *“Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.”*
- Proverbs 13:20 – *“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”*
- 2 Corinthians 6:14 – *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?”*

Reflection Questions:

1. Think about your closest friends—how do they influence your thoughts, choices, and relationship with God?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt pressured to fit in with a certain group? How did you handle it?
3. What qualities should you look for in godly friendships?

Practical Application:

- Evaluate your friendships: Do they bring you closer to God or pull you away?
- Write down 3 qualities of a friend who would help you grow in your faith. Pray for wisdom in choosing your friends wisely.

PART 3: SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH — KEEP- ING YOUR HEART ALIGNED WITH GOD

Key Scriptures:

- Psalm 51:10 – *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*
- Ezekiel 36:26 – *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”*
- Philippians 4:7 – *“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

Reflection Questions:

1. How can you allow God to shape your heart and align it with His will?
2. Are there any past hurts or emotional burdens that you need to surrender to God?
3. What practical steps can you take to ensure that your heart stays pure and focused on God?

Practical Application:

- Start a prayer journal, asking God to refine your heart and align it with His.
- Choose one Bible verse from this study to memorize and pray over

daily.



RS 11: BEAUTIFUL BY BRAINS



PART 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR WORTH AND IDENTITY

Key Lessons:

- Your beauty and worth come from God, not from people's opinions.
- You are uniquely and wonderfully made.
- Compliments should not manipulate your emotions or decisions.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to be “beautiful”? How does society define it versus how God defines it?
2. How do you react when people compliment you? Do you let it influence your decisions?
3. Have you ever felt pressure to believe someone's words because they called you beautiful?

Bible Verses:

- **Psalms 139:14** – “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”
- **Proverbs 31:30** – “Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”

Application:

- Write a list of five things that make you valuable beyond physical beauty.
- Memorize Psalm 139:14 and say it to yourself when you doubt your worth.
- Talk to a trusted mentor (parent, older sister, youth leader) about how to remain confident in your identity.

PART 2: CHOOSING FRIENDS AND RELATIONSHIPS WISELY

Key Lessons:

- Not everyone who shows interest in you has good intentions.
- Pay attention to red flags in friendships and relationships.
- Jealousy, control, and disrespect are signs of unhealthy relationships.

Reflection Questions:

1. Have you ever ignored a red flag in a friendship or relationship? What happened?
2. Why do you think people fall for sweet words despite warning signs?
3. How can you be wise in friendships and relationships without being judgmental?

Bible Verses:

- **1 Corinthians 15:33** – “Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’”
- **Proverbs 13:20** – “Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”

- **James 1:5** – “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”

Application:

- Make a list of the top three qualities you want in a friend or a future partner.
- Role-play different scenarios where someone might try to manipulate you—practice how to respond wisely.
- Pray daily for wisdom in choosing the right people to associate with.

PART 3: SETTING BOUNDARIES AND STAYING SAFE

Key Lessons:

- Dating should be done wisely, preferably in a group setting first.
- Your safety and values should always come first.
- Parents, mentors, and God should be involved in your decisions.

Reflection Questions:

1. What are your personal boundaries when it comes to dating?
2. Why is it important to inform your parents or guardians about your outings?
3. What steps will you take if you ever find yourself in an uncomfortable situation?

Bible Verses:

- **Proverbs 4:23** – “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you

do flows from it.”

- **2 Timothy 2:22** – “Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
- **Isaiah 41:10** – “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

APPLICATION:

- Write down your boundaries when it comes to dating, friendships, and personal values.
- Have an open conversation with your parents about what makes you feel safe and supported.
- Role-play what you would do in a risky situation (e.g., if someone pressures you or makes unwanted advances).



RS 12: MONEY MANNERS



Here's a three-part study guide to help your daughter reflect on and apply the key lessons from **“Money Manners.”** Each section includes guiding questions, activities, and relevant Bible verses.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF MONEY

Key Lessons:

- Money is necessary but not everything.
- Value relationships more than wealth.
- Work and effort are required to earn money honestly.

Bible Verses:

- **Ecclesiastes 5:10** – *“Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income.”*
- **Proverbs 22:1** – *“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.”*

Reflection Questions:

1. How does money affect people's actions and decisions?

2. Why is it important to value relationships over financial gain?
3. What are some examples of people who lost or gained respect due to their approach to money?

Action Step:

- List five non-material things that bring happiness in life. How can you invest in them instead of just focusing on money?

PART 2: EARNING AND MANAGING MONEY WISELY

Key Lessons:

- Work hard and develop skills to earn money honestly.
- Avoid shortcuts like cheating or betting.
- Budgeting and saving are essential.

Bible Verses:

- **Colossians 3:23** – *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”*
- **Proverbs 13:11** – *“Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”*

Reflection Questions:

1. What skills do you have or want to develop to earn money honestly?
2. Why do you think betting and corruption are harmful ways to seek wealth?
3. How can you create a budget for your pocket money?

Action Step:

- Create a simple budget with three categories: Spending, Saving, and

Giving. Track how you use your money for one month.

PART 3: INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

Key Lessons:

- Savings lead to investment opportunities.
- Building good character and skills is a long-term investment.
- Money should be used to improve life, not control it.

Bible Verses:

- **Proverbs 31:17** – *“She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.”*
- **Matthew 6:19-21** – *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.”*

Reflection Questions:

1. What are some ways you can invest in yourself (skills, education, experience)?
2. Why is building a good reputation a better investment than just accumulating money?
3. How can you balance work, saving, and enjoying life?

Action Step:

- Choose one skill from the letter (e.g., public speaking, video editing, typing) and commit to learning it over the next three months.



RS 13: LIVE SIMPLY



SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING SIMPLICITY VS. COMPLEXITY

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean to you to live simply?
2. How can you differentiate between being childlike and childish in your own life?
3. Are there areas in your life where you tend to complicate things? How can you simplify them?

Key Memory Verses:

Matthew 6:25-27: *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”*

Proverbs 15:16: *“Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil.”*

Action

Write down three aspects of your life (like relationships, studies, hobbies) where you can embrace simplicity. Create a plan to focus more on these areas this week.

SECTION 2: AVOIDING COMPARISON

Reflection Questions

1. How has comparison affected you personally? Can you recall specific situations?
2. Why do you think we often feel pressured to have what others have?
3. In what ways can you appreciate your own uniqueness and strengths?

Key Memory Verses

2 Corinthians 10:12: “We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.”

Galatians 6:4: “Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else.”

Action

- Create a “Gratitude Journal” where you write down three things you appreciate about yourself every day for a week. Reflect on how this practice changes your mindset.

SECTION 3: KEEPING WORDS SIMPLE

Reflection Questions

1. How do you currently communicate with your friends and family? Are there areas where your words lead to confusion or drama?
2. What can you do to improve clarity in your communication?
3. Are there situations where you find it challenging to say “no”? How can you practice gracious refusal?

Key Memory Verses

Matthew 5:37: “All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.”

Proverbs 12:18: “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

Action

This week, practice saying “no” in a few situations where you would typically say yes out of obligation. Reflect on how it feels to be honest and maintain boundaries.



RS 14: LIVE BACKWARDS



PART 1: UNDERSTANDING LIFE'S UNPREDICTABILITY

Reflection Questions:

1. What are some unexpected events you have experienced in your life? How did they change your perspective?
2. Jacob mentions that the most enjoyable moments often come unexpectedly. Can you recall a time when something wonderful happened out of the blue? What were the feelings you experienced at that moment?

Action

Create a “Life’s Surprises” journal entry. Write down three unexpected events in your life (positive or negative) and how they have affected you. Reflect on what you learned from each experience.

PART 2: THE IMPORTANCE OF INTENTIONALITY AND VISION

Reflection Questions:

1. Jacob had a vision for a resource center for children from his village. What is a dream or goal you have for your life? How does it make you feel?
2. Why do you think it's important to have a vision? How can it guide you through tough times, similar to how Jacob found purpose in his ride?

Action

Take some time to create a vision board. Gather images, quotes, and other materials that represent your dreams and goals. Display it somewhere you'll see it daily to remind yourself of your purpose.

PART 3: EMBRACING CHALLENGES AND GROWTH

Reflection Questions:

1. Jacob faced many challenges but chose to shift his focus to something positive. How do you typically respond to challenges? Do you face them head-on or avoid them?
2. Think about a challenge you are currently facing. What is one small step you can take to address it instead of feeling overwhelmed?

Action

Write a letter to your future self, detailing your current challenge. Offer advice on how to overcome it and remind yourself of your strengths. Seal the letter and set a date months from now to open it and reflect on your growth.



RS 15: LIVE PURE



PART 1: GUARDING AGAINST CONTAMINATION

Key Scripture: Proverbs 4:23 – *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”*

Reflection:

1. The message compares rust on iron to contamination in our lives. What are some things that can “rust” or contaminate your heart, mind, and soul?
2. Think about your daily life—music, social media, friendships, entertainment. Are there any influences that might be weakening your faith?
3. Why is guarding your heart so important? How does it affect your choices and actions?

Action Step:

Write down **three specific ways** you can guard your heart this week (e.g., choosing uplifting music, limiting social media, avoiding gossip).

PART 2: THE INNER BATTLE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG

Key Scripture: Romans 7:19 – *“For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.”*

Reflection:

1. Have you ever felt like Paul—wanting to do the right thing but struggling with temptation? What are some personal struggles you face?
2. What are some ways people try to “numb” or ignore their inner struggles (e.g., peer pressure, bad habits)?
3. Why do you think relying on God’s strength (instead of your own) is the key to overcoming sin?

Action Step:

Choose **one area** where you struggle with temptation. Pray daily for God’s help, and find a Bible verse to memorize that encourages you in this battle.

PART 3: SURRENDERING TO GOD’S POWER

Key Scripture: Romans 7:24-25 – *“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!”*

Reflection:

1. The message says we can’t live pure by our own strength. What does it mean to surrender to God’s will?
2. How does filling your mind with God’s Word help you live differently?
3. What are some ways you can invite God to take charge of your thoughts, actions, and habits?

Action Step:

Create a **“Mind Renewal Plan”**—list one new **daily habit** that will help you grow spiritually (e.g., morning devotion, listening to Christian music, journaling prayers).

FINAL CHALLENGE:

Pray and ask God to help you live a pure life. Find an accountability partner (a trusted friend, mentor, or parent) to check in with regularly.



RS 16: LIVE FOR ETERNITY



PART 1: LIVING BEYOND THE DASH

Key Scripture: Matthew 6:19-20 – *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

Reflection:

1. The message talks about life being a dash between birth and death. How does this perspective change the way you view your daily choices?
2. What are some things people chase after that will not last beyond this life?
3. How can you start investing in things that have eternal value?

Action Step:

Write down **three things** you can do this week that will have **eternal impact** (e.g., sharing Christ with a friend, serving someone in need, memorizing a Bible verse).

PART 2: SURRENDERING TO GOD'S MISSION

Key Scripture: John 12:24 – *“Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”*

Reflection:

1. The message says, “We are nothing until we let go and let God.” What do you think it means to “die to self” in your daily life?
2. How did Jesus’ disciples struggle to surrender, and what changed in them after encountering the risen Christ?
3. What is holding you back from fully surrendering to God’s purpose?

Action Step:

Take time to **pray and surrender** a specific area of your life to God (e.g., fears about the future, personal struggles, or selfish desires).

PART 3: THE GREAT COMMISSION — A LIFE WORTH REMEMBERING

Key Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20 – *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*

Reflection:

1. Jesus’ disciples were ordinary people, yet they changed the world. What does that tell you about God’s ability to use you?
2. The message states, “Whatever we do for God has no expiry date.” What are some ways you can impact others spiritually, even at your age?
3. Who in your life needs to hear the gospel? How can you share it with

them?

Action Step:

Create a **discipleship goal**: Choose **one person** you can pray for, encourage in faith, or share the gospel with this month.

FINAL CHALLENGE:

Adopt the **Navigators' vision and mission statement** as your personal life mission. Write it somewhere visible as a daily reminder of your purpose:

"To advance the gospel of Jesus and His kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost."

Authors' Brief

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A devoted mother, Montessori teacher and Sunday school enthusiast, Tabitha has worked with children and parents from all walks of life nurturing and empowering them for purpose and productivity. Tabitha is also a writer and a self taught abstract artist. She writes from her experiences and reflections on what she wishes would have learnt in her teen years. Guided by the gospel, her life mission is to inspire, infuse and instill godliness in children.

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