



# It All Comes Out *in the Wash*

A BOOK OF REFLECTIONS

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This is a creative work. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

*IT ALL COMES OUT IN THE WASH*

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## **It All Comes Out in the Wash:**

### **A Book of Reflections**

This book is funny sometimes and sometimes not. It's sad sometimes, and sometimes not. It teaches a little (God willing) and reflects on a ton. It's many different flavors of feeling because I think that's what it's like to be human—to put everything in the tub at once, the colors bleeding into one another and then watching as the soap cleans and the bleach whitens, thankful that eventually, it all comes out in the wash.

# Two Thoughts

**ONE:** In Leviticus, it talks about a grain offering. Okay, let's back up. Yes, I know books like Leviticus and Deuteronomy can feel like a slow climb to somewhere (where that is, we aren't always too sure).

But a while back, I decided when I was reading parts of the Bible that stumped me, I'd stop trying to "figure it out," and instead ask, "**What does this say about my Father?**"

And when I read about the grain offering, I learned how it was an offering that the Israelites were able to personalize (whereas the burnt offering was set in stone to cover their sin, indicative of the notion that they played no part in their atonement).

It was a beautiful act of worship that a child of God could give back to Him in a way that reflected their unique design. And I think that shows how loving He is to give us space to be and become what He's always desired.

**TWO:** We watched a British mini-series called *Adolescence*<sup>1</sup>, which is truly remarkably written and acted. It hit me on two levels:

i. Sometimes people in our lives break our hearts and wreck our circumstances, but like God who is always steadfast in His patient, gentle love for us, we're required to offer the same. It doesn't mean boundaries won't be set. **It just means that love is an act, an often-painful choice, but the right one.**

ii. The mind is such a powerful tool that can be guarded and kept safe in Christ or offered to the god of this world<sup>2</sup>. It's a

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1. <https://www.netflix.com/title/81756069>

2. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians%204%3A4&version=NLT>

precious commodity that needs to be renewed daily. (If that's something that interests you, this might help<sup>3</sup>).

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3. <https://erickaclay.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/the-art-of-renewing-your-mind-1-1.pdf>

## A Different Sort of Prayer

I've been praying differently.

I usually pray for my daughter, that her heart continues to soften and she gives over anything that's troubling her soul over to God.

I pray this often for the sake of our relationship.

But then God helped me realize, why am I not praying for me?

I want that for her, sure. Absolutely.

But seeing that I can't control her behavior, only mine, and also knowing I'm no innocent in our mother/teenage daughter relationship, maybe I should be praying for my own heart.

For ears to listen, a heart that loves even when hurt. A gentle patience that never falters.

Like my Father has for me.

# Becoming

This morning, I read an article<sup>1</sup> as to why God refers to Himself as “I Am,” with Moses. The article hits at something I never put together before (I’m brandishing my dunce’s cap right now):

**He can only refer to Himself in comparison to Himself because He is unlike anything else ever created.**

Also, this part: “*He never became, nor is he becoming—he simply is.*”

Woah.

Yesterday, I was listening to this podcast<sup>2</sup> and the second caller was like my college self<sup>3</sup> calling in. This woman became a hermit in college (something I had started to do before transferring schools) after severe panic attacks. She lost her friends, and her school (a small private, “Christian” school) told her to, and I quote, “pray it off.”

Insert extremely disappointed face here.

This is the thing about us followers. We *are* becoming. And one of the things about becoming is getting back to the root of what’s true:

*We are to be in fellowship with our fellow brothers and sisters, and we need to allow God’s Word to penetrate our hearts so if one of us is believing Satan’s lies, we can walk with that person back into God’s beautiful light.*

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1. [https://www.crossway.org/articles/why-does-god-call-himself-i-am/?utm\\_source=Crossway+Marketing&utm\\_campaign=a8ad0a948c-20260126+General-WhyGodCallsHimselfI-AM&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_-a8ad0a948c-527318174&mc\\_cid=a8ad0a948c&mc\\_cid=ad16244de1](https://www.crossway.org/articles/why-does-god-call-himself-i-am/?utm_source=Crossway+Marketing&utm_campaign=a8ad0a948c-20260126+General-WhyGodCallsHimselfI-AM&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-a8ad0a948c-527318174&mc_cid=a8ad0a948c&mc_cid=ad16244de1)

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xJKt86G9k8>

3. <https://erickaclay.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/i-guess-all-this-is-to-say.pdf>

Mental health issues *are* real. Christians *do* suffer from them (Satan stalks us<sup>4</sup>, remember?). And there are a myriad of ways God uses to heal us (medicine, therapists, close friends and families, the testimonies of complete strangers...).

So prayer? It works, absolutely. It's the gorgeous conversation between us "becomers" with the Great I Am. But part of that conversation is being open to how *He* chooses to prune and grow one of His children.

So, yes, prayer is important. But *us* being willing to work in whatever capacity He desires for the sake of someone else?

That, my friends, is the ultimate definition of becoming.

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4. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Peter%205%3A7-9&version=NLV>

# A Learning Curve

Even the priests had to atone for their sins.

This struck me, reading Leviticus<sup>1</sup>.

In this day and age, people are idolized, sometimes, pastors and priests and “holy” people included.

We need to be very careful about that, not just for our sakes, but for theirs too.

**Pride is an ugly beast.** It sneaks in when you least expect it (ask me how I know).

And as much as pride can kill a community, it certainly can take down the one who harbors it, separating them from the God they’ve deceived themselves into believing they’re serving.

I lived this life once at our previous church. I got caught up in “all the things.” It didn’t start like that. It started out with a servant’s heart wanting to serve.

**But, eventually, it became about serving man and not God, and sometimes, my own ego and pride.**

*It’s easy to do when you’re more worried about the result than the journey God’s taking you on.*

Now, I’ve learned a little something: I’m not the savior of the world (surprise, surprise). I’m **His** servant. And my first responsibility is to Him, my second is to my husband, and my third is to my child.

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus%209%3A7&version=NIV>

As someone very close to me (and very wise) once said, we're to serve the church within our own home first, stewarding them as God would have us.

And when things are well there, then my heart is free to serve elsewhere, wherever God desires me to go (not where I desire to go).

*More succinctly:* If I ignore the log jutting out of my own eye, how can I help remove my neighbor's?

It's a learning curve for sure and takes *time*.

Good thing, we know the Guy who created it.

# Mags

Sometimes, I like to drill a point home, especially when I'm in the right, even though there's no need to.

My husband jokes about how lovely I look atop my huge white steed.

I then ask him if he likes how gorgeous my long blond locks are, flowing in the wind.

The thing is, I have an issue with pride. But the other thing is, God knew this would be the case, and therefore, gave me my daughter to raise.

Let's call her Mags.

Like the rest of our family, Mags has her mental crosses to bear. But Mags is also creative and wildly funny and stubborn as a mule.

I used to joke that if anyone kidnapped her, they'd send her right back. But honestly, my actual fear was that she'd somehow supersede the ring-leader and take over the whole operation herself.

Seriously.

Mags has taught me so much about myself. Maybe that book learning is all fun and games until you have a living, breathing human in front of you that isn't as black or white as you wish the world to be.

She's all shades of gray, man, and plucking apart each individual color is like searching for needles in a haystack.

God's used her to show me love. Like I mentioned before, I used to pray *for her* to change.

Oh, sweet naïve Ericka.

What God needed me to see is that **I was the one who needed changing.**

Not to say, it wouldn't be nice knowing my daughter couldn't end up the brainchild behind some sort of multi-tiered hostage situation.

*But, maybe it's even better knowing He's taught me to love what's right in front of me, to take my cares and anxieties about her and place them at His feet, and know that I'm not the one in charge of the details, He is.*

The view is a lot nicer from down here. Just don't tell my husband.

## 73 Chickens

Trust is something I don't do as well as I think.

My husband can tell me something for days on end, and it's not until I watch some harried mother of seventeen on YouTube make a go of it out on the homestead and bake sourdough bread like the meaning of life itself depends on it, that I go:

“You know, she's absolutely right.”

I'm surprised his head isn't concave from how many times it's met our bedroom wall.

I was explaining to a friend that the point of wifedom isn't to concede that we're the “weaker vessel<sup>1</sup>” (and just to point out here, Paul's observing physical weakness, and I would imagine — although don't quote me — he's also pointing out our weakness in light of the world's [i.e. Satan's] general hatred towards women).

Instead, I think Scripture makes it pretty clear that women are cunning and quite intelligent through the stories of Esther<sup>2</sup>, and Deborah<sup>3</sup>, and even Jezebel<sup>4</sup> (not saying to follow that last example, just saying the woman was no dummy).

*So, what then does God desire from me as a wife?*

**I told my friend it's to trust my husband. That's what God asks of me.**

Because my default gear is to trust myself, to do everything myself, to spiritually lead our family myself, to make sure my kid is a model citizen

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Peter%203%3A6-8&version=NIV>

2. <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Esther.html>

3. <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Deborah.html>

4. <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Jezebel.html>

myself, to clean the house in a way that says “oh, haha, it always looks like this,” myself, to learn what the heck “barrel” jeans are myself..

Oh look. I just passed out.

Woman was made for man. And ladies, men were made for women.

I know. Not everyone lives up to the ideal that God originally created. ***But, if two hearts are focused on the same God, I've realized, they easily begin to meld together.***

And so, if I don't trust my husband (and go to everyone else and their mother for guidance and mentorship), what is it I'm really saying about God?

Ick.

So, all I know is that when I trust the man God gave me to love, honor, respect, and protect me, I find peace. And granted, my husband ***does*** the work (you kind of have to when you're married to someone who managed to light her dishwasher on fire), so there's that.

But I've also learned to give him the space to let God change his heart, since that's our Father's jurisdiction, not mine.

And if I trust God, then I trust He has my best interests already mapped out within the marriage He's blessed me with.

Okay. Time to get serious and figure where I'm going to house this jar of sourdough starter...and 73 chickens.

# Pants

This morning, I had a hard time doing pants.

I mean, not wearing them, but figuring out where I stand in the great wide world of them.

Let me back up.

Last night, my daughter danced. She performed as Glinda in *The Wizard of Oz* with her dance team, and she did wonderfully. She did a beautiful ballet solo, and it's one of those moments where I wanted to stand up and shout, "I did that!"

But no worries, I didn't. Mostly because everyone's pants confounded me.

We live in what I would call a "privileged" area, and everyone wears pants now that I wouldn't have been caught dead wearing in the sixth grade.

And one particular woman was wearing some sort of tie-dyed long-sleeved printed shirt tucked into her "no-no sixth grade" pants with a pair of white go-go type leather boots, and she wasn't even being ironic.

She just looked fabulous.

These are the things that have frustrated me all my life. Clothes and the wearing of them and makeup and the putting on of it and hair and the wondering what to do with it and deciding to just let it be itself, which, in its natural form, is, of course, orbiting around my head like I've just put my finger in a socket.

These are the things that make me long for heaven.

Because one day, I won't have to worry about pants or makeup or hair. And that feeling I had of watching my daughter dance will be that feeling but a million-fold as God grants me the eternal walk with Him.

And only then and even now in all my pants-hating awkwardness, all I can ask for is that when people see me, they think, "He did that."

# The Way

We all get God so wrong.

Like when I took my Bible as Fiction class back in college (way before I began following The Way<sup>1</sup> – the one in Scripture, not the cult<sup>2</sup>, I might add), God seemed like a big ‘ol meany who just wanted to smite me because it seemed He didn’t have much else going on.

Oh, boy. How horribly wrong.

What I’m finding in Leviticus is the fact that even though there is a MYRIAD of ways we sin as human beings, God gives us “the out.”

He gives us the act of sacrifice to atone for our sins. He doesn’t allow His children to sit in their grief and guilt.

He gives us an opportunity for peace and complete freedom from the grip of evil.

And He goes one further (as any good father does). He eventually takes on that sacrifice Himself so we don’t even have to burn livestock anymore (and praise God for that!).

We can simply believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus and follow in His beautiful footsteps.

We can walk in the Way that leads to Life.

I can’t say if I were God that I’d ever do such a thing. The smiting seems much more appealing (especially in our current day and age).

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1. <https://www.gotquestions.org/the-Way.html>

2. <https://www.gotquestions.org/The-Way-International.html>

The harder thing? To love like Jesus, to the point where we're the sacrifice for the good of those around us.

Lord, may it be so.

# I Ain't Yo Mama

One time I asked my five-year-old niece if I could get a glass of water when I was at her house, and she said, "I don't know. I ain't yo mama."

I'm from Arkansas.

I'm considering giving you more context, but I suppose that will suffice.

That phrase has stuck with me for a long time, like another one that goes "I'm not my brother's keeper" or maybe even "you do you."

Coming from a five-year-old, something like that is adorable.

Coming from the world? It's a bit unseemly.

It's a reminder to me, however, of two things:

1. We're built for community, for "it's not good for man to be alone."
2. And also, the directive "let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

What a concept I've been learning, to dig in intentionally with others and live out the Word, not just read it (however, sometimes, painful that may be).

Because, no, I ain't yo mama.

But, alas, I am your friend.

## It All Comes Out in the Wash

One time, I went to an amusement park with my sixth-grade class over the summer and randomly got my period.

I had no “accessories” with me nor did I have the heart to tell anyone within a five-mile radius because, you know, introvert, and instead, pulled my shirt over my backside the entire time (especially after being pushed into going on the log ride in all of its incredibly wet glory).

Then I had a sleepover, so I didn’t even have the dignity of dying slowly in my own bedroom, and my friend’s mother had to wash all my clothes.

And that, my friends, isn’t even a fraction of the embarrassment I often feel as a parent.

Have you ever thought to yourself, “Dude, I could do that way better”?

That was pretty much my thought process coming into this whole raising another human being situation.

What I neglected to factor into my calculations during the months and years of deliberating over whether or not I’d be a good mother (haha, just kidding...forethought? What’s that??) is the fact that indeed, another human being would be involved.

Complete with her own thoughts, wants, needs, and opinions.

Well, drat.

But I suppose it was part of God’s good plan that I’ve taken more time planning out what sweatshirt I’ll be wearing this weekend (the gray one...duh) than actually raising another human being. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have had the pleasure of watching all my pride being sucked from my soul on pretty much a nightly basis.

Like, I told a friend yesterday, I have no pride left after being a mother (although I'm sure the Lord's smirking at that one).

You see, there's love and then there's *love*. The first I thought I knew, and maybe I did. It's always come with the stipulation that as long as you don't cross me, then I can be a pretty loving creature.

But the other type? The other type comes with the fruit<sup>1</sup>, man. It's a long, drawn out walk into patience and gentleness and getting the foggiest of glimpses of what God's incredible being must feel like as we (more often than not) wail against his own love for us and are hell bent on walking off the path He's laid out.

It involves *trust* knowing I'm not in control of these things. I can only remain vigilant in my obedience to Him, and sometimes, it means watching whatever is out of my control crash and burn.

And then being tasked with running to the scene to help pick up the pieces.

If I would have known that day that life would feel like a series of randomly getting your period at the most inopportune times (I mean not literally...I have an app for that now), would I still have chosen this path?

The sin-natured human in me probably would have thought twice.

But the soul that craves cleansing and purity and sharing all that God has so selflessly shared with me?

It says, "Bring it on."

So here I am, waddling, completely clueless, yet persevering in His good love as I love my daughter through a life that is out of my control.

And thankfully, it all comes out in the wash.

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1. <https://www.gotquestions.org/fruit-of-the-Holy-Spirit.html>

## Deaf and Dumb

The other day, one of our pastors mentioned Moses during his sermon.

Not Moses from the Bible, but Moses from the street corner on Dickson at the University of Arkansas.

Moses was a “fire and brimstone” street “prophet” who specifically bad-mouthed women for wearing clothes he didn’t deem appropriate.

Our pastor recounted during his freshman year how he prayed over Moses, extending his hand and asking God to make him deaf and dumb.

And I mentally recounted how at 2 a.m. one evening, stumbling down along Dickson from the last bar of the night, I also intended to make Moses deaf and dumb but not through prayer.

Fortunately, Matt was there to hold me back.

Sartre famously said hell is other people, which I used to wholeheartedly ascribe to.

Until of course, I realized, I was “other people” to other people.

I believe differently now, how we have the power of good (or evil) through our words, words that can be gifts from God or rain judgment on others.

I think about Moses now and actually found myself praying for him during our pastor’s sermon.

I no longer want to make him deaf or dumb, just mindful of the power he could have actually wielded if he would have pointed all of us to the Good News of Jesus instead of the bad news of his tainted heart.

Oh well.

# Shoulda, Coulda, Woulda

Legalism. I have a darkened heart for it.

I was raised on school uniforms and high achievement and following the rules and only being curious within a defined set of guidelines (you know what they say happened to the cat and all).

And so, imagine suddenly gaining my freedom through Christ.

And then watching as the Christian world keeps struggling to follow “the rules.”

It looks like all sorts of shades of evil.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.” **Galatians 5:1-2<sup>1</sup>**

Paul’s telling us to give up the legalism, to not hang our personal convictions over the heads of the entire group (that’s the way cults get started, friends), and realize that Jesus fulfilled the law, and therefore, we’re in no way imprisoned by it.

Because if we don’t? What Christ did for us becomes of no value to us.

Insert \*shivers\* here.

It’s cool if you’re not a fan of certain things in this world or if those things personally lead you astray. Then by all means, steer clear, friends.

**But we can’t assume what God’s made good overall is bad for others just because we’re not a fan.**

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A1-2&version=NIV>

I can't tell you how many times I've met with people who would have rather dove into a barrel full of acid over drinking a glass of wine (which they deemed "sinful") and yet their hearts were burdened with years of bitterness towards those they've harbored a grudge against.

Oy.

We all have that log that juts out just a bit too far. And I think this is why Jesus says the road to heaven is narrow. I used to feel threatened by that. Like, man, I'm in no way going to get down that path to the other side.

But after praying and meditating on this, I know that's not what He's saying at all.

**He's not saying I'm not "good" enough to walk down that path. He's saying to watch for my own prideful heart that wants to judge others instead of internally considering what's holding me back from truly submitting to Him.**

Oy, again.

The Good News? He did die for us because He loves us and He was raised on the third day for us to truly know and experience freedom in this life and the next.

So let's not get burdened down with the "shoul'da, would'a, could'a," and instead focus on the **relationship** with Him that He designed for us from the very beginning.

# Punishment

I used to think the suffering was a punishment. It's not hard to think that way.

Nobody enjoys pain. At least, not sane people,

But then, I always come back to that part in Scripture that says God disciplines those He loves<sup>1</sup>.

Maybe my suffering isn't about me as much as it is about God.

I read Scripture now as a chance to know Our Father better, whereas before, I often read it from the "me-me-me" perspective: what could this little line right here tell me about who I am, my future, my needs and wants like I was scanning my horoscope.

Now, it's a little different. When you're being punched in the gut and think to shout "Why?" but know that question is futile<sup>2</sup>, you start asking a different question:

"What about You?"

I think about God's suffering more often than my own now, how maybe it's more of an honor than a punishment. Like He trusts me enough to bring me into His inner circle and pull back what it's like when all your children turn their backs on you.

And still, His love. It grows so deep and steady and refuses to falter no matter how many times we do.

Living that in real-time with another human being you call your own? Heart wrenching. Pride killing. Soul crushing.

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2012%3A5-7&version=NIV>

2. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job%2038-42&version=NIV>

Which should really, above all else, show us how strong our God is. Not just in the physical sense but in the deeply emotional.

How He can suffer us all a million times over and never yield to the punishment we deserve, I'll never understand. All I know is I'm grateful.

# This Is What You Prayed For

I've had way too many cups of coffee and am transcribing a sentencing hearing that is five million hours long.

I want to complain because my back hurts, and I'm tired, and I don't understand why a hearing has to be five million hours long (or why the judge insists on blowing his nose directly into my ear, but he seems like the kind, grandfatherly type, so I'm letting it slide).

This is one of those moments where God gently whispers, "This is what you prayed for."

And it is. I'm warm (although to be fair, I'm wearing my bathrobe over my clothes and covered in a blanket because my husband is tinkering with the A/C in an effort to cool down his office. I'm also sitting against my heating pad because I'm officially I-don't-care-years-old), I'm dry, I'm fed, and most importantly, I'm caffeinated (worryingly so).

God has led me down an interesting journey of transcription. He answered the prayer in my heart – "What is a career where I could use my writing, editing, and my ability to decipher voices (I have this uncanny ability of naming the actor who does the voiceover in any given commercial. It's kind of creepy at this point)?" – and he led me to transcription (through ChatGPT of all places!).

And He's been using this journey to sanctify me even further. I've learned tons, gotten my certificate from my local community college in transcription, been steadily working, and even passed my national certification test (even though they're making me retake it for a glitch on their end...which I imagine God is using to teach me perseverance and determination and that punching my fist into a wall instead would hurt...very badly).

So, I suppose this is my way of throwing up a little prayer of gratitude even in the midst of silent suffering (I'm sure my husband would smirk at the "silent" part) and reminding myself that this truly is what I prayed for.

## In The Thick of It

I've been in the thick of lament during this Lenten season. It's been a study in sitting still and letting God talk while I listen.

And the quieter I am, the more I'm met with His intense love and grace for me, something I yearn to reflect for others.

My mother gave me this devotional<sup>1</sup> by Sarah Kroger, and today, she talks about how the love of others is like a small glimpse into the profound, unending love of God.

But more importantly, Sarah talks about the grace we should have for others when they don't meet our expectations—when their humanity is just a bit too human.

When I put God in His place and all others right besides me, I can bask more fully in His glow, knowing that He's the one that never fails, and even when others do, I still remain firm in Him, extending those little glimpses of love whenever and wherever possible.

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1. <https://amzn.to/3Pt6DNW>

# The Reason We're Breathing

Our church is doing a year-long study in Acts.

And there's a part in Chapter 14<sup>1</sup> where Paul and Barnabas are sharing the Good News in what's now considered modern-day Turkey, and the Turkish people are so enamored, they start worshipping them.

Paul and Barnabas are both horrified by this prospect, tearing their clothes and shouting:

*"Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. **In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.**"*

Did you catch that bolded part? Even though God has let those who don't believe in Him go their own way, He still provides them goodness.

This is why even the most hard-hearted atheist still has beauty in their lives.

As a former hard-hearted atheist, I can certainly attest to this.

I just felt the need to point this out because how easily we *all* can fall into that trap of thinking—that we're the reason we're alive.

We're the reason we're breathing.

We're the reason good things happen.

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2014&version=NIV>

Oh, what folly in thinking such as that.

## Breaking all the Rules

Last Sunday, one of our pastors shared that if he were going out to eat with a friend who didn't drink, he most certainly wouldn't either.

But if he was going out with a friend who prided himself on not drinking as if he had won some sort of Christianity contest (my words, not his), he'd definitely order a beer and get down to the business of unearthing the bitter root in his friend's heart for the sake of pointing him down the road of repentance.

This was on the heels of sharing about Paul's ministry, his devotion to the Lord by becoming all things to all people (1 Corinthians 9:22<sup>1</sup>).

It's not developing a blind eye to our own morality. Quite the contrary. Instead, it's the willingness to not be so human in order to understand and empathize with those who see the world differently (i.e. everybody considering we all walk in a different pair of shoes).

This has been my prayer for a quite a while now. I've talked in the past about my own bout with pride – my seemingly ever-present struggle to be the good girl, the perfect girl, the one who never breaks the rules.

But Jesus, sometimes, broke the world's rules, not for the sake of being a trouble maker but for the sake of righting our hearts.

And that's what I've prayed for. That I'd stop making all of this about me so much, and that God will help me to see His children as He does Himself.

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%209%3A22&version=NIV>

# The Art of the Old Lady

Lately, I've been diving headfirst into, what I like to call, "the art of the old lady."

As a connoisseur of fine literature, I've found a mighty deep disconnect between the people women used to be and who they are now.

Granted, some good things have sprung up along the way like getting the vote and, for the most part, being treated like human beings (depending on what circles you hang out in, naturally).

But there are still some hindrances that make me yearn for yesteryear – a year I didn't even get to inhabit but do get to live vicariously through people like Anne Shirley<sup>1</sup> and Jo March<sup>2</sup>.

Whatever happened to women being to able to just get, well, old?

I mean old without having to worry about searing off our faces, burning off our fat, and making ourselves sacrificial lambs to a world that only wishes to consume us in a fit of smoke and ash?

So I've been combatting this nonsense by baking sourdough bread, taking up embroidery, and reading books that allow me to "once upon a time" myself out of these present circumstances and into a time that wasn't perfect either, but at least I didn't have to prove my self worth by working this feeble, dusty body of mine into an absolute tizzy.

Instead, I could have once just sat uncomfortably for days on end in a corset and numbly stared at the wall.

Okay, fine. None of this is ideal. But you know what is?

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1. <https://amzn.to/4bYQsQ1>

2. <https://amzn.to/4dcmJoT>

Knowing what comes after aging – the inevitable plunge into a nobler world where everything is gilt in gold, and I am honored as a child of the King.

But until then, I have a starter to feed.

## Like the Little Children

Some people scoff at the thought of children.

I used to be one of those people...most especially as a child.

I distinctively remember looking around while playing with my fellow peers, thinking, "Wow, these people are idiots."

I no longer think that way about children. God has rightly changed my heart in this matter.

Instead? I see people who are uniquely themselves and aren't a wink ashamed about it.

I think that's why Jesus asks us to be like the little children. We're not to walk around with our adult masks on, always pretending to be something we're not.

It's an exhausting act, and everywhere you look, you can see that exhaustion in the Lord's "big kids."

But the ones that are small but mighty in heart? They're nothing but themselves, an offering they give to God and the world.

This was unfathomable to me at one point, but nothing is impossible with God. So I asked him to give me eyes that see and ears that hear like those who He loves who never feel the urge to stay hidden.

A prayer, I think, that benefits us all.

# Open the Door

We're in a season of not deconstructing our faith but deconstructing "church."

And by no means do I mean Christ's Church of the Scriptures.

I mean the act of plastering a particular worldview on what's good and holy, a manmade derivative of the actual thing, whereas the thing itself is much bigger.

Much better.

I liken it to the Pharisees, distilling down God's law and then multiplying it by a hundred-fold until the mere thought of being human becomes quite an impossibility.

Are we doing that now?

I believe in structure wholeheartedly (as does our God, who turned chaos into the boundaries of this world).

But if we don't let one another flow in the Spirit, becoming the knee, eye, ear, hand, foot, God always intended us to be, then how are we not working against our God?

In my prayers and understanding and taking time to sit and discern, I think it's all much simpler and, at the same time, much more profound.

We can't hold God in our hands. He holds us. But we can follow the sound of His voice, encouraging each other along the way.

We can open the door for one another instead of shutting out all we falsely believe just doesn't measure up.

# The Last Word

I've been on a bit of a bender.

I've watched documentaries on Ruby Franke<sup>1</sup> and the FLDS<sup>2</sup> in the past, and I've watched/am watching two that popped up recently on Netflix.

**And I have a few things stirring in my heart.**

1. Ruby Franke's desire was to parent her children well, a desire that took a sick turn when looking to someone else for advice instead of studying the love of Christ in God's Word.

**So instead of being Jesus to her kids by loving them unconditionally and gently guiding them into the people God created them to be, she let fear win.**

Fear that her kids wouldn't measure up. Fear that people would possibly blame her for being a bad mother. Fear that has absolutely nothing to do with God. And so? She turned to the sin of controlling others, which ultimately negates all faith in God.

2. The FLDS also works in a similar vein – fear and control being at the heart of their "religion," all the while stamping it with a Christian label (as if God would ever approve such vicious handling of His children). **Like Ruby, these people look to another human being to be God's mouthpiece instead of directly communing with their Savior.**

So here's the truth: Jesus already came. He is the one we should be looking to for guidance, not others who claim to speak for Him. We should,

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1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruby\\_Franke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruby_Franke)

2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamentalist\\_Church\\_of\\_Jesus\\_Christ\\_of\\_Latter-Day\\_Saints](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamentalist_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-Day_Saints)

of course, meet with our fellow brothers and sisters<sup>3</sup> and allow the ones we thoroughly trust to speak into our lives.

HOWEVER: We're to have discernment. Jesus told us to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves<sup>4</sup>, and to look out for men intent on hurting us.

So, as easily it is to be swayed by other people, the onus is on us to not let that happen. No pastor, priest, "prophet," or the like has the last word in our lives.

God does. Period.

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3. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2010%3A25&version=NIV>

4. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2010%3A16-17&version=NLV>

# Do You Still Love Him?

I think faith can easily boil down to this:

If things are going wrong, do you still love Him?

I subscribed to our church's weekly devos for Holy Week, and a line one of our pastors wrote got to the very core of it:

"Jesus did not come to rescue us from our circumstances. He came to save us from our sin."

I think we all get this wrong sometimes, on a personal level and a church one, too.

We think something "magical" will happen if we tithe like we *should*, if we serve like we *should*, if we do all the things a "good" Christian *should*.

But filthy rags<sup>1</sup>, my friends, and no one is good but God<sup>2</sup>.

Instead? We should obey<sup>3</sup> like we should, bending our knee and submitting our pride<sup>4</sup> to the One who is owed all our praise.

This often comes with a change in perspective—like Paul said, being transformed by the renewing of our minds.

And if something like that sounds daunting, I'd like to give you this<sup>5</sup> as a starting point.

Because in reality, the bad is inevitable. We live in a fallen world.

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2064%3A6&version=NIV>

2. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%2010%3A18&version=NIV>

3. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014%3A15&version=NIV>

4. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%2016%3A5&version=NIV>

5. <https://erickaclay.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/the-art-of-renewing-your-mind.pdf>

But there's always something beautiful in watching how God uses it to save our souls.

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