



7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Godly Moms

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE • SAINT LOUIS



Copyright © 2016 Concordia Publishing House
3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968
1-800-325-3040 • www.cph.org

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Concordia Publishing House.

Text copyright © 2013 Lenore Buth

Scripture quotations unless otherwise noted are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NKJV™ are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Manufactured in the United States of America

Made for Each Other

Your family is no accident. God gave you to each other.

Each child who calls you "Mom" was created just for you.

God placed you together because you need each other.

Let those sentences sink deep into your heart and your mind.

This is true even when you have conflicts and difficulties. Even if you are as different as plums and peanut butter. Even though it seems you always say or do the wrong thing with one of your children.

Your Designer Kids need *you*, not the Ms. Flawless Mom who lives on the corner.

And vice versa.

You don't need the placid child next door, nor Super Kid across the street. You need that one who most often baffles you or challenges you.

God tailor-makes our children to stretch us.

To teach us.

To grow us.

Mothering opens our minds and strips away old, comfortable illusions about life.

And about ourselves.

Day after day, we're forced to cope. As we do, we may discover strengths we didn't know we had.

Weaknesses too.

No mom would label this process easy or comfortable. Growing pains never are.

When you feel overwhelmed, reassure yourself with what you know. God put together the pieces of your family jigsaw puzzle according to His plan.

It is a good one.

So walk on, trust Jesus, and be at peace.

Like your kids, you're in the process of becoming. Your heart will never shrink back to its original size.

[The Lord says,] "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you." Jeremiah 1:5a

P.S.

Ignore those stretch marks on your tummy. What counts are the stretch marks on your heart and mind and spirit. New ones will keep showing up over the years—and that's a good thing.

Abandon the Struggle to Know It All

Some moms live in Tension City and they're proud of it.

They devour guidebooks on child development at different ages and stages. They track their children's progress, constantly wondering whether their kids measure up.

Who wouldn't be uptight?

Rearing a child bears no resemblance to conducting a science experiment. Step A does not necessarily lead to Step B. Research studies abound, each one citing endless statistics and averages. Yet even world-famous experts can only guess about any individual.

Every child is a one-time creation.

Unpredictable.

Full of potential we cannot glimpse.

Remember that.

Otherwise, you may slot your son or daughter into a category, then adjust your perception and expectations to fit. Or you might compare your child using timetables written by "the experts" instead of your eyes and ears.

When you do that, you cheat your kids.

Rearing our children remains one of the great adventures in life. No doubt God planned it that

way. Otherwise, how would we moms grow? Why would we pray? Only the Creator can say what is within each child. He knows us too, and He promises to supply what we need when we need it. Jesus died and rose again. He frees us from fear, and we can live fully.

So give up trying to have all the answers, and enjoy the surprises.

Besides, anxiety brings on early wrinkles.

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; His understanding is beyond measure. The LORD lifts up the humble.
Psalm 147:5-6a

P.S.

Sometimes what we think we know for sure isn't quite accurate. Pray for fresh insight into each child and a sensitive heart.

Over in the Blink of an Eye

Look out for when/then thinking.

Every mom has spoken her own version of this script.

You know the lines. "Once she's out of preschool, I'll have my days to myself."

"Little League practice and games can't end soon enough for me. I am really tired of sitting on those bleachers for hours and waiting around when practice runs late."

"I can't wait for her to get her driver's license. Then she can chauffeur herself to school and those endless after-school activities. I will be so glad!"

How many times have you started a sentence with "It will be wonderful when . . ."?

With eyes intently fastened on the next "when," you might forget to notice the here and now.

Truth is, here and now is all you've got.

Soon enough, children fly away.

Soon enough, you'll be done.

That's when you will see clearly the meaning, the poignant sweetness of today. Of family, all together in one place.

You will comprehend the joy of today's jam-packed existence.

You will ache to relive even twenty-four hours of this present time.

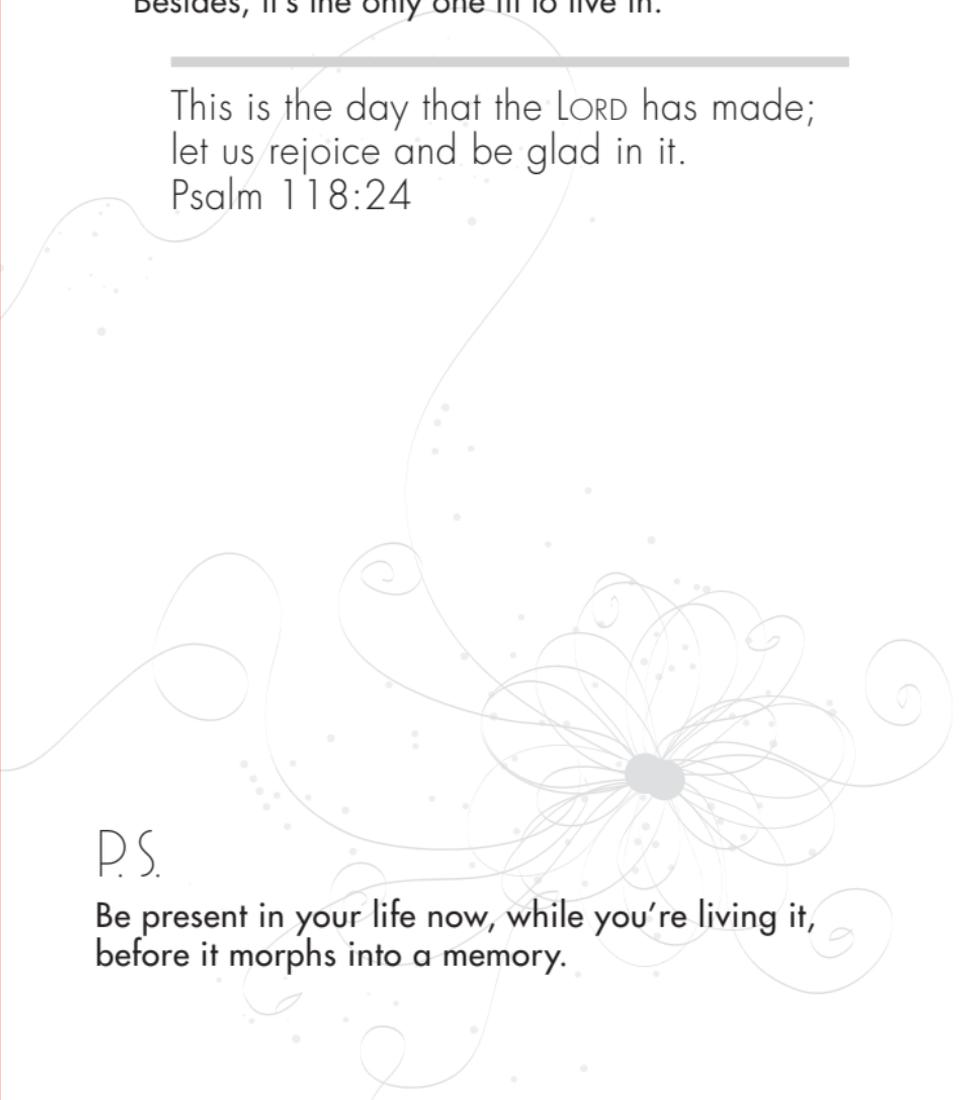
Only you won't be able to.

Nobody can.
So breathe deep and savor this moment. Treasure
this ordinary, extraordinary day.
It is the gift of God.
Besides, it's the only one fit to live in.

This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Psalm 118:24

P.S.

Be present in your life now, while you're living it,
before it morphs into a memory.



Never Enough of Me

Moms don't do spare time, not in the real world.

Mostly we muddle through, trying to be all things to all people, all the time. The mythical Perfect Mother teases from just ahead, and we never quite catch up. Watching her makes us want to quit.

You can stop doubting yourself if you fix your thoughts on what the Bible says.

Psalms 139 says God created you and each of your children.

- He saw you before you were born.

He knows your thoughts and your words before you speak them.

He watches over you in all your ways, all your days.

This you can rely on.

He put your family together, whether your children were planned, unplanned, or came by adoption or by marriage.

Sometimes all you can offer is your weary self and your love that won't quit. That is sufficient.

Christ's strength will carry you through.

He can work all things for good, even your weaknesses.

Jesus is hope in discouragement, joy in despair, peace in the midst of pressure.

Commit yourself and your family to His loving care. Know that you are living out His purpose for you.

Growing.

Trusting.

Walking by faith, one day at a time.

It will be more than enough.

[Jesus said,] "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." John 15:5

P.S.

God never gives you more than twenty-four hours in your day, but He can stretch your time. Try asking Him.

Be Careful Where You Look

Right from the beginning, life turned inside out.

Every mom knows that instant flash of recognition. At once, our child owns us—heart, mind, and body.

Some days we feel swallowed up by motherhood.

Sometimes we ache for what we've lost. That pre-baby figure, for instance, the one with the tiny waistline. Uninterrupted sleep and private time. Quiet dinners, with adult conversation.

Warning: Hazardous thinking zone ahead. Proceed with caution. Self-pity waits to move in and set up housekeeping, with bitterness close behind.

Is that how you want to live?

Turn away. Focus on what you gained, like your child's sunshine smile.

Purpose in your days, no matter what else is or isn't going on.

Meaning for your existence.

A deeper understanding of love.

A reason to keep going that keeps you going.

Count on everyday irritations, as predictable as weeds in a garden.

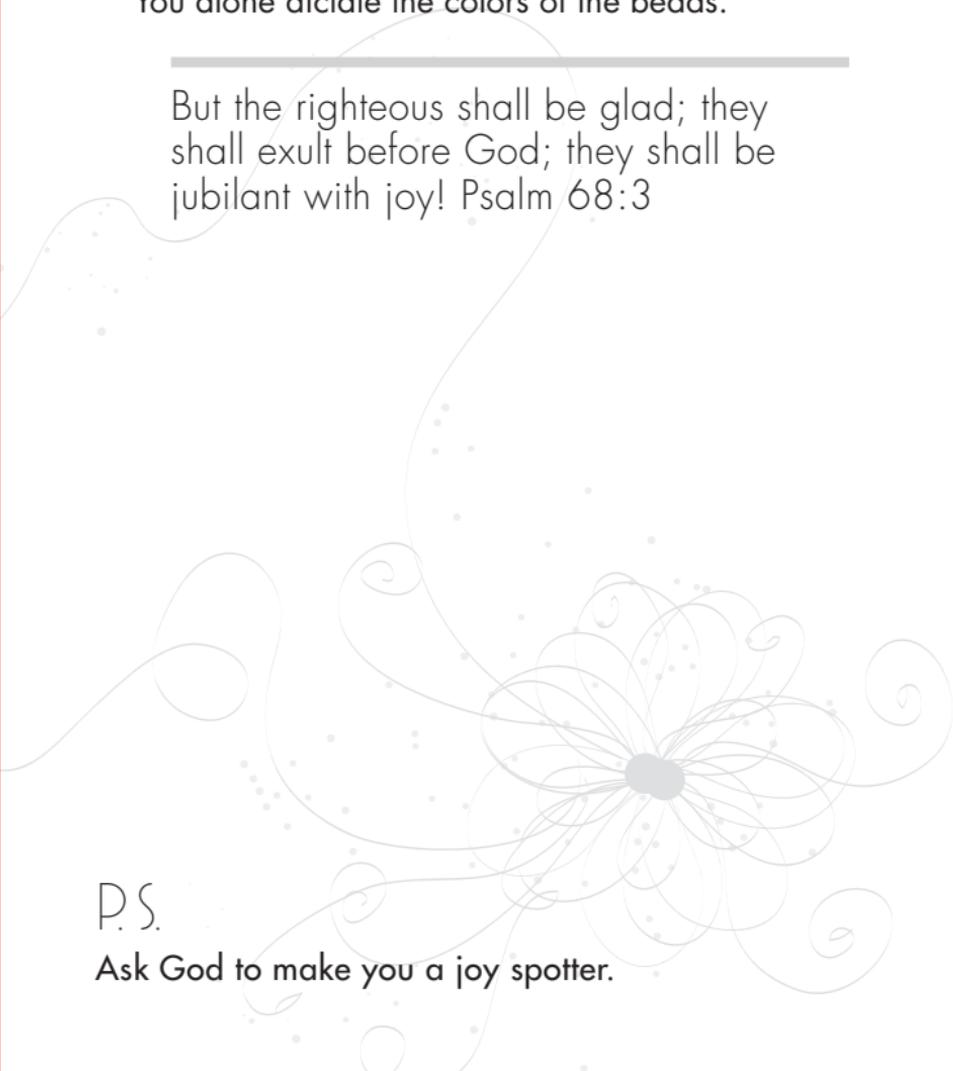
Joy lives at your house too, waiting to be noticed. Are you looking for it? You will find it if you live this moment fully and embrace your life now. Reflect on

the wonder: God entrusted you with your child's life
and love. God made you His children through Jesus.
Let that fill your heart with gladness.
Moments strung together make a life.
You alone dictate the colors of the beads.

But the righteous shall be glad; they
shall exult before God; they shall be
jubilant with joy! Psalm 68:3

P.S.

Ask God to make you a joy spotter.



Mom, the Chief Nurturer

That phrase sounds old-fashioned, perhaps outmoded.

Not necessarily.

True, many dads display tenderness and sensitivity.

Yet almost always it's Mommy who runs to kiss the boo-boo, who more likely sheds tears of joy and empathy. God wired us this way.

That's not weakness. That's strength.

At work, you may need to operate like a man. It can be a struggle to set that aside at home. You rush to keep up and sometimes think you will crack.

Heed that signal to pare down nonessentials and replenish.

Now, as in the beginning, Mom is the heart of the home. The glue that keeps everyone connected.

Your family counts on you to care. With a smile, you can set their world to rights. So you listen, although you yearn for time alone. You hug the child who just drove you to the brink of losing it.

Again.

Never discount the worth of your natural love and tenderness. They come from the Creator. As Christian moms, we can love our children because Jesus loved us all first.

You may rise to the top at work and eventually receive a gold watch or an engraved plaque.

Nice.

As a mom, you cooperate with God in shaping and rearing human beings.

Lose sight of that, and you lose who you are.

You can choose to define mothering as a burden.

Or call it what it is: a privilege.

Call it joy.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22–23

P.S.

Can any woman live up to this list? Not on our own and not all the time. Read it again. Notice who produces the fruit, and be at peace.

Pause and Be Refreshed

Life can get lost in the living.

We reach the end of the week and wonder where it went.

Life is full, we say; life is good. Yet we feel as empty as a riverbed in time of drought.

We arrive at this desert place any time we forget how we are made.

On that sixth day of creation, God formed human beings in His image.

On the seventh day, He rested, looked over His work, and weighed its value.

What if you set aside one quiet day a week, every week? A time to stop and remember whose you are. A time to rest and reflect on the six days just lived, and a time to receive the gifts that only Jesus can give.

Consider the many ways you lived out love.

Focus on each child by name.

Growing.

Changing.

Learning.

Name each one who loves you and needs you.

Thank God for these gifts.

When failures float to the surface, lay your packets of pain at the cross. Leave them there, then drink in refreshment and renewal.

See again the meaning in what you do every day. Allow yourself to feel good about the life you are living right now.

Every week boasts moments of joy, yours to savor and replay.

Each day you leave footprints on the future.
Let your heart rejoice.

And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. . . . And He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done. Genesis 1:31a; 2:2b

P.S.

Our Creator infuses every human being with His rhythm of life. When we ignore that, our lives get out of sync.



7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Godly Moms

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE • SAINT LOUIS