

# AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

**HOUSE:** Reclaiming Home as Holy Ground

**MARRIAGE:** Communication: One Foundation to a Successful Marriage

**HEALTH:** From the Scale to the Sanctuary

**FINANCE:** Building a Legacy of Faith and Freedom

**PARENTING:** Jesus Loves the Little Children and Teenagers Too!

**COMMUNITY:** What If the Church Said Yes?



## PUBLISHING EDITOR

Niccie is CEO of Fulfill Your Legacy and the Legacy Leader Community and magazine, as well as host of Fulfill Your Legacy Podcast, A Spiritual Growth & Leadership Podcast To Equip Mankind & Ministries Through Holy Spirit Revelation (Discipleship), Restoration (Physical & Spiritual Support) & Education (Training & Coaching) for believers and ministries who are ready to move beyond lukewarm faith and to step into the fullness of life with Christ. Niccie has just finished her final book in the Legacy Series and now devotes her time discipling mankind and ministries into the fullness of Christ.



## COPY EDITOR

Helen Izek is an award-winning author and was once also a freelance editor. In addition to her current full-time day job with a global medical device company, Helen continues to edit the articles for our monthly *As for Me and My House* magazine. Passionate about working with each and every author, Helen strives to ensure the magazine is free of errors while preserving the unique voice of the contributors. She'd rather stay true to you, the authors, quirky turns of phrases included!

Helen lives in Israel with her husband and is mother to three wonderful children, and grandmother to three little tots.



## DESIGN EDITOR

Jana is a Christian Life and Author Coach, Bible Teacher, and End Times writer who transforms lives at the intersection of Faith, Fact, and Fiction through her two programs, *Writing with Eternal Focus* and *Living for an Eternal Future*, to help others discover their divine purpose, be transformed by God's word, and reflect His L.I.G.H.T. INTO THE WORLD.

Jana is also the author of the End Times futuristic series, *Children of Light*.



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## HOUSE

Coach Sonya J is a Christian Life Coach, author, and speaker dedicated to helping women heal from past trauma, break emotional strongholds, and rediscover their identity in Christ.

Sonya is the founder of the A.R.I.S.E. Mastermind, equipping women to restore their hearts, strengthen their homes, and build generational legacy.

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## MARRIAGE

Missy Maxwell Worton is a multi award-winning, selling author, speaker, and coach. She writes across various media platforms, including film, television, and multiple magazines. Alongside her husband, Mark, she is Founder/CEO of Light Warrior Publishing and Warrior Writer Training Program, mentoring women to write and release their message for Kingdom impact.

Missy is a mother of four powerful children and two grandbabies, and lives in Franklin Tennessee with her husband of 35 years and their two German shepherds.

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## HEALTH

Deena Trocino is an author, speaker, podcaster, and mom coach. Whether she's sharing the challenges of raising a child with special needs or offering insight on marriage, faith, and personal growth, her work is anchored in compassion, empathy, and unwavering determination to overcome adversity, inspiring others to do the same.

As founder of Specially Empowered Moms, a faith-based coaching movement, Deena equips chronically stressed moms—especially those navigating special needs parenting or complex family circumstances—to find strength, build community, and step into empowered motherhood.

Deena lives in Michigan with her husband, Doug, their five children, and four grandchildren.



## 21 FINANCES

Sara Morris is a former law enforcement professional turned Licensed Financial Consultant, entrepreneur, and mentor. After nearly a decade serving her community in uniform, she transitioned into a mission of helping families gain financial confidence, peace of mind, and generational freedom.

Together with her husband (also a retired Law Enforcement officer), Sara now leads a team of purpose-driven entrepreneurs across the country. Her passion lies in teaching faith-based families how to align their finances with their values and use proven wealth strategies to build a legacy that outlives them.



## 25 PARENTING

Chrystal Gilkey is an author, speaker, educator, and Bible study teacher. A Texas girl born and raised, she now resides in Arkansas with her husband, three children, and cat.

Chrystal writes to encourage and strengthen people's faith in God. She enjoys playing the piano and gardening.

Connect with her at [chrystaljgilkey.com](https://chrystaljgilkey.com) or find her on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok and LinkedIn @chrystaljgilkey



## 29 COMMUNITY

Christina Queen is an author and advocate from Lockbourne, Ohio, where she and her husband have welcomed thirty-five foster children into their home and adopted ten.

Christina writes books that help children navigate the emotions and transitions of foster care, including *Mobi's Big Adventure* and *The Adventures of Squash and Etti: Journey to Mount Emotion*.

# WORDS FROM THE EDITOR

NICCIE KIEGL, FULFILL YOUR LEGACY

March has arrived, and with it comes the first whispers of spring. The days begin to stretch a little longer, the sunlight feels warmer, and the earth slowly awakens from winter's rest. After months of dormancy, something new begins stirring beneath the surface—life pushing forward, reminding us that God is always at work bringing renewal. This season has stirred something new in me as well. Over the past few years, I have been working and praying through the completion of my four-part discipleship Legacy Series, and this spring marks a special milestone with the final book completed. There's something about springtime that mirrors what I've been sensing in my spirit—new life, fresh growth, and transformation.

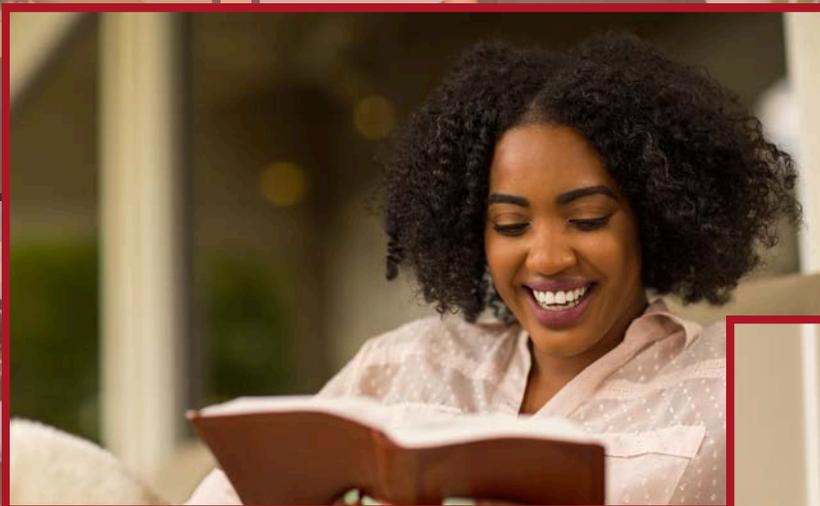
Scripture reminds us in Ezekiel 37 that even what feels dry or lifeless can be revived by the breath of God. Psalm 1:3 describes the believer as “a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.” God is always cultivating something deeper in us—often beneath the surface before we ever see the fruit.

Because of that stirring, I'll be offering something new this year. On the last page of this magazine, you'll find details about an upcoming opportunity to join me for a four-month transformation journey where I'll personally guide participants through all four of my discipleship books and programs. Together we'll focus on transformation of our LIFE | HOME | CALL | SPIRITUAL GIFTS—with Christian Coaching for the MIND, Health Coaching for the BODY, and Holy Spirit training for the SPIRIT. My hope is that you'll join the free workshop first to get a taste of what the program will be like. I truly believe this could be a powerful season of NEW LIFE for many who feel ready for deeper growth with the Lord.

For those of you who are new to *As for Me and My House*, welcome! We're so glad you're here. The writers in this magazine are part of our faith family—Legacy Leaders who are committed to living out their God-partnered lives in every aspect, from their homes to their work, and beyond. Our contributors come from all walks of life—parents, many Christian entrepreneurs, mentors, and more—all seeking to grow in their faith and impact their families and communities. Together, we LIVE | LOVE | LEARN | LEAD as we follow God's call, knowing that each step brings us closer to Him.

This magazine, *As for Me and My House*, is inspired by my second book in the Legacy Series, *Embracing the Loving Legacy*. As the book extends the God-partnered life into the home, this magazine touches on the same six areas: house, marriage, health, finances, parenting, and community. It's amazing to witness how God's work in our lives overflows into our homes, shaping the next generation. As we step into this new season of spring, may you sense God awakening new vision and fresh purpose in your own life. Whether He is renewing your hope, restoring your strength, or calling you deeper into your purpose, remember that every season of growth begins with the quiet work of God beneath the surface.

We hope you enjoy the wisdom and encouragement shared by our fellow Legacy Leaders in this month's God-partnered magazine. *Niccie Kiegl*



# SONYA

## JONES

**AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE**  
CONTACT SONYA

## RECLAIMING HOME AS HOLY GROUND

There is a quiet battle happening in homes across our nation.

Not always loud.  
Not always visible.  
But deeply spiritual.

Marriages are strained. Children are overwhelmed. Women are carrying emotional weight they were never meant to hold. Families are functioning—but not flourishing.

Yet in the middle of cultural confusion, one declaration still stands:

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**“BUT AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL  
SERVE THE LORD.”**  
**JOSHUA 24:15**

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Joshua’s words were not decorative. They were decisive.

He spoke to them at a defining moment when the people had to choose who they would serve. Culture or covenant. Idols or the one true God. His declaration began with personal responsibility: *“As for me.”*

Before transformation touches a household, it touches a heart.

***“Before transformation touches a household, it touches a heart.”***

*Sonya Jones*

Home is not defined by square footage; it is defined by spiritual foundation.

As a Christian life coach walking alongside women pursuing healing and identity restoration, I have seen how the condition of a woman’s heart shapes the atmosphere of her home. When she is weighed down by unhealed wounds, resentment, or misplaced identity, the home absorbs it. But when she is anchored in truth and surrender, the home reflects that too.

The atmosphere shifts when alignment shifts.

Serving the Lord in your home is not about religious performance; it is about lordship. It looks like inviting God into decisions, establishing rhythms of prayer, modeling repentance, choosing forgiveness, and teaching children identity before achievement.

It means your home becomes a place of discipleship, not just a place to rest.

But this kind of leadership requires inner work.

Many women love God yet still live emotionally stuck—faithful but fatigued, committed yet carrying pain from childhood, marriage wounds, or unmet expectations. What is buried does not stay buried. It shows up in tone, reactions, and relationships.

Healing is not selfish. It is sacred.

When a woman allows God to examine her heart, lead her to true repentance—a complete change of



*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,  
he is a new creation. Old things  
have passed away; behold, all  
things have become new.”*

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*“He who finds a wife finds a good  
thing and obtains favor from the  
Lord.”*

*Proverbs 18:22*

mind and direction—bring inner healing, and guide her into surrender, everything changes. Her marriage feels steadier. Her parenting softens. Her home feels lighter.

When a woman rises whole, her home rises with her.

Joshua's declaration was not only about his present moment; it was about generational legacy. Choosing to serve the Lord is choosing intentional direction over spiritual drift. It is choosing covenant over convenience and faith over fear.

Every woman must answer the question: Who will we serve?

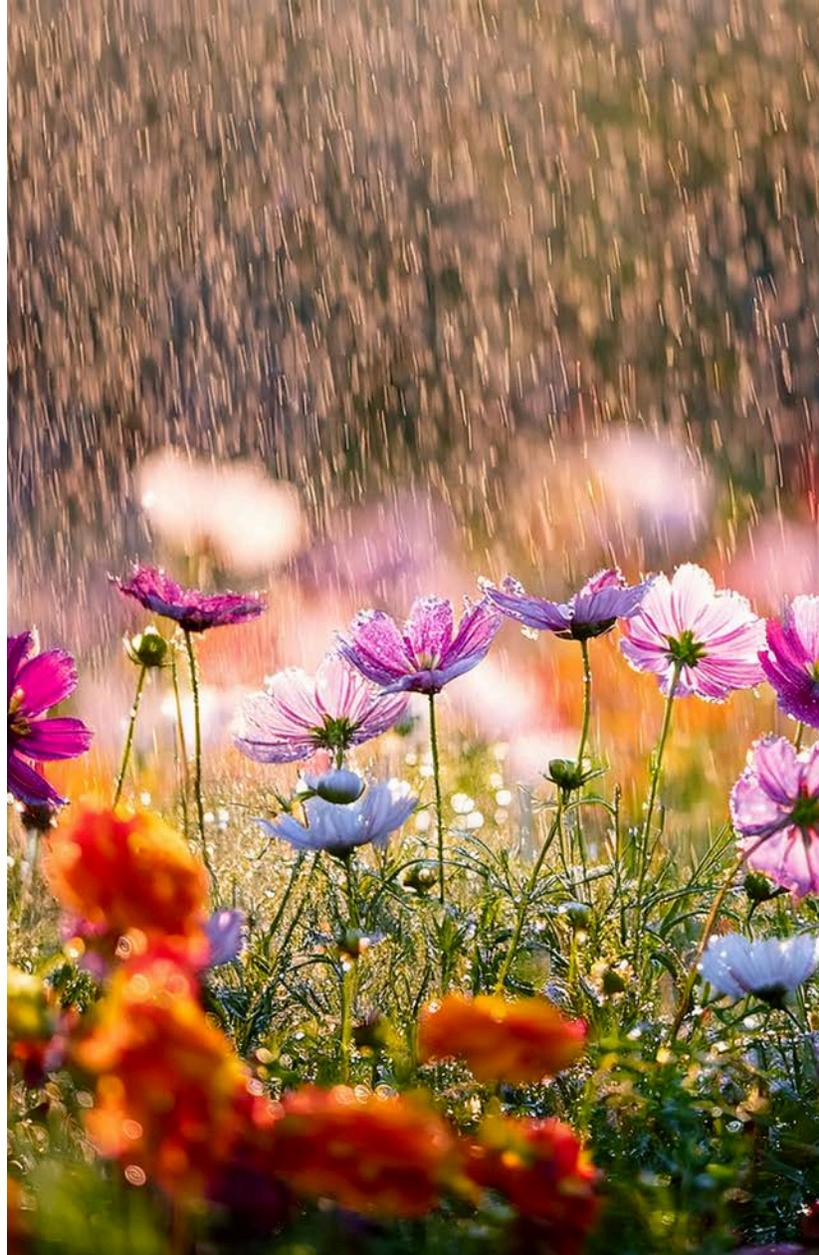
Will our homes serve busyness, success, or unhealed trauma?

Or will they serve the Lord?

You may not control every circumstance in your household, but you can choose alignment. You can choose surrender. You can choose healing.

***“As for me’ begins in the heart—  
and echoes through generations.”***

*Sonya Jones*



If you are ready to move beyond survival and lead your home from healing and identity, the A.R.I.S.E. Mastermind is a Christ-centered community designed to help women assess, repent, receive inner healing, surrender fully, and embrace who God created them to be. Because when a woman declares, “As for me,” heaven partners with her house.

**When a woman rises whole, her home rises with her.**

*Sonya Jones*



# Nuimages Of You

Where Women A.R.I.S.E. & Break Free From Past Trauma To Walk Boldly In Their God-given Identity  
Join Us For A Free Workshop! (Date TBA)

[JOIN NOW](#)

## Hi, I'm Coach Sonya J.

I am Coach Sonya J., a Christian Life Coach and the CEO of Nuimages of You LLC, a faith-based organization dedicated to helping women Break Free from Past Trauma. Heal Deeply. Rise Boldly into Your Divine Identity. As a devoted intercessor and prayer warrior, I believe in the transformative power of prayer, the Blood of the Lamb, and the word of testimony brings us...

- Break Free from Past Trauma.
- Heal Deeply.
- Rise Boldly into Your Divine Identity.

My mission is to empower women through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## Create Your Own Arise Process

**A=Assessment**, where you gain clarity on the roots of your struggles and how they've shaped your story.

**R=Repentance**, releasing the burdens of shame, guilt, and unforgiveness by aligning your heart with God's truth.

**I=Inner Healing**, you'll allow the Lord to mend the deep places of pain and restore your soul with His love.

**S=Surrender**, learn to release control and fully trust God's plan for your life. Finally...

**E=Embrace**, and Arise your divine calling, walking with boldness, joy, and renewed strength.





# MISSY

**AS FOR ME AND MY MARRIAGE**  
CONTACT MISSY

# MAXWELL WORTON

## Communication: One Foundation to a Successful Marriage

A few weeks ago, my husband, Mark, and I sat across from one another at a beautiful restaurant celebrating our 36th Valentine's Day. On one side of us sat a wealthy real estate mogul and his wife of 20 years. Sadly, he spoke more passionately about his money than his marriage. On the other side was a young couple, together for just over two years, still stealing glances at each other with a kind of shyness that reminded me of our early years.

It's hard to fathom 36 years, but when I think about our

marriage, I realize it is one of the most beautiful and yet most stretching relationships we will ever experience. Two people with different backgrounds, temperaments, ideals, and dreams, choosing to build a life together is both challenging and sacred.

While no two marriages are the same, there are some fundamental principles that every couple should incorporate into their marriage. The one I want to discuss today is *Communication*.

Communication is more than talking—it is the continual effort to remain emotionally connected. Many marriages don't break because of a lack of love but because of unresolved misunderstandings that quietly build walls. The question comes up, "How do we make sure we don't create those walls?"

Here is my husband's answer regarding communication when he is asked what makes our marriage healthy.

I picture a moment I had with Missy roughly 10 years into our marriage. It was 2001 and I remember coming home from work, walking into our bedroom, and being welcomed with a look on Missy's face that said, "We are about to have a conversation, and you are not going to like it."

As she started to talk about what needed to be discussed, I turned away from her and walked into the closet, making it quite clear that I was not going to talk about it, and that was that! When I walked back into our room, she asked me why I didn't want to talk about it. My response, although not well-thought-out, was honest. "Because I'm not going to win," I said.

Her reaction caused me to step back as she answered, "You don't know that!"

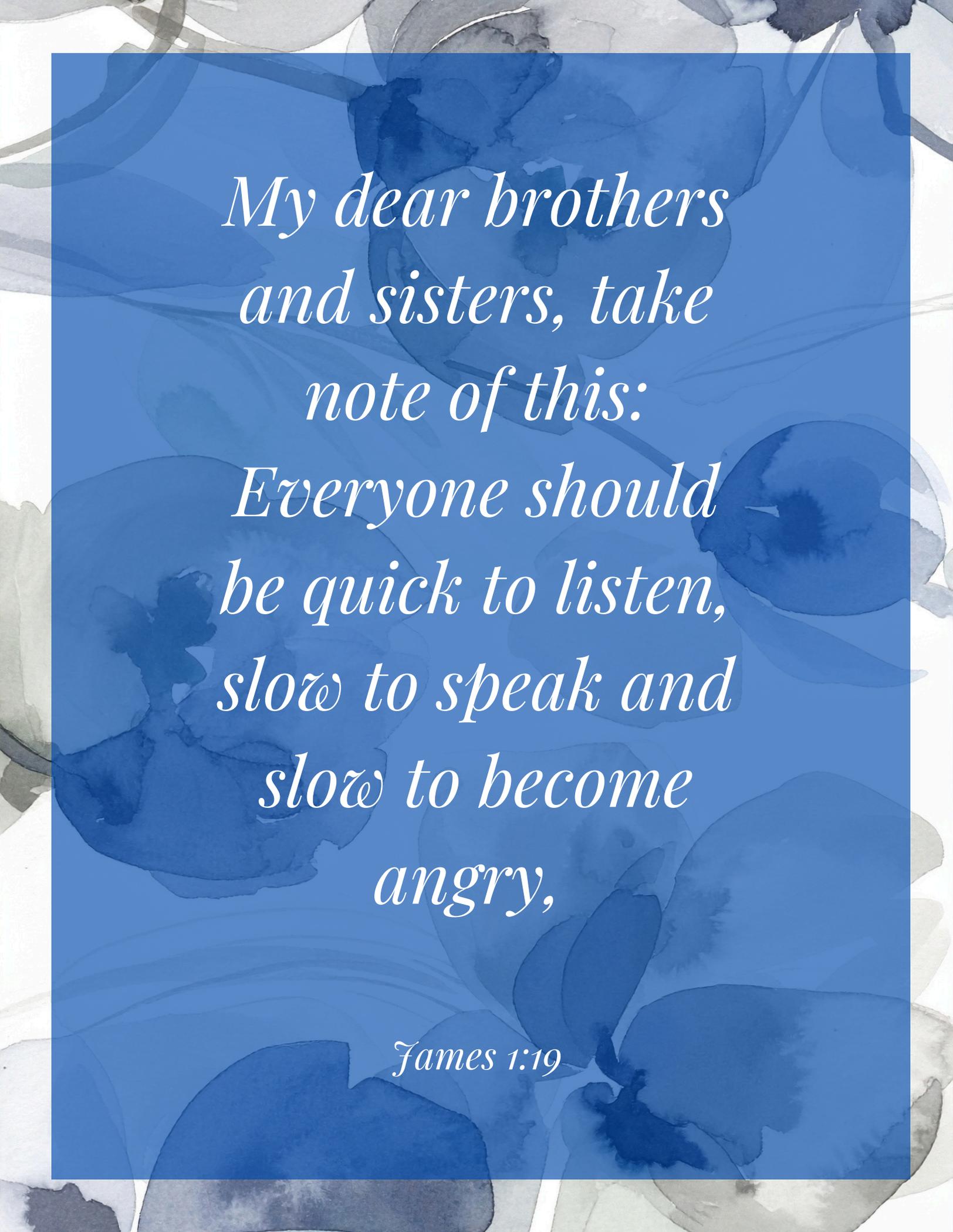
Wait a minute, had I heard her, right? "Are you saying there's a chance for me to win this argument?"

"You won't know unless you try," was all she said.

It was at that moment I learned something about my wife, myself, and our marriage. While I was arguing to win, she was talking to be heard. She wasn't trying to prove a point; she was simply asking me to listen.

It took me 10 years to learn that my wife wanted me to communicate with her. True, she wanted me to know what she was going through or wasn't happy about. But she also wanted me to be open and responsive, not guarded or closed off.





*My dear brothers  
and sisters, take  
note of this:*

*Everyone should  
be quick to listen,  
slow to speak and  
slow to become  
angry,*

*James 1:19*



One timeless piece of wisdom is to never go to bed mad. This doesn't mean every disagreement must be perfectly resolved before we fall asleep. It does mean choosing connection over avoidance. Even a simple "I love you and we'll keep working through this tomorrow," can prevent distance from settling into the relationship overnight.

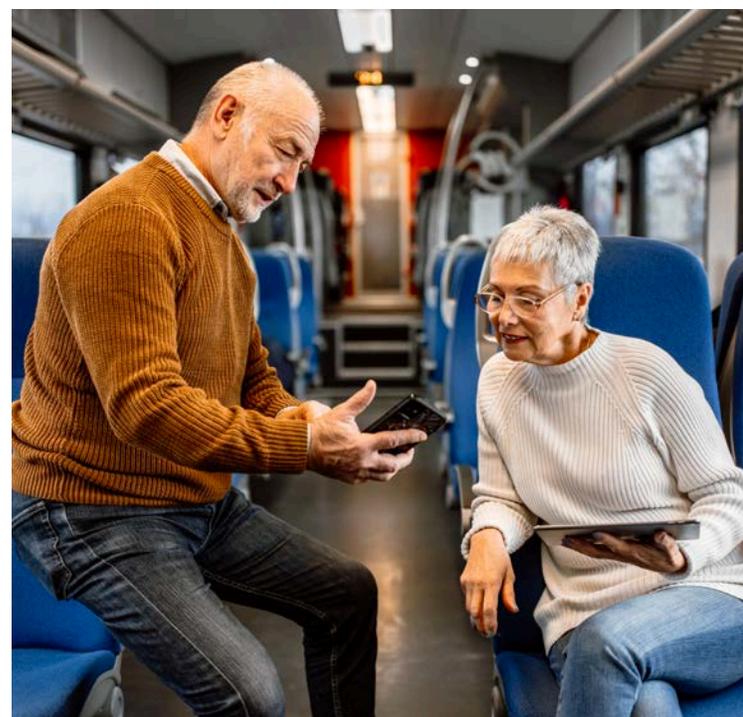
Finally, when those misunderstandings arise, choose to believe the best about your spouse's intentions. It is easy, especially when our emotions are high, to assume hurtful motives. But when we pause and ask, "What if my spouse isn't trying to hurt me? What if they are simply a human being having a bad day, overwhelmed, or unsure how to be vulnerable and express themselves?"

Giving them the benefit of the doubt in these situations creates a safe space for them. When that place is created, two shifts take place. First, the safety they feel invites them to open up and be honest. Second, their tone softens. The anger they were prepared to unleash loses its edge. What could have come out as harsh is now the sound of them being vulnerable.

When these changes occur, communication with our spouses becomes more intimate, trust-building, and unifying. That is the communication God intended us to have in marriage. This is what we work for each and every day.

I clearly remember that day because it defined a noticeable shift in my husband. From that day on, his approach towards difficult conversations with me changed. When couples shift from defending their position to listening for the heart underneath the words, something powerful happens. Validation doesn't require agreement; it requires presence. Saying, "I hear you," can calm more storms than being right ever will.

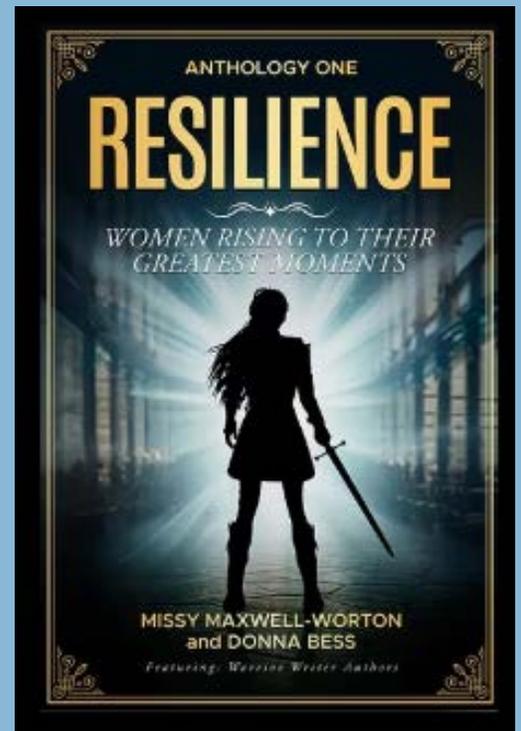
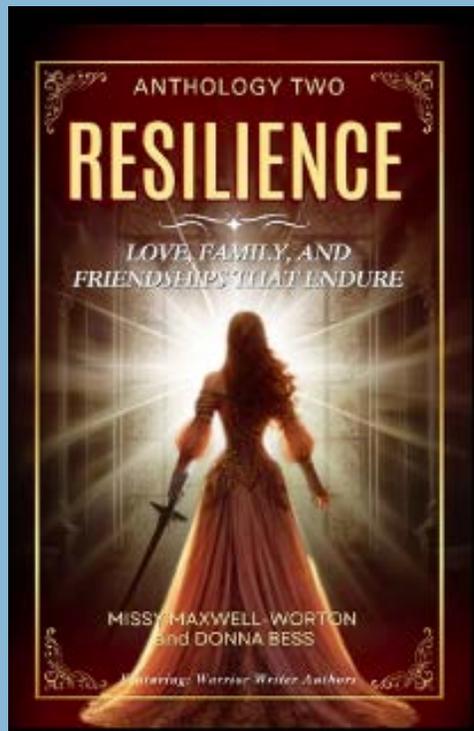
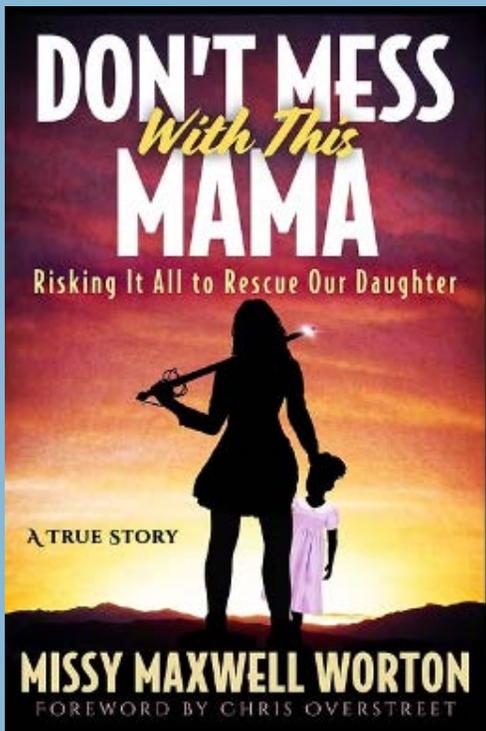
From that day forward, our marriage has grown stronger and more open. We still have our disagreements, but most are more like small embers than large flames.





# MISSY MAXWELL WORTON

AUTHOR SPEAKER COACH PUBLISHER  
WRITING AND RELEASING BOOKS AND  
MOVIES FOR KINGDOM IMPACT



Book a call with Missy



# DEENA

## TROCINO

AS FOR ME AND MY HEALTH  
CONTACT DEENA



## FROM THE SCALE TO THE SANCTUARY

### WHEN FOOD BECAME A MEASURING STICK

I grew up in a big Italian family where food was everything. Meals weren't simply meals; they were how we gathered, celebrated, and comforted one another. Everything revolved around what we were going to eat, who was bringing what, and how much there would be.

Food meant love, connection, and belonging. It also meant an ever-increasing waistline, and somewhere along the way, food became a measuring stick that led to decades of food addiction, extreme dieting, and shame.

I began attaching meaning to every bite. Food was no longer simply nourishment or celebration; it became a verdict. If I followed the rules, I felt disciplined and worthy. If I indulged, I felt like I had failed again. The scale became the judge that told me whether I was succeeding or failing, not only physically but personally.

For years I lived in the rhythm so many women know: start over on Monday, regret by Friday, promise to do better next week. I believed the answer was more discipline. If I could just get my body under control, peace would follow.

But peace never came.

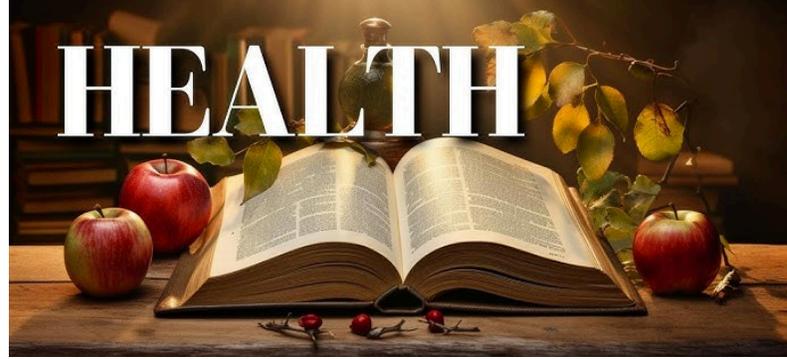
## MANAGED, NOT NOURISHED

I was constantly thinking about what I had eaten, what I shouldn't have eaten, and what I would need to do to make up for it. Even when I was trying to eat "healthy," there was tension attached to it. I wasn't enjoying meals; I was evaluating them.

That constant internal pressure doesn't only affect your mindset. It affects your body. When you live in self-monitoring and correction, your nervous system stays on alert. A body that feels constantly judged does not feel safe. It shifts into protection mode.

It doesn't matter how "clean" you eat if your nervous system is dysregulated. A body that feels under threat will hold on. It will conserve. It will store. Healing requires safety.

Looking back, I can see my struggle wasn't simply about a food plan. It was about striving. I approached my health from fear instead of trust, from urgency to lose weight instead of peace with who I am.



## PROVISION, NOT PUNISHMENT

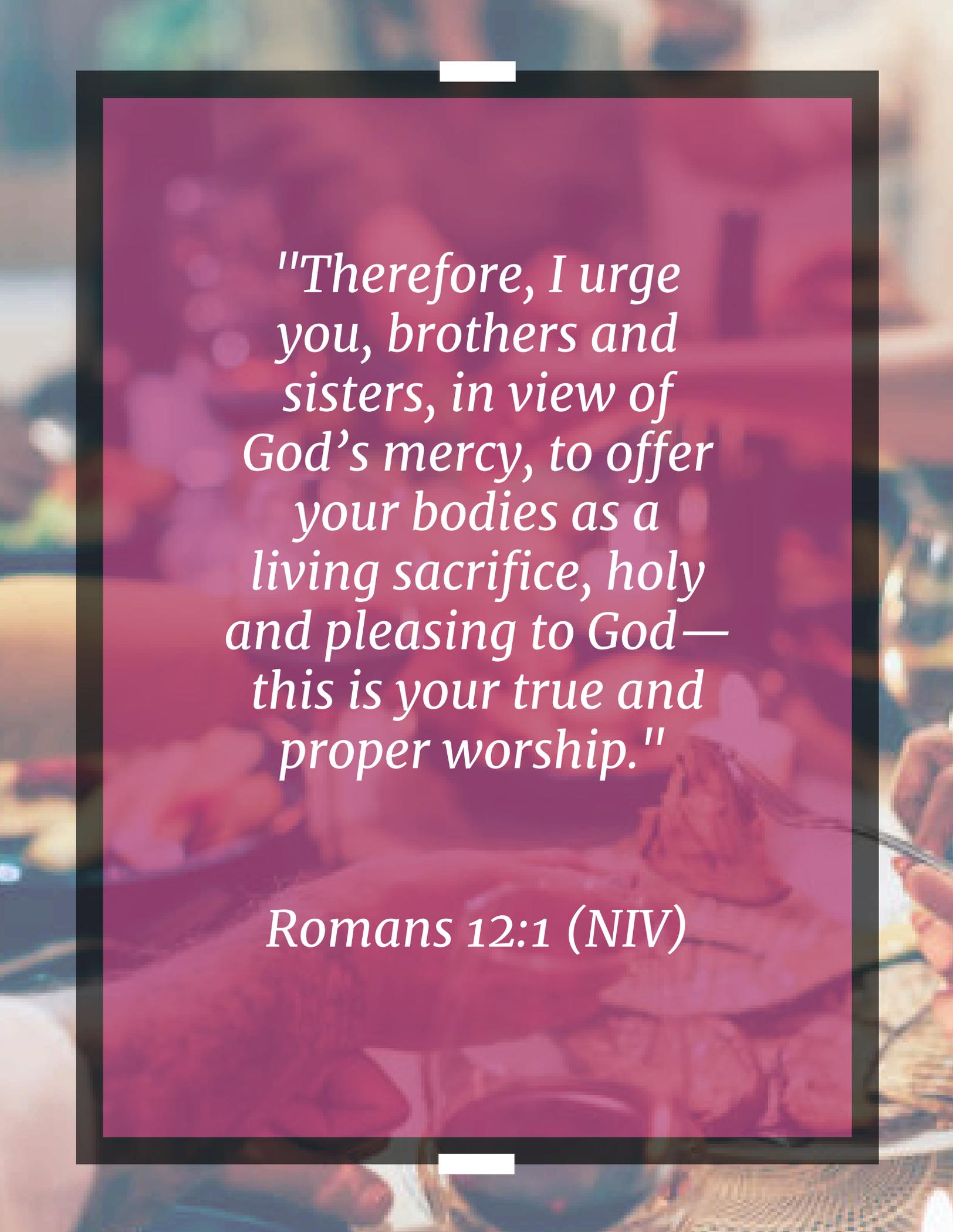
The turning point came when God shifted the conversation from performance to partnership.

I had been treating my body like a problem to solve. God began teaching me to treat it like a gift to steward. Scripture reframed everything. Romans 12:1 calls us to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God—an act of worship. For years I interpreted that as stricter discipline. Now I see it as devotion. Presenting my body to God is not about shrinking it into worthiness. It is about honoring what He created.

Stewardship means caring for what God has given us. It does not mean punishing ourselves into smaller versions of ourselves or tying our value to a number on a scale. It means nourishing our bodies with wisdom, gratitude, and consistency while refusing to let shame drive the process.

In Genesis 1:29, God gave seed-bearing plants and fruit as nourishment. After the flood, He permitted meat. Throughout Scripture, food is described as provision. Even the dietary boundaries in the Old Testament were about protection and holiness, not shame. God's design was never starvation, obsession, or self-hatred. It was nourishment.

I had quietly allowed my body to speak louder than my Creator. Instead of seeing myself first as a beloved daughter of God, I let the scale narrate my value. When I began approaching my health from partnership instead of performance, something inside me changed. I was no longer fighting my body. I was learning to care for it.



*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship."*

*Romans 12:1 (NIV)*

## BREAKING THE CYCLE

The healing did not stop with me.

As a mother, I began to see how closely my children were watching. They listened to how I spoke about my body. They noticed how I reacted to the scale. They absorbed how I approached food—whether with gratitude or guilt.

I realized I was either handing them freedom or handing them the same burden I had carried for decades.

I did not want to pass down a legacy of shame disguised as discipline. I wanted my children to see a woman who nourishes her body because it is a gift, not because it is a project.

Breaking this cycle became about more than weight. It became about rewriting a story. It became about teaching my children that their bodies are not something to be judged or a problem to be fixed. They are a gift to be cherished.

### I DID NOT WANT TO PASS DOWN A LEGACY OF SHAME DISGUISED AS DISCIPLINE.



**GOD'S DESIGN WAS NEVER ABOUT OBSESSION OR NEGLECT. IT WAS ABOUT NOURISHMENT, GRATITUDE, AND STEWARDSHIP ROOTED IN IDENTITY.**

The fuller story of this journey is shared in my chapter, **No More Start-Over Mondays**, in the newly released **Resilience 3** anthology. But the heart of it is simple: when identity is settled first, food loses its power to define us.

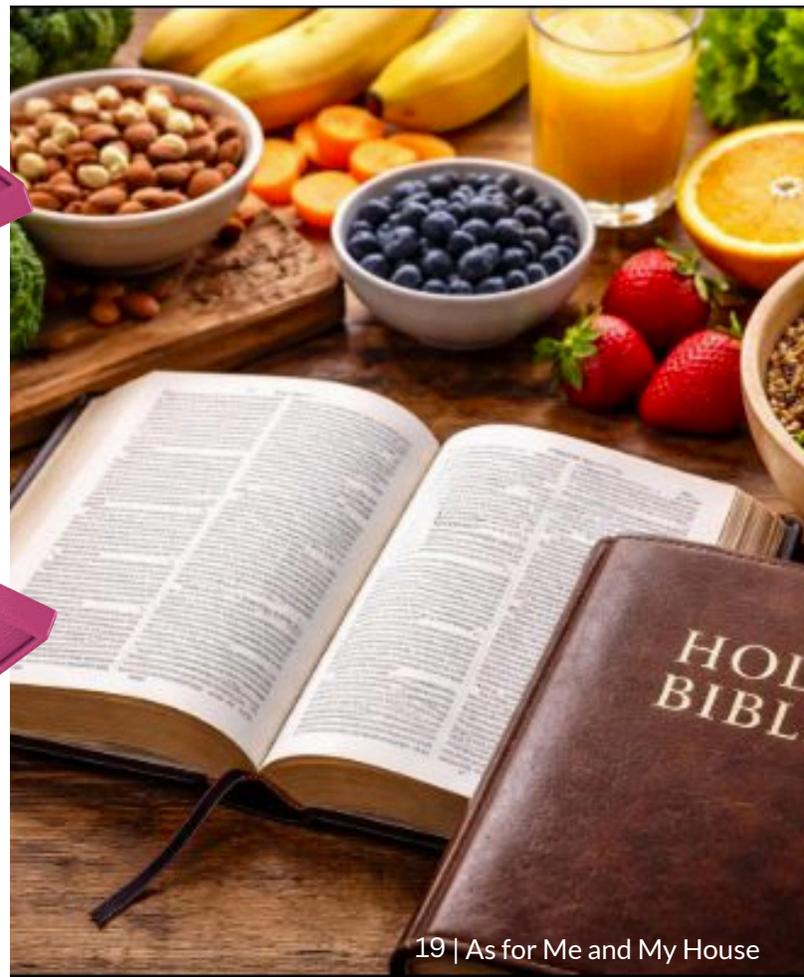
## BACK TO THE TABLE

If you have ever measured your worth by your weight, you are not alone. Many of us have allowed food to carry meaning it was never meant to hold.

God's design was never about obsession or neglect. It was about nourishment, gratitude, and stewardship rooted in identity. When we remember who we are in Him, we are free to care for our bodies without condemning them.

For me, the breakthrough did not come when the scale changed. It came when I stopped letting it speak louder than my Creator.

And that shift—from performance to worship, from fear to trust—is what finally brought peace back to my table.





# Deena Trocino



**A SISTERHOOD OF MOMS FIGHTING  
EXTRAORDINARY BATTLES  
STANDING STRONG TOGETHER**

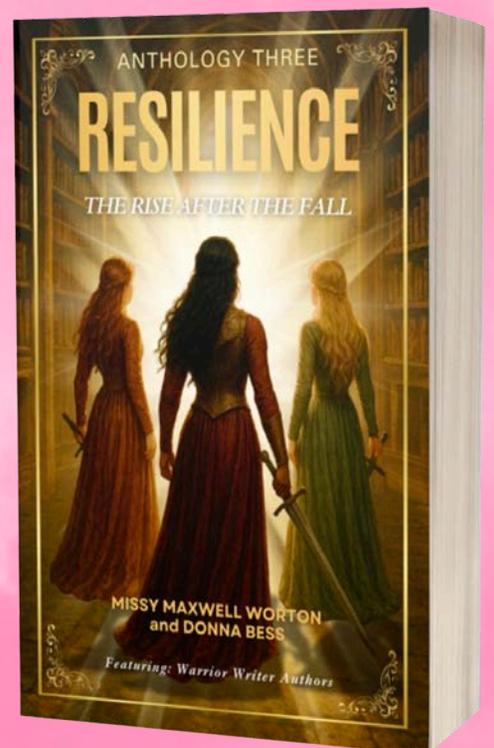
**The Junk Drawer Mamas Are Here!**

Tune in every Wednesday for a new episode!

**CHECK IT OUT**

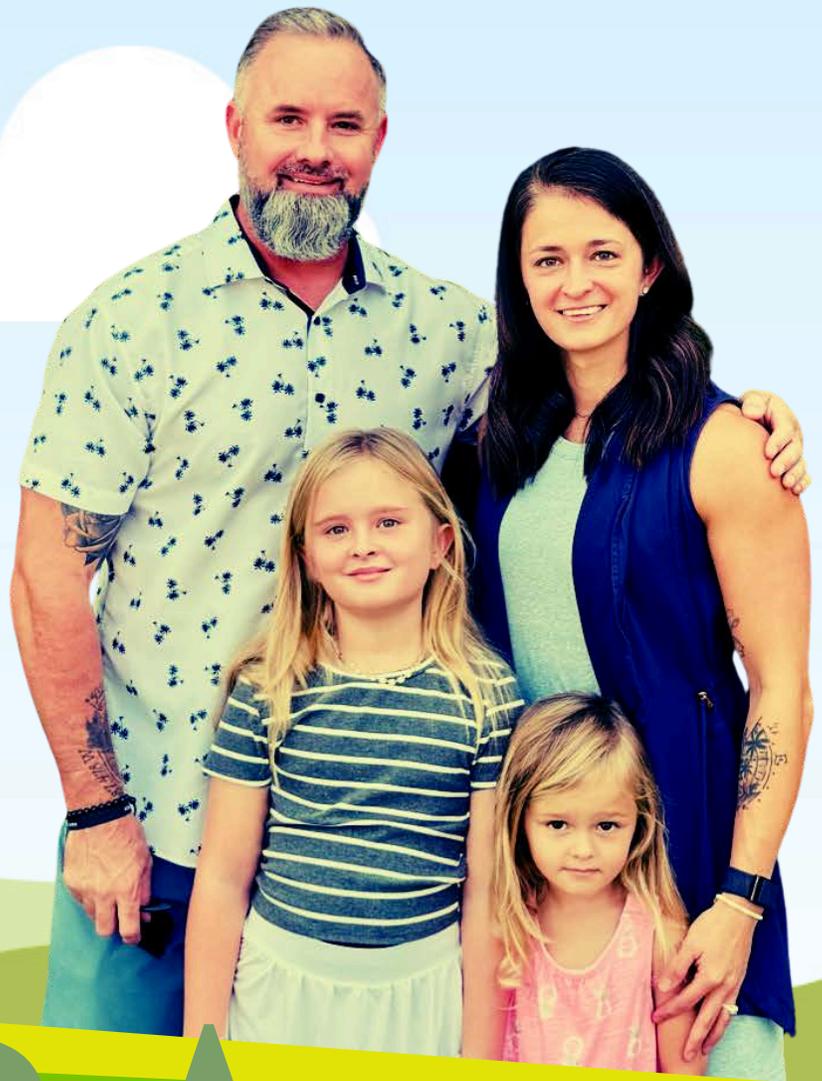
## RESILIENCE 3: THE RISE AFTER THE FALL

One anthology—twenty-two battles—from twenty-two authors. Each with one breathtaking rise. From betrayal, illness, widowhood, abuse, addiction, financial collapse, anxiety and silence that nearly crushed them, these stories reveal a fierce truth—resilience isn't loud—it's a quiet decision to stand again. Raw and real, each journey shows that God meets us in the impossible and turns ashes into hope and pain into purpose. If you've ever wondered if beauty can come from brokenness—these women shout YES—and their rise might just ignite yours.



**BUY NOW**





# SARA MORRIS

AS FOR ME AND MY FINANCES  
CONTACT SARA

## BUILDING A LEGACY OF FAITH & FREEDOM

Faith has always been my foundation, but it wasn't until I began helping families with their finances that I fully understood how deeply faith and stewardship intertwine. Scripture reminds us that *"to whom much is given, much is required"* (Luke 12:48), and I believe that applies not only to our time and talents, but to our financial resources as well.

My mission is simple: to help families build financial confidence, create lasting legacy, and live with peace knowing their house—both spiritually and financially—is in order.

In this article, I want to share three guiding principles that have shaped both my walk of faith and my approach to financial empowerment:

*"Everyone to whom  
much was given, of  
him much will be  
required; and from  
him to whom they  
entrusted much, they  
will demand the  
more."*

*Luke 12:48*

1. FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION FOR FINANCIAL FREEDOM.

2. LEGACY ISN'T ABOUT WEALTH, IT'S ABOUT WISDOM.

3. CONFIDENCE COMES THROUGH CLARITY AND STEWARDSHIP.

## 1 FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION FOR FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Faith and finances are often seen as separate, but I've learned they are deeply connected. Faith is what keeps us steady when uncertainty rises, whether in the economy or in life. Financial freedom isn't simply about having more; it's about *trusting more*.

When families invite God into their financial decisions, they begin to experience peace that doesn't depend on circumstances. It's not about perfection, it's about partnership. My clients often tell me that when they started praying over their finances, they stopped living in survival mode and began moving in purpose.

## 2 LEGACY ISN'T ABOUT WEALTH, IT'S ABOUT WISDOM

We all want to leave something behind, but legacy is more than an inheritance. It's about passing on principles of faith, integrity, generosity, and discipline.

One of my favorite parts of what I do is showing parents how to use smart financial tools (like the Million Dollar Baby Plan) to set their children up with more than money. It's about creating opportunities, instilling stewardship early, and showing them how to multiply blessings instead of just consuming them.

A true legacy is built when financial literacy meets biblical wisdom.

## 3

## CONFIDENCE COMES THROUGH CLARITY AND STEWARDSHIP

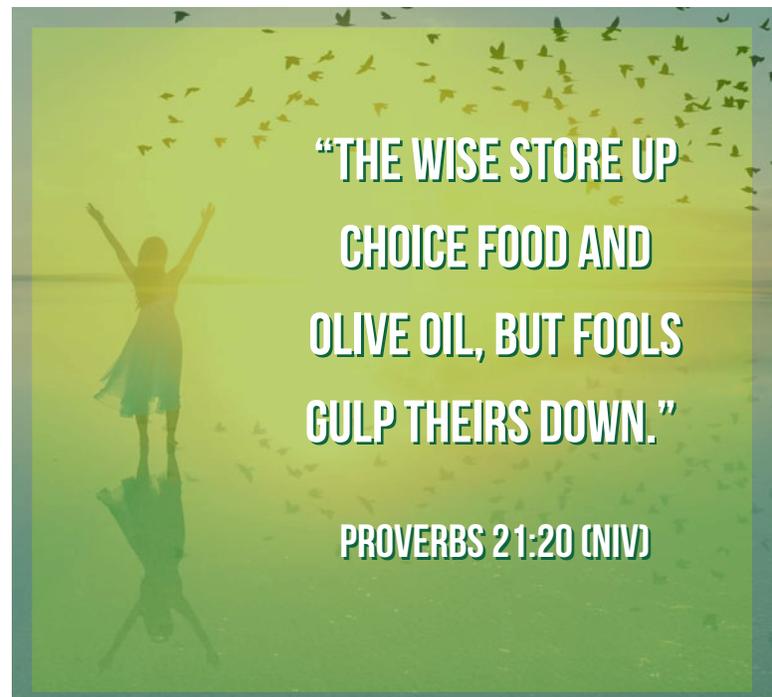
Many people feel overwhelmed when it comes to their finances, not because they lack the ability, but because they lack clarity. That's why education is the heartbeat of what I do.

When we take the time to understand how money works, we can make confident, God-honoring decisions that align with our values and vision. Stewardship isn't restrictive; it's freeing. It allows us to manage our resources intentionally and create margin for generosity, purpose, and rest.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

When we align our faith with financial stewardship, we unlock the ability to live abundantly and give abundantly. Whether you're just getting started or rebuilding from scratch, know this: God can do more with your obedience than you could ever do with your control.

Your faith is the key to financial peace, and your discipline is the door to generational freedom. Build wisely, give freely, and trust that what you're sowing today will become someone else's blessing tomorrow.



**“THE WISE STORE UP  
CHOICE FOOD AND  
OLIVE OIL, BUT FOOLS  
GULP THEIRS DOWN.”**

**PROVERBS 21:20 (NIV)**

Your Trusted Financial Partner

## About Sara Morris



TRUNORTH

Hi, I'm Sara Morris, a licensed financial professional with a mission to empower individuals through personalized financial strategies.



## About TruNorth

Welcome to TruNorth Solutions LLC, where your financial aspirations turn into achievable goals. Founded by Sara Morris, a seasoned financial specialist, TruNorth is dedicated to guiding you through the complexities of financial planning with clarity and purpose.

Sara brings experience in the financial industry, driven by a passion for helping people understand and manage their financial lives. Her expertise spans a wide range of financial disciplines, including wealth management, estate planning, and risk assessment. At TruNorth, we believe in a personalized approach; Sara tailors each strategy to reflect your personal goals, lifestyle, and values.

## True North Services

- Financial Strategies Services
- Life Insurance Solutions
- Retirement Strategies
- College Funding Plan
- Business Strategies
- Small Business Strategies

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# CHRYS TAL

## GILKEY

AS FOR ME AND MY PARENTING  
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## JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS TOO!

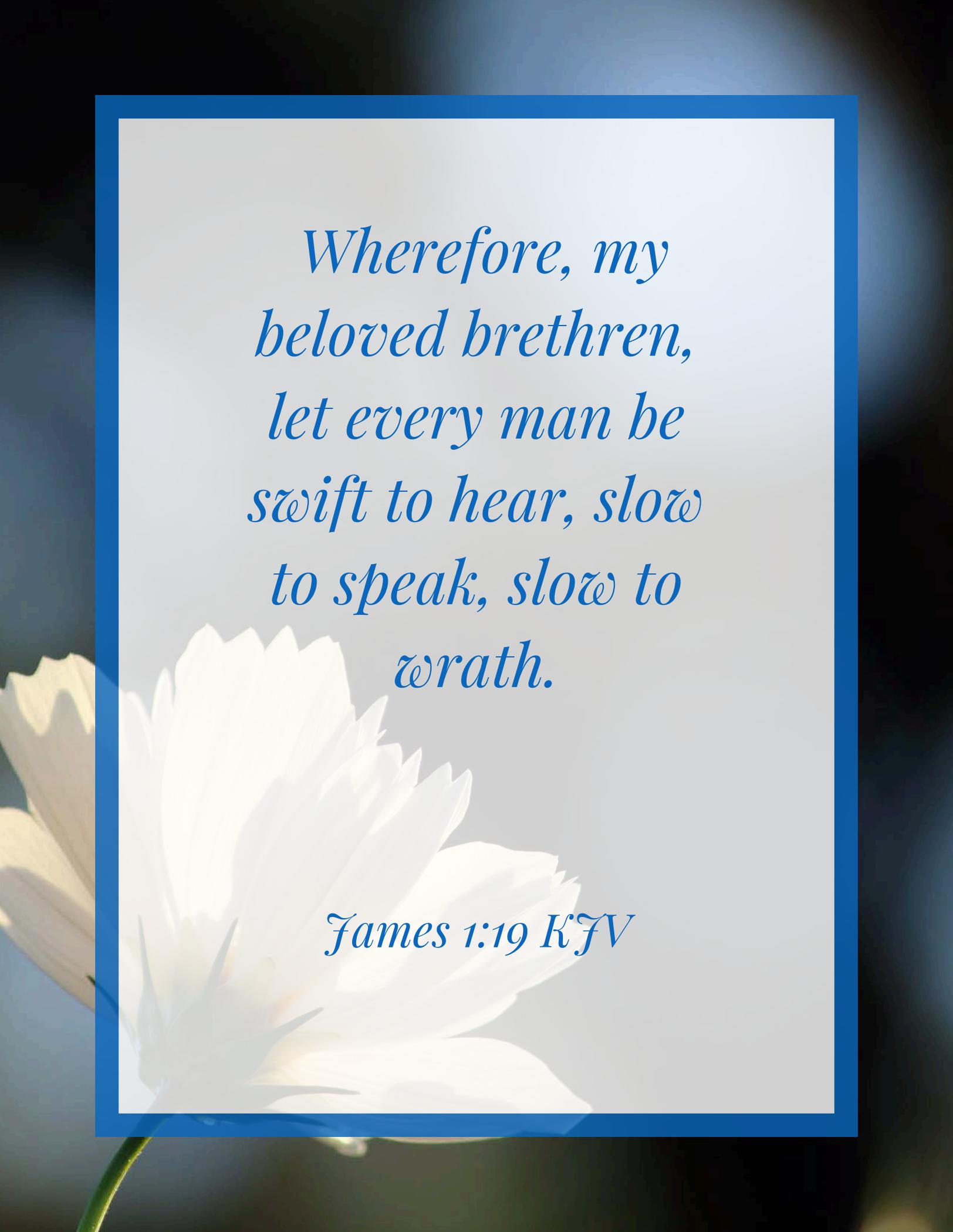
As my children grow older and hormones begin raging (mine and theirs), parenting looks a little different. I have heard parents say they enjoy the baby and child stage, but are not as fond of the adolescent stage. While there definitely are challenges in parenting these young adults, I have found we can still find joy and love in our not-so-mini-mes.

One way we can connect with our teens is by

following James 1:19: be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.

### QUICK TO HEAR

One of the biggest ways we can support our teens is to listen. They want to be heard and are looking for anyone to listen to them. For some reason, the time they want to talk is at night or when we are busy doing something else, but we have to stop and give them that time to be heard. Don't push them away to a more convenient time.



*Wherefore, my  
beloved brethren,  
let every man be  
swift to hear, slow  
to speak, slow to  
wrath.*

*James 1:19 KJV*

My daughter came into my room one night while I was reading a book and told me she had a new passion. I set the book aside and listened to her new dream of being a photographer. Our teenagers still need us. They look to us for guidance and support. It's important to give them their time whenever they need it.

## SLOW TO SPEAK

Another way we can support our teens is by being slow to speak. Often, they are seeking validation of their feelings. Empathizing with how they feel can go a long way, rather than passing judgment or giving unwanted advice.

We want to "fix it" for them, but often they simply want us to listen. Relationships are built and destroyed on miscommunication. We must think and pray before we speak. Proverbs 29:20 (KJV) says, ***"Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him."***

**"SEEST THOU A MAN THAT IS HASTY IN HIS WORDS? THERE IS MORE HOPE OF A FOOL THAN OF HIM."  
PROVERBS 29:20**



## SLOW TO WRATH

The last way we can support our teens is by being slow to anger. Dr. James Dobson offers this advice on disagreements with our teen: "Don't throw away your friendship with your teenager over behavior that has no great moral significance. There will be plenty of real issues that require you to stand like a rock. Save your big guns for those crucial confrontations."

How is it we can be more patient with a complete stranger or a client than we can with our own children? I found myself guilty of this when helping my son with his math homework! The Lord convicted me of being more patient with my classroom students than with my own child.

When we choose to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, we reflect the heart of Christ in our homes. We create a safe place for our teens' emotions and growing independence. We show them that love is not withdrawn when attitudes flare or mistakes are made. Instead, love leans in. Love listens. Love is lasting. Parenting teens can be scary but can offer incredible joy and precious moments. God gives us abundant grace so that we can give that grace to others, starting in our home!

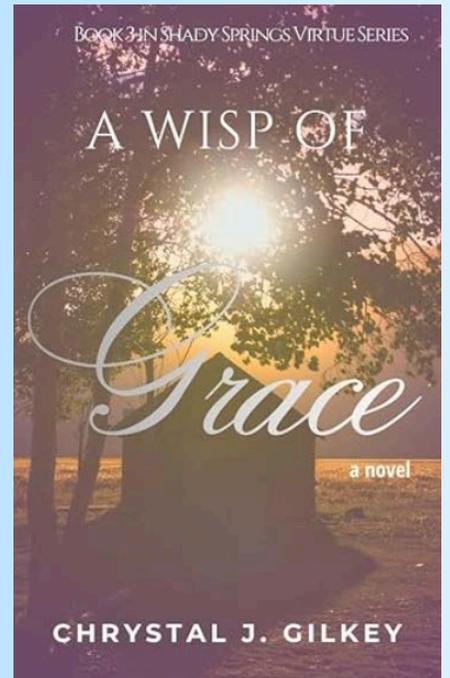
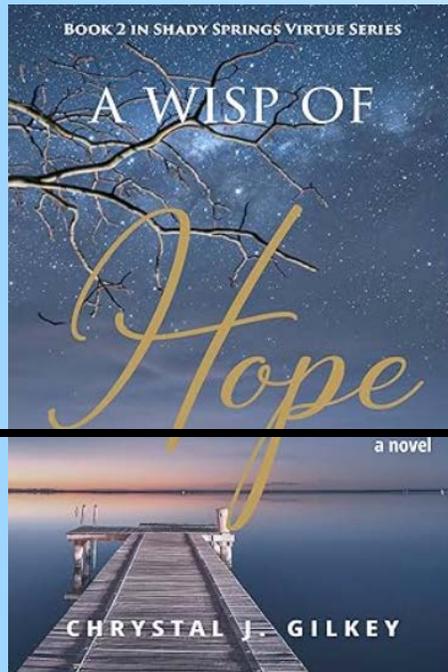
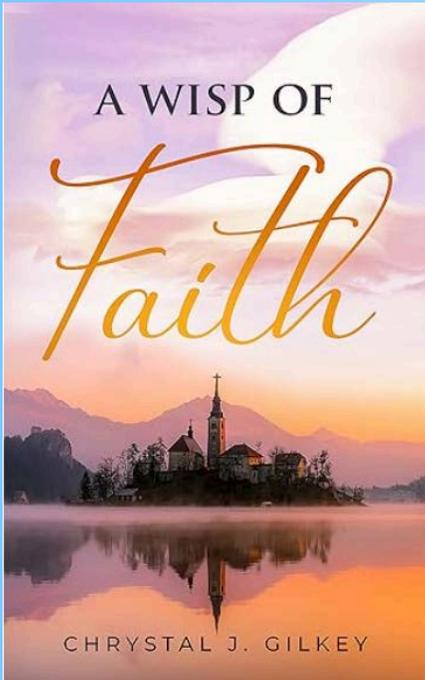
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**"LET NO MAN DESPISE THY YOUTH; BUT BE THOU AN EXAMPLE OF THE BELIEVERS, IN WORD, IN CONVERSATION, IN CHARITY, IN SPIRIT, IN FAITH, IN PURITY,"  
1 TIMOTHY 4:12 KJV**

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# CHRYSTAL GILKEY



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# CHRISTINA QUEEN

AS FOR ME AND MY COMMUNITY

[Contact Christina](#)



## WHAT IF THE CHURCH SAID YES?

I recently watched a movie called *Sound of Hope*. In this powerful story, an entire church community came together and emptied the foster care system in their area. Every child was placed in a family, as church members opened their homes—some taking in one child, some multiple. Talk about community!

This stirred something in my heart that I can hardly explain. My husband and I have been foster parents for over twenty years now. In that time, we've rarely seen the church at large step into the world of foster care in a meaningful way. Honestly, I can count on one

hand the number of times we've personally received help from the church in all those years. To be fair, we've never really asked for help. Somewhere along the way, we adopted this mindset that because we were the ones who "signed up for this," we should be the ones to carry it all. That if God called us to it, then surely, we could handle it on our own.

But recently, God has been working on my heart. He's been peeling back layers of pride I didn't even realize were there.

I began to see that part of the reason no one was helping wasn't because they didn't care, but because I wasn't letting them. In my own stubbornness, I had built up this wall that said, "I can do this all by myself." And while I know God never promised an easy road, I've also learned He never intended for us to carry it all alone.

He wants to provide help—through His people—if we let Him. He also showed me that sometimes when we won't allow others to help we are interfering with the blessings they could receive by getting to love on these precious kids.

## THE REALITY OF FOSTER PARENTING

Over the years, dozens of children have come through our doors. We've just completed our 10th adoption. Right now, we have five foster children and five adopted children still at home. We have seventeen kids in total, ranging in age from one to thirty-two.

Yes, you read that right—seventeen. Some people collect stamps or coffee mugs. Apparently, we collect kids.

Of the ten currently living at home, most have special needs: PTSD, ADHD, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, developmental delays, and Down syndrome, just to give some insight. Our days are filled with therapy appointments, counseling sessions, IEPs, and meltdowns (sometimes theirs, sometimes ours).

We're both 49 years old, and we've got grandbabies the same age as some of our foster and adopted kids. I'm convinced God has a sense of humor—and He's using our family to prove it.

There's nothing quite like changing a diaper mid-hot flash. It's a special kind of wild when you're praying for your hormones to calm down while trying not to spontaneously combust. Having hot flashes and newborns at the same time should qualify as an Olympic sport.

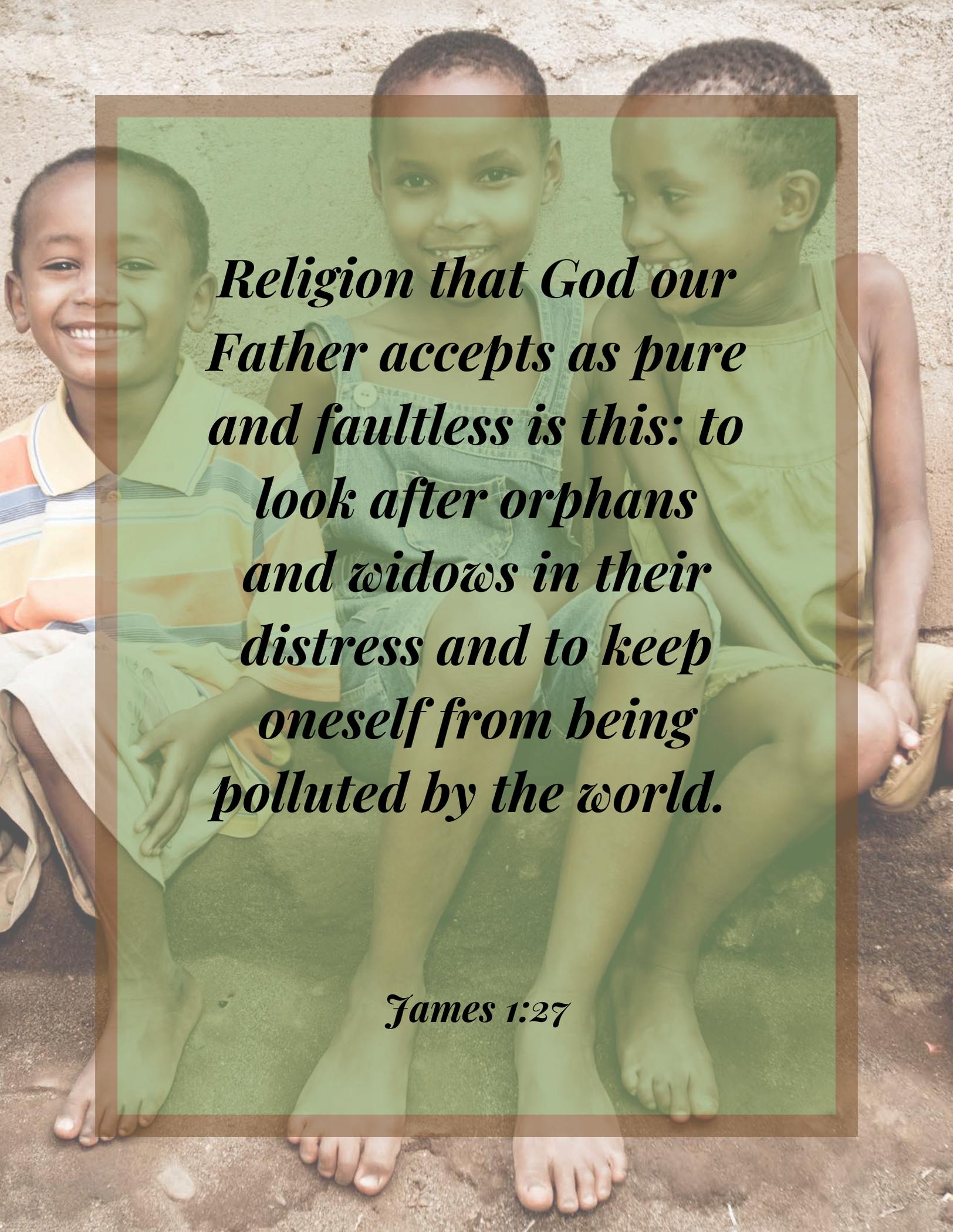
But honestly, as chaotic and exhausting as it can be, I wouldn't trade it for anything. Every time I start to say, "Lord, I'm too old for this," He gently reminds me, "You're not done yet." Then He pours out just enough grace to get me through one more day—sometimes with laughter, sometimes with tears, but always with Him.



Over the years, we've watched many fellow foster parents close their homes and walk away, not because their hearts weren't willing, but because the weight was simply too heavy.

Foster care is not babysitting. It's not only about providing a home and three meals a day. It's stepping into the brokenness of a child's life and choosing to sit with them right in the middle of it. It's crying with them when the trauma feels too heavy for their little hearts to carry. It's absorbing their pain until it becomes part of your own story—developing secondary PTSD from hearing the things no child should ever have to say out loud.

It's juggling therapy appointments, counseling sessions, medical visits, and school meetings, all in the same week. And on the darkest days, it's watching a child you love—and would move mountains for—be placed back into an abusive home, knowing there's nothing you can do but pray for God's protection to surround them in a supernatural way.

A photograph of three young children sitting on the ground against a textured, light-colored wall. The child on the left is a boy wearing a striped polo shirt and a light-colored wrap. The child in the middle is a girl wearing denim overalls over a light-colored shirt. The child on the right is a girl wearing a light-colored sleeveless top. All three children are smiling and looking towards the camera. The image has a semi-transparent green overlay with white text.

*Religion that God our  
Father accepts as pure  
and faultless is this: to  
look after orphans  
and widows in their  
distress and to keep  
oneself from being  
polluted by the world.*

*James 1:27*

And somehow, even after all that, God keeps nudging us forward—one prayer, one tear, and one "Lord, give me strength" whisper under our breath at a time. His strength shows up right when ours runs out, reminding us that even when our hearts break, our calling still stands.

## WHAT THE CHURCH CAN DO

Not everyone is called to foster—and that's okay. But everyone is called to do something. Scripture makes that clear:

**1** "RELIGION THAT GOD OUR FATHER ACCEPTS AS PURE AND FAULTLESS IS THIS: TO LOOK AFTER ORPHANS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR DISTRESS..." JAMES 1:27 NIV

**2** "TRULY I TELL YOU, WHATEVER YOU DID FOR ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF MINE, YOU DID FOR ME," MATTHEW 25:40 NIV

Here are some tangible ways the Church can step in:

**1** Bring a meal. When a new child arrives, dinner is often the last thing a foster family is thinking about,



**2** Help with household chores. Laundry, yard work, dishes—it may seem small, but it lifts a huge burden.



**3** Provide gift cards. A family fun night or a meal out can bring joy to weary hearts.



**4** Celebrate birthdays. Too many foster kids have sat at birthday tables with no one showing up for them. You can change that.



5

Offer childcare for an evening. Sometimes foster parents simply need a short break to recharge so they can keep going.



The truth is, the Church doesn't need everyone to foster. But it desperately needs everyone to care.

## A CALL TO THE BODY OF CHRIST

Foster parents are in desperate need of the body of Christ to surround them—not only us, but the children themselves. These kids did nothing to deserve the brokenness they've experienced. Through no fault of their own, they find themselves displaced, abandoned, and longing for stability.

They need more than foster parents. They need the Church.

They need to see and feel the love of Jesus—through meals, through prayers, through showing up, through celebrating them, through simply being present.

Holiday seasons are one of the most powerful times to step in. Holidays can be especially painful for children in foster care. Many are reminded of families they've lost, or they sit at tables surrounded by love but silently aching for the people who are missing. You can make a difference.

Bring over hot chocolate and cookies and share in the traditions. Sometimes the smallest gesture during the holidays becomes the brightest memory for a child who feels forgotten.

When we love these children, we are loving Christ Himself.

So I ask you: will you be His hands and feet? Will you step into the gap for the most vulnerable among us? The movie *Sound of Hope* showed what is possible when the Church rises up together. Imagine what could happen if more of us chose to live out James 1:27. Imagine the impact on children's lives. Imagine the healing. Imagine the hope.

The children need all of us. They need a community.





*Christina Queen*



**Christina Queen** lives in Lockbourne, Ohio with her husband of 31 years, two foster babies and four adopted children, all of which came into her home through fostering.

She and her husband also have seven additional adult children; four adopted, a biological son and daughter, a son in law and four grandchildren.

At this time, they have parented more than 30 children and adopted eight.

Her heart's desire is to help foster families learn how to welcome foster children into their home so the kids feel loved and like they have always been a part of the family. She is currently working on her second book to help ease the transition for 7-12 year olds coming into foster care.



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*See If Any Of This Resonates With You....*

**You're Feeling Stuck:** Whether you're a ministry leader, a parent, or someone in between, something is holding you back from stepping into all God offers.

**You're Feeling Defeated:** You love God and find it hard to connect with Him, to hear His voice, or get the direction and support you need.

**You're Worn-out:** You've given so much to your work, your family, and community, but somehow you aren't seeing the fruit.

**You're Lacking Clarity:** God is nudging you to more, and you want to step in boldly, but you aren't sure what He is even asking or how to tap into His power.

**You're Feeling Disillusioned:** Your health, emotions, confidence, and joy just aren't where you want them to be. You know God's called you, but these things are holding you back from having the life you can only hope for.

**You're Hopeful But Need A Safe Space:** You're ready 'Tap into the Trinity' and go all in on your faith; to get healed, learn to hear God, study the Word, learn to pray like the warrior you are called to be, learn of your talents, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit but you're not sure who to trust.

**You've Been Hurt, and It's Time to Heal:** Something from your past, done by you or others, has held you back long enough... You are ready to lay everything down at the cross and start living in freedom.

**You Are a Leader In the Church/ministry Desiring to Use Your Gifts Powerfully:** You see other leaders who are healing the sick, casting out the enemy, speaking God's truth powerfully, and hearing from God prophetically... You desire this and are ready to step in.

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