

DRAWING NEAR

**HOW TO GROW CLOSER TO GOD
IN THE MIDST OF MOTHERHOOD**

Edited by
Sarah K. Butterfield



INTRODUCTION

Before I became a mother, if someone would have told me that having a baby changes the way you relate to God, I would have scoffed. I've always been a creature of habit, and I still envisioned that my quiet time would stay unchanged after my baby was born. I could not foresee the sleepless nights, the constant interruptions, the mental and physical toll that raising a child would demand of me. Before I knew it, I had two under two, and any attempt at a traditional quiet time was laughable.

Gone were the days of waking up early, lighting a candle, praying while sipping my hot coffee, and spending good chunks of uninterrupted time reading my Bible. Instead, I muttered one sentence prayers under my breath ("Please God, make him sleep!") and opened my Bible on Sunday mornings if I was lucky.

I worried that God was disappointed in me, that He looked on in disapproval as I paid more attention to my fussy baby than the Sunday morning sermon. I collapsed into bed every night, guilty that I hadn't opened my Bible.

But the good news of the gospel is that it meets us right where we are, even in the busy, boring, beautiful, tired places of motherhood. Jesus loves us in the same way that we love our children, and there's no one "right" way to have a relationship with Him. He does not demand that we check off all of our quiet time boxes in order to please Him.

So how can we, as moms, grow deeper in our relationship with God? How do we move closer to Him amidst the sticky chaos of young children underfoot?

In the following pages, you'll read encouraging stories and glean practical wisdom from Christian moms who have also grappled with these questions. My hope is that the words from this diverse group of women will inspire you in your own journey in growing closer to God in the midst of motherhood.



Sarah K. Butterfield is a Missionary Kid from France who currently makes her home in San Diego. As a women's ministry leader and writer, she is passionate about helping women live out their faith by pursuing missional moments in the everyday. When she's not with her two boys you can find her at a thrift shop, reading at the beach, or grabbing coffee with a friend! You can connect with her [on her website](#), on [Facebook](#), and on [Instagram](#).



GOD'S UNCHANGING LOVE

Before I became a mama I was a ministry junkie. I lead discipleship groups, prayed in silence, read my Bible daily and journaled to my heart's content. It was glorious. Needless to say, once my oldest boy entered the scene, everything went topsy-turvy. I couldn't pee by myself, let alone spend more than a few minutes reading something that involved Jesus. This new reality led me to a "Christian" identity crisis.

I felt like I was disappointing God. I felt like I wasn't doing enough. I had spent so many years basing my worth on what I could do for Him, I lost the beauty of what He had done for me. I forgot about GRACE.

As mamas we can easily dish out unconditional love and grace to our kids. But when tables are turned, we struggle receiving this holy gift for ourselves. We feel unworthy. We feel a sense of *shame*.

Sweet mama, I want to tell you an important secret: *Our times with Jesus may change when we have babies, but God's love for us does not.* He loves us no matter what we do (or don't do). We may not have hours of solitude with Him, but we do have little image-bearers who point us towards the Father's heart. We may not read our Bibles via strict schedule, but we can experience God's Word coming to life in every moment. We get to make disciples. We are Great Commission Girls. Spreading the gospel in our kitchens. In our living rooms. And yes, even in our bathrooms.

I don't have a perfect formula for experiencing God in messy motherhood because all our lives are different. BUT I do have three pieces of advice I have come to embrace...

- 1.) *Grab Jesus whenever you can.* God can be experienced anytime, anywhere. As moms we need to take advantage of this! Pray in the shower. Listen to podcasts instead of Paw Patrol. Read Bible verses on your phone while you wait in the preschool pick-up line. Mom life is fluid, which means our Jesus' times will be as well.
- 2.) *Have God discussions with your kids.* The gospel is simple. It's all about Jesus. When we discuss the Source of Christianity with our kids, our hearts are reminded of what matters most.
- 3.) *Worship and pray together.* There's nothing sweeter than hearing your baby pray and sing to God. We smile and melt. And God's reaction towards us looks exactly the same.

Remember mama, I'm in this with you. Let's link arms and walk out our faith together.



Becky lives in Chicagoland and is happily outnumbered by her husband and three wild boys. She is a writer and speaker, with a passion for encouraging God's Daughters to embrace their holy worth and live life fully loved. She would love to connect more online at www.BeckyBeresford.com where you can grab a copy of her Brave Woman Manifesto for FREE.

A black Bible with the words "HOLY BIBLE" printed in white, uppercase letters on its cover. The Bible is positioned diagonally on a light-colored wooden surface. To the left of the Bible, there is a bouquet of several pink tulips with green leaves. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a table or floor.

HOLY BIBLE

CREATING SPACE

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

—James 4:8 (NIV)

I kept waiting for time to appear magically. I thought, “Maybe once he sleeps through the night...” or “perhaps when they can occupy themselves...” and finally “possibly when they start school.” No, no, and no. Ten years and four boys later, life has not miraculously produced what I so desperately crave: time alone with God.

As an introvert, solitude is my sanctuary. My soul needs it—especially to keep pace with this high-energy, draining season of life—but time alone doesn’t come naturally. Someone is always in my arm pit (or so it seems).

In turn, I’ve had to create that space. For me, that meant doing one thing I never wanted to do as a mom: Get up early. You see, I’m not a morning person. (I’m not really a night owl, either. The late afternoon seems to be my sweet spot.) But my mom? She was a natural riser who would wake me and my siblings with her daily, sing-song rendition of, “Good morning, good morning, good morning, it’s time to rise and shine!” Her pep was *not* welcomed.

But here I am following in her footsteps. Most mornings, I set my alarm for 5:30. I will myself out of bed, pep-talking my eyes to stay open with the promise of coffee. I cozy under a blanket, pull my Bible on my lap, and begin to read. On a good day, God and I get forty-five minutes alone—but it makes all the difference.

When those first little feet hit the steps, my spirit is calmer, stiller somehow. I’m a better version of myself because I’ve been in God’s presence. I’ve read His words. I’ve asked my questions. I’ve invited Him into the concerns of the day.

And by starting my day with God, I’m better able to see Him in the rest of it. I am more apt to dish out breakfast with joy, one bagel at a time, or to marvel as a breeze rustles the trees in our backyard, making leaves flutter and dance. I am faster to fall to my knees, desperate for His wisdom and patience.

Growing closer to God begins with creating space to draw near. And while carving out that space may look different for each of us, it’s an essential discipline that results in a deeper relationship.



Sarah's story is marked by both deep grief and unexpected grace, both of which have become a catalyst for her as a writer and a speaker. Sarah invites women to lean in to God, right where they are, and to look for Him in everyday life—in the beautiful, the broken, and those seemingly mundane in-between spaces. Sarah lives in Indiana with her husband Ben and four boys.

You can connect more with Sarah on her blog as well as on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#).



GO-TO MOM MOVES

As a mom, spending time with God is so important for my own sanity and the sanity of all of those who surround me. I do a combination of things to make sure this happens. Because life as a mom is a mixture of calm and chaos, sometimes all of the things happen, and sometimes none of them happen.

My number one go-to mom move is the Bible app on my phone. I work through devotions depending on the need I have in my life and where God takes me after prayer or even during prayer. (I have an ongoing conversation with God throughout the day.) I usually complete the devotion on the app right when I wake up in the morning, and they do not take long – at the most 5 to 10 minutes.

Another way I carve out time to grow close to God is in the car on my drive to work. I love listening to YouTube videos of my favorite pastors on my commute. It is during this time that I can hear God the clearest as I have nowhere else to be but in that car on that journey. There is nothing else that I can be doing besides driving so God has my undivided attention. As a writer, I want to bottle up all of our conversations so I can remember them but many times, that is not God's need. He just wants a simple talk with me one on one without all the distractions.

Finally, I grow closer to God when I block out a set time on my calendar to go to my office space, read a word from a book, pray for 5 minutes, sit in silence and listen for 5 minutes, then journal it out for 5-10 minutes. These are the times I feel the closest to Him. When I make the time, I am never disappointed. I wish I could say that I do it daily because it helps with clarity every time, but alas, life is life so I do the best I can and rely on God's grace for the rest.



Brittany Bonnaffons is born and raised in Texas, but spent the last 20 years of her life in Louisiana. She is a wife of 11 years to her husband Brett Bonnaffons, and the mother of three children - Braden, Jimmie, and Mya who are 8, 7, and 5 years-old. She is a high school math teacher, a track coach, and a blogger. She has dedicated her life to challenging unrealistic standards so that she and others can embrace themselves for who they are - ordinarily extraordinary.



FIND YOUR RHYTHM

The interruptions were constant when my little ones were young. I couldn't even remember what was next unless I referred to my planner. Bonus points if I actually remembered to write it down. The never-ending "to do" list is enough to challenge the most organized mama, let alone the rest of us who are just trying to get by with sanity intact.

With all the immediate needs of motherhood, I almost forgot what was most important. Time with God always seemed to be put on the back burner because there were more pressing things to take care of—like cleaning the toddler up from a poop-smearing fest during nap time.

I tried to read my Bible first thing in the morning, but in those early days of parenting, it just didn't work for me. I struggled to find a regular time to study my Bible and actively take time with God. Advice from a veteran homeschool mom made me reconsider our day. She shared that she took a nap every day from noon to 1:00 pm.

The rhythm of our life consisted of our morning homeschool lessons with lunch at 11:30. After lunch, my baby would nap while the older ones would have quiet time for an hour. While I never napped and didn't feel I needed to use my time in that manner, I discovered I could repurpose that quiet time into something productive. Instead of using it on household tasks that may be required a little extra time and attention, I committed to reading the Bible.

We had two simple rules the kids had to follow. During rest time, they had to remain in their bed the entire hour and be quiet. What they chose to do with that time was up to them. Most of the time they read or played quietly, but sometimes they fell asleep. We all continued this quiet time routine throughout the middle school years.

This was a timely reset in the middle of the day and kept my focus on God. I was able to concentrate on my relationship with the Lord for one full hour. It was especially important on those days when quiet time ended with the diaper, once again, removed. Even in the midst of chaos, stilled moments were unearthed and equipped me for the rest of the day.



Gina LaPapa is a faith warrior who encourages her readers to grow their faith through everyday brave moments. For the past 15 years, as a breast cancer overcomer (Paget's Disease), she is a speaker, writer, and mentor for others who face their own trials. She is married and a step, bio, and adoptive mama of five. You can connect with her at www.BeingBrave.faith, on [Instagram](#), or on [Facebook](#).

PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, including our dear friends and fellow workers in the gospel, Epaphroditus, Timothy, Titus, and Onesimus. Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is in the form of God and has emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. He appeared in the likeness of men, and being found in the form of a servant, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



DIFFICULT BUT POSSIBLE

Being a mommy to 3 children isn't easy at all, especially since I homeschool and my kids are with me 24/7! The only thing that truly gets me through it all is spending time with God. I've noticed that when I don't, my life gets pretty hectic, and I am literally a complete mess! I know it may be difficult to find the time to spend with Him, but it is possible. I'd like to share three things that have helped me grow closer to God.

1. Hunger

Matthew 5:6, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." The craziness that life brings can make us hunger and thirst for Him. You know those times when everything seems to be falling apart? The beauty in the struggle is that it can actually bring you closer to God. When you've acknowledged that you truly need more of Him, it will motivate and propel you into His presence. That hunger helps me make God the number one priority.

2. Waking up earlier

Waking up before my kids work because it allows me to have a more intimate time with The Father. I set an alarm on my phone to help me wake up. Then, I make me a nice cup of coffee to get my energy up so I don't fall back asleep. When waking up earlier, I have time to pray, do a devotion either on my phone or a book, and even worship through song.

3. Resting in God's grace

I know that motherhood is a ministry in itself. Caring for children is no easy task and I'm sure that God understands where we are in this season. I try not to get overwhelmed and feeling like I'm a failure because my day didn't go as planned. I rest in God's grace knowing that I am His, and that no matter what, He will meet me exactly where I am. Guilt and feelings of inadequacy are a trick of the enemy. Whenever I began feeling like a failure due to lack of time, I remember that NOTHING can separate me from the love of God (Romans 8:38). I let true love lead me to Christ each and everyday. It can be shown in my thoughts, my encounters with others, and sharing the gospel.



Kamry O. is a wife and stay-at-home-homeschool-mom of 3 beautiful children. Her passion is motivating and inspiring women to be their best selves while also finding their God-given purpose.



SEASONS OF PRAYER

There are seasons to everything, even to prayer.

This season of motherhood does not hold space for carved out, lengthy, and in depth prayer sessions.

This is a season of little sleep, exhaustion, endless questions, and stolen prayers.

In this season we pray the same way that we eat: starting a prayer and then setting it down, hoping to return and reheat it minutes later, finishing it as fast as we can. We steal bites of the Word between tractors, and trains, and legos. We lock ourselves in the bathroom to experience just one solid minute of alone time with Jesus, hoping He meets us on the tile floor, and exhaling deeply when we realize He's there too.

We don't get to spend hours in prayer, or even minutes, but saying His name is enough.

Just saying, "Jesus" is our prayer. "Be near" and "we need you" are our new lines of life.

Because even prayer has its seasons. Even our time with Him looks different in different stages of life.

Sometimes growing in our relationship with Him means allowing the space for the season of life that we are in, remembering that our Daddy sees that too.

Some seasons are lengthy and full of time, and others are like right now.

But He understands them all, and they are all precious and meaningful to Him.

So we offer our thoughts as our prayers, and we whisper "Jesus come quick" and "we need you now", and we hand Him our measly little lunch, knowing He is the One who can use it to feed thousands.



Jennalee is a wife and mother to three little boys. She enjoys working as a Christian Spiritual Coach and walking women through their Gospel Soul Architecture. She spends her free time in the trenches of motherhood, playing legos and trains, and reading children's books.



BE AN EXAMPLE

I'll be the first to admit that there are days that I don't complete my full personal Bible study regimen. Sometimes I do my Bible reading on my phone during middle-of-the-night feedings, or right before I fall asleep. Life is just like that. But honestly, mamas, there aren't very many good excuses for neglecting personal Bible study. We just need to make it a priority.

If we don't maintain meaningful daily communications with God, through prayer and Bible study (and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives), our relationships with Him will not make meaningful progress.

Like me, you might feel like you can't always squeeze it in because you're tired, your house needs cleaning, meals need cooking, laundry needs washing/folding/putting away, you'd like to take a shower, and maybe have a conversation with your spouse. Maybe you're working full-time, too. Oh, and you have loud little bundles of joy running in circles around you while you attempt to do all of that.

Most days, that's how I feel.

In a perfect world, I'd study my Bible curled up on the couch in a perfectly tidy living room with a cozy blanket, a steamy rooibos chai latte, and my journaling Bible, colored pencils, and pens. I'd have 30-45 minutes with nothing else to do and I'd be well-rested.

Yeah, it's just not happening. That's not life (at least it's not MY life), and it's not going to be for the foreseeable future. That doesn't change the fact that I still need to make it happen.

In spite of the frustrations, what encourages me in this season of Bible study amidst the chaos is that my personal Bible study time is an important example for my kids.

I can't give my kids my relationship with God. They've got to build it with Him on their own. What I can do, though, is show them how desirable that relationship is, and give them the tools to help them discover it for themselves.

So, yeah, it's inconvenient and noisy, but in this season I can show my kids where my priorities lie by letting them see me study my Bible. Because they watch everything I do, eventually they'll ask me about it. And one day, I pray they'll ask me if they can learn how to study the Bible for themselves.



A former elementary/middle school teacher and school administrator, [Brianna Martin](#) loves kids and is passionate about learning. Since becoming a mom of two little boys (ages 3.5 and 1.5), she has felt a strong desire to help Christian parents lead their children daily toward Jesus. Brianna blogs on growing little ones into disciples, screen-free life, and anything related to Christian parenting over at [DiscipleMama.com](#).



HOLY BIBLE

THE KING JAMES VERSION

... of the ... and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the

BE GENTLE WITH YOURSELF

Relationships take time together, communication, and work. However, we all know that when you are in the midst of raising young children, your relationship with Jesus feels like it suffers for lack of those three things. Who has time to get the laundry and dishes done, let alone spend “quiet” time with Jesus?

After having raised four children, I completely understand where you are at right now. Looking back on those days of a messy house, mountains of laundry and a sink full of dishes, there were a couple of realizations that I came to as a mom of young kids who wants to grow in her relationship with Jesus. Let me share with you what I learned in the trenches.

Quiet time isn't quiet when you have young children. Sure, you can try to get up 30 minutes before your family does, but we all know what happens when you try to make that happen...someone always wakes up. Your quiet time might look like your Bible open on the kitchen table during breakfast trying to read one verse without interruption. That's awesome, because not only are you making your relationship with Jesus a priority, you're showing your kids that it's a priority too. Better yet, read the verse to them and ask them what they think.

Snack like your kids do! I don't mean actual food but what I do mean is snack on the Bible throughout the day. Here's how that works; leave your Bible open on the kitchen counter and every time you walk by, grab a Biblical snack.

The music you listen to in your home will either starve your soul or feed it. Turn up the praise tunes. Two things happen when you have praise music playing in the background. One, the enemy hates it so he backs off from wreaking havoc in your home, and two; it feeds your soul and the souls of your children as well. God used my Mom's gospel music to draw me to Himself as a child and He will use it in your children's lives as well.

More than anything, let Jesus guide you throughout your day. Speak to him about the mountains of laundry...He truly cares about it. Those dishes, He cares about them too. Why? Because He cares about you. He promises in the Bible to gently lead those who have young. (Isaiah 40:11) If He is gentle with you, you need to be gentle with you.



Tina Chambers Smith is a writer, author, teacher and founder of Raising Kids on Your Knees, a ministry focused on equipping Moms and Dads to pray and parent life into the lives of our children. She has seen the power of prayer in her own children's lives and believes there is no better way for us as parents and guardians to raise our children than on our knees in daily prayer for them. Tina resides with her husband, Rod, in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Together they have four children and three grandchildren.

YOU GOT THIS

Jesus is my homie. He is literally my EVERYTHING! My love for Him is everlasting but, my walk with Him has been a little rocky since stepping into the role of motherhood. Being a mom of two is difficult in itself and finding time to add anything else to that to do list is dreadful. The great thing is that it is possible though. The Bible tells us that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. (Phillipians 4:13) Experience has taught me that this is indeed true. Leaning on God has helped me conquer this mom thing. Time is something that's almost never on my side but I believe the saying goes " you make time for what's important to you." Well as harsh as that sounds, it's true dear. Trust me I know better than anyone that it is easier said than done. But, how do you do it Lynyadia? I'm glad you asked that question.

My go to for every single thing is prayer. I think we as people overthink prayer. Praying is literally having a conversation with God. I just told you that Jesus is my homie therefore I talk to Him as such. There is no way you can have a relationship with anybody without communication and that includes God. We must stay in constant conversation with Him in order to grow our relationship with Him. When I realized how talking to God helped me it created the need for me to do it more frequently. The good thing about prayer is that it doesn't take up a whole bunch of time. There are many different ways to do it. Speaking aloud, silently, or you can even write it out. This sounds so simple. Well that's because it is. Start your day with prayer. While your tackling mommy duties whisper to God. I've even learned that just uttering the name Jesus can soothe you in frustrating times. Growing closer to God in the midst of motherhood is achievable. Ask God to grant you time, to strengthen you and give you the will to grow closer to Him. If you've got the faith then God's got the power. I started with prayer and with time I've added reading my bible and even reading devotionals. For me it all started with prayer. Don't be afraid to ask God for what you really want! Growing closer to God while trying to be an awesome mom can be challenging but YOU GOT THIS! God said He'll give us the desires of our hearts if we delight ourselves Him.(Psalm 37:4) So if you truly desire to grow closer to Him. Seek Him through prayer and let everything else fall into place.



Lynyadia Prosper is a lifestyle blogger from New Orleans, La. She is a wife, mom and part time Superhero. She has a passion for Jesus and to touch the lives of every person she comes in connection with. You can connect with her on her blog and on Instagram.



...the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me,
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall" on me,
Even the night shall be light about me;
Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

139:11 * Vulgate and Syriac; but read verse.

...I shall call them, they would be made to number the stars of heaven.
When I awake, I am still with You.
Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men,
For they speak against You wickedly,
Your enemies take Your name in vain.
Do I not hate them, O Lord, who hate You?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?
I hate them with perfect hatred;
I hate them my enemies.
Search me, O God, and now my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 140

Prayer for Deliverance from Evil Men
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Deliver me, O Lord, from evil men;
Preserve me from violent men,
Who plan evil things in their hearts;
They continually gather together for war,
They sharpen their tongues like a serpent;
The poison of asps is under their lips.

139:14 * following Masoretic text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate are fearfully wonderful. 139:20 * Septuagint and Vulgate have cities in vain.

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

Resisting overload

Parenting young children is a stage of life where you are often just overloaded...

Overloaded with questions because your children never stop asking them.

Overloaded with touch because someone is constantly wanting to be held, or hanging onto you.

Overloaded with things because your kids have way too many plastic toys; they are literally taking over your home.

Overloaded with thoughts because there's just so many things to worry about and to remember.

Overloaded with things to do because you are trying to manage and organize little people's lives now, and not just your own.

So what do you need to do to spiritually survive it all?

You need to ask for help... and you need to accept help when it's given.

You need to simplify your life... and you need to learn how to say 'no' to some things that once would have been a 'yes'.

You need to choose to prioritize... and you need to just let some the lower priority stuff slide for a while.

But most of all, you need to pray. A lot! And often on the go...

Bring God right into each of those full on, crazy moments, even as they happen.

He is already there with you, of course, but I find that it often helps my own perspective when I actually acknowledge this fact in the midst of these moments, and ask Him to give me His strength to do it well.

'Pray at all times'

Don't wait for the next chunk of time to appear in your day or your week where you can finally get a focused devotional time squeezed in. Chances are they won't be appearing all that often, and almost certainly not as often as you need.

So instead, why not start inviting Him right into the busyness, the arguments, the glorious chaos, and the mess of your day?

Ephesians 6:18 instructs us to 'Pray at all times', and it's by far the single best solution to parenting overload that I have ever found.

So why not try it? Ask Him to inhabit your life, right here, right now, right in the midst of the school run, the grocery shop, the laundry, or the bedtime routine. And who knows, maybe you will discover the grace that you need right in the moment when you need it the most.

Because the truth is that prayer was never meant to be reserved for a few super-spiritual people who have enough spare time to be holy; it was designed for normal, busy, imperfect, and overloaded mums - just like me and you.



Anna Kettle is an experienced writer, christian blogger, marketing and PR professional, and is currently writing her first published book under Tyndale. She is married to husband Andy, and mum to their son Ben who is 4 (plus three babies in heaven). They live in the beautiful waterfront city of Liverpool in England. Anna is a coffee lover, bookworm, travel enthusiast, live music fan, a keen foodie, a gatherer of people, and a believer in the healing power of words. Find her on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).



THE TENDER YEARS

Motherhood started with orientation by fire for our family. When my son was two months old, we moved cities, while my husband temporarily continued commuting to his old job in our previous city, two hours away. We had taken on a four-year-old foster daughter (long story). I had a nursing infant and a preschooler who could run circles around me with power struggles and tantrums.

Suffice it to say “quiet time” became elusive if not impossible most days. Before having children, I could sit for hours reading the Word, praying, and journaling. I would take full days away with only a blanket, my Bible, a hymnal, and some snacks, going to our local botanical garden for a personal retreat where I would seek God and be filled.

Now, my life went round the clock between time spent driving to preschool, handling case worker visits, and all the needs of my newborn son and our foster daughter. I was frazzled. Formal time with God seemed to be an out-of-reach luxury.

Maintaining my sense of connection with God during that early season of motherhood, reminds me of the way I got all my nourishment. When I was hungry, I would cruise by the fridge or the pantry, grabbing finger food to eat while I cared for my children. My spiritual food was also grab-and-go. I kept a Bible propped on a cookbook stand on the island. I would literally pass by it, read a verse to ponder as I cleaned up toys, gave our daughter a bath, or rocked my son to sleep.

Intervals of nursing seemed to come in rapid succession in those days. I prayed and sang worship songs as I sat holding my precious son in my arms. These weren't the days for looking up Greek and Hebrew meanings or studying Matthew Henry's commentaries. I had to make do on morsels. God is a God of loaves and fishes, and He multiplied the little I was able to do.

I learned beautiful lessons about how God cares for us in these tender years while we raise young children. God says in Isaiah that He gently leads the nursing ewe and gathers her young to his chest. God is constantly pursuing us. We only need to do what we can to reach back to Him and He will be found. Some days we are able to spend more time in the Word, or be more devoted to quiet and solitude. We need to know that when that is not possible, God is still with us. We can practice the awareness of His presence as we go through our days – abiding in His love, and doing what we can, because He will meet us there and fill in the blanks.



Patty writes and speaks to encourage your heart, feed your soul, and provide you wisdom for life. Patty and her husband have two boys ages 10 and 17. Patty loves coffee dates with friends, escaping into a good book, kayaking on the ocean, and taking spontaneous road trips.

You can connect with Patty on [Instagram](#), follow her on [Pinterest](#) or read her writing on and find resources for your motherhood at her [website](#). She also invites you to join her [Facebook community for moms](#).

Patty's books for moms [can be found on Amazon](#).



WHERE TO START

Time with God changes with the different seasons of motherhood. Most days, I pick a passage of scripture to study while my two-year-old daughter is napping. But even then, there are often distractions. The phone dings with a text from my husband or a friend. A phone call comes from the nurse at school.

When the interruptions come, it's easy to either resort to resentment or guilt. Resentment at the fact that quiet time is so difficult or guilt that I can't seem to make it work.

This is how I felt for a long season of my life. I swung between these two extremes like a pendulum. Eventually, I learned that with three young children ranging from ages ten to two, minutes count. They have to.

I realized the time I spent with God mattered, even if it was short. Even if it was prayers interspersed throughout the day. And although he wants me to put him first in my life, I understood he wasn't keeping a log of each minute I sat in a quiet, interruption-free space memorizing scripture.

Valuable time with God flows from a desire to be with him, and this is where we always start.



Abby McDonald is a wife, mom of three, and writer whose hope is show women their identity is found in Christ alone, not the noise of the world. When she's not chasing her two boys or cuddling her newest sweet girl, you can find her drinking copious amounts of coffee while writing about her adventures on her blog and other places where she regularly contributes.



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