

## In this Issue

- A Letter from Mom
- Workin' A Pigpen
- Dear Son
- Words to Grow By
- Women Empowering Women
- What Was Before God?
- Forgiveness
- Little by Little
- Confession
- Just for Laughs
- Closing Words
- Write Us
- Word Search
- Word Search Answers



## A Letter from Mom

Hello Son

I was sitting here reminiscing about you. My mind was pondering about where you are, what you are doing and who you have become. I remember my dreams for your future. Watching you grow, laughing at the little quirks that were you. Son, this is not what I desired for you, for us. I sit and think about you; your smile, how it lights up my heart. When I would see you and get the hug that only you give. I miss you son.

But in my times of missing you, I wonder about the man you have become. I know the environment you are in now hinders your movement and the activities you can participate in. I get it, but you chose the man you are. How's your heart? The part that makes you totally unique, the part of you yourself may have forgotten about. Simply because of where you are, your environment...that does not define you. Whatever happened to your dreams? Son, is your vision dead? So today, I want to remind you of who you ARE. Don't just read the words, LISTEN to your heart.

Remember the ideas you had? You were so bright in ways that only you could see things differently, but it made sense to you. You were adventurous, running head on to tackle anything. You were full of laughter, full of hope, you were full of LIFE. As you grew, you began to change. You were not so open to talk, you smiled and joked but the life was not in the laughter. You became hidden from me. I don't know what or when it happened, but my son became hurt and angry. I honestly don't know if I was the cause of the pain you hid. I saw you struggling. I saw you fighting to make a place for the pain to be pushed down. I saw it and I couldn't do a thing



about it. So here and now, I apologize. I apologize for the times I didn't listen. When I was too busy with my life to pay attention to yours, forgive me. I apologize for the words; the words I spoke in anger; the words I spoke with the intention to hurt. Forgive me for the words I spoke to you because of the frustration I felt, because I thought "I was the momma", and I should have known. I should have seen, I should have done more, forgive me. I apologize for everything I was responsible for that helped push you away. For the times I walked away because of the unseen pain you caused me and I would not share. For every mistake I made because you were my first child and I didn't know better. Please forgive me.

But this Mother's Day, I want to give you a gift. My gift is how I see you in my dreams, in my heart. I see a strong man. I see a man that can handle adverse situations. I see a man striving to repair the broken bridges of the past. I see a man that's starting to be honest about the effects of his actions. Yes, there are those you think have not forgiven you. But don't focus on them. Focus on your heart because you can't truly forgive others if you haven't forgiven yourself. The only person to teach us how to forgive is the One that forgave the most, Jesus Christ. Learn of Him. He is the Repairer of the Breach. He is the Giver of Hope.

I love you,  
Mom

TARI CANNON GMI GUEST WRITER

# Workin' a Pigpen

Sometimes we exchange what we want for what we really need. These types of self-gratifying decisions often lead us off into a muddy pigpen of unforeseen problems. This was especially true for the Prodigal son. (Parable of the Lost Son - Luke 15:11-32)

Jesus shares a story about the younger of two sons who decides to ask his father for his portion of the family inheritance. (v. 12) Once he had control of it, he set out on his own, living free of restrictions and responsibilities. He had the false sense of believing everything would be alright as long as he had his money. He thought life was going to be one big party. This broke his daddy's heart, but he let his son have his own way. However, the son would come to realize the pursuit of (this and that) is never enough.

Jesus goes on to say the son lived a wasteful lifestyle. While traveling abroad, "... he squandered his estate with loose living". (v. 13) This is symbolic for those of us who have wasted potential and privileges and refused any relationship with God. So, let's dig deeper into what this looks like and what God's response is.

We find the son out of money (resources). He was now at his lowest point in his life, feeling empty and ashamed. In a desperate measure, "... he hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine". (v. 15) It was a degrading job working in a pigpen. In Jewish law, swine were the worst sort of unclean animals; but the son was in dire straits.



From the outside looking in, a common judgement would be: "You got what you deserved. You made your bed, now lay in it." I imagine he swam in thoughts of failure and shame. Perhaps he was buried in the questions of "what if" or a similar question I had for myself: How did I come to the point of losing self-respect and the value and dignity of another human being?

As a once upon a time prodigal, I've told myself, "I got myself into this mess, I'll get myself out of it." This DIY perspective is 1 part noble, 1 part pride, and 1 part ignorance. It's a self-defeating mix. I don't subscribe to it anymore. The son didn't either when, "... he came to his senses". (v. 17) He felt the weight of giving the family name a black eye. He not only misrepresented them, but he disrespected his father. It was offensive for a son to ask for his inheritance preceding the father's death.

The son realized he valued the wrong choice and relationship; the two most important aspects concerning living life. He would also understand he valued the wrong inheritance. Trusting in (this and that) is no substitute for trusting in God. To the ego this all seems counterintuitive, but the value of reward is in the relationship.

If your happiness or sense of belonging is controlled or dependent upon someone, something, or some place outside of your relationship with God then you will always be held hostage to the nouns. If you don't find your significance in this relationship, you'll be tempted to validate your existence by trying to promote yourself or by trying to fit in with the crowd. Thus, in creeps spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial pain and problems.

## Workin' A Pigpen cont.

When the son came to his senses, he woke up to the One who has the answers. So, he went to seek forgiveness back into the presence of his father. He had a readymade speech in his heart, "... Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, I am no longer worthy to be called your son ..." (vv. 18-19)

I want you to know that you don't have to clean yourself up before you come to God. He'll embrace you just as you are right where you are. He isn't concerned with the issue of cause, rather, the issue of response. Once you make a move towards Him He will react exactly the same way to you as the son, with compassion and xxoo's. (v. 26)

You may have lost your way but God won't leave you how He finds you ... unclean and defiled. He has a different inheritance for you, an eternal one, not only reserved for you in heaven, but for the present moment. He says, bring out the best robe, a ring, some sandals, and a fattened calf for a celebration. (vv. 22-23) These gifts are symbolic of a restored relationship with God as a regenerated son or daughter.

I would like to focus on the ring briefly.

When the subject of rings comes up we usually think of wedding rings. In ancient times rings were wore by the rich to display their wealth, women would wear nose rings to beautify themselves, and kings to symbolize their status and power. A king would wear a signet ring decorated by distinct carvings and moldings that became their official signature when they stamped important documents or letters. Presenting a ring to someone was a sign of affection and gave them authority to do business in the king's name. For the son, the ring signified the authority to do kingdom work glorifying God.

Think about it ... would you have given the son full power of attorney over your affairs? You might attach certain labels or judgements believing he didn't deserve it or he would just squander the opportunity again to do the right thing. If so, get in line with the Pharisee, a hypocritical religious person. God isn't concerned where you've been but rather where you're going and what He's going to do through you.

As a steward, the apostle Peter says you'll do business in His name, outsourcing the gifts He gives you to be a part of someone else's rise instead of demise. (1 Pet. 4:10) As an ambassador, the apostle Paul says you have authority to move and speak, representing the King of heaven. Paul also says, as a fragrant aroma, you have the honor of living on Gods behalf by encouraging a path of victory in battles you and others face. Paul uses the image of a Roman parade called The Triumph in which a victorious general was honored throughout the city. The sweet aroma of incense and fragrance of flowers pommeled by the hooves of horses produced a scent that touched the hearts of those lined up on the streets. (2 Cor. 2:14-16)

If your life is a pigsty of regret, shame, excuses, or desperation, sift through the fog for a moment. God is waiting eagerly for you to turn to Him. He has a wanted sign posted with your name on it ... Wanted: Dead for Alive. (v. 32) The reward is that He has a plan for you to overcome, have victory, and experience freedom. He has a ring for you, a robe, some sandals, and a fattened calf to restore you and gives you the privileges forfeited by you.

Praises to Him

Brian, GMI contributor

# Dear Son

These are the words I would say to you if I could. Life sometimes gets in our way, and pain or fear sometimes clouds my heart. But when I come home to the mother's heart God gave me.... These are the words I so earnestly want to speak to you.

Son.

Thank you for choosing me to be your mom. I have not been worthy of you. I've struggled to know my own value. And sometimes I expected you to be and do so much, just so I would feel better about myself.

That was unfair.

Please forgive me.

I have tried to control you, and unable to control you, I've rejected you. I've punished you by withholding my love and approval from you. I was wrong.

Instead of seeing you with the eyes of love, I viewed you through my fear and my insecurity. Your actions felt like a threat to me. I was unable to hear your cries for attention and affection because I was so afraid myself. I am sorry.

It was never your job to take care of me.

It was never your job to make me feel good about myself.

It was never your job to prove your worth or value to me.

It is my job to see you in your purest light.

My job to love you without condition.

Please forgive me for all the many ways I have failed you.

In this moment, I want you to know...

To know in your deepest being....

To KNOW....

You are worthy of love.

You are worth my time, my attention, and my affection.

Your life is important.

Period.

Not because of things you will give to me or to anyone else. Not because of the work you will do, or anything you will produce.

You are important because you are. Your beating heart is enough for me to love you.

If I could hold you close to my heart again, I would. If I could look into your eyes again, I would, so you could see God's love pouring through me into you.

I pray your heart can feel God's love.

I pray you can find enough forgiveness toward me that your heart will be able to receive and rest in His love.

Perhaps one day you and I will both more fully understand why things between us have been as they have been. And in the end, you will realize that your life has truly been a blessed gift to me.

I love you, son

Page | 4



*Kendana Heston*

## Words to Grow By (Linda Lewis)

### A Mother's Love Is Unconditional

A Mother's love for her child does not waiver.  
She may not be the smartest,  
Or always say the right things,  
Or wear fancy clothes.  
But she shows up for her child  
Time and Time again,  
In unexpected ways.  
Her care and concern is ALWAYS there,  
Even when her child is fully grown.  
It's a heart and soul connection that transcends the test of time.  
And it doesn't matter what he or she has done...the good, the bad and the ugly.  
A Mothers Love is unconditional,  
And unconditional love gives  
Without expecting anything back. *John 3:16*

## Women Empowering Women (Linda Lewis)

### *Mother's Day Prayer*

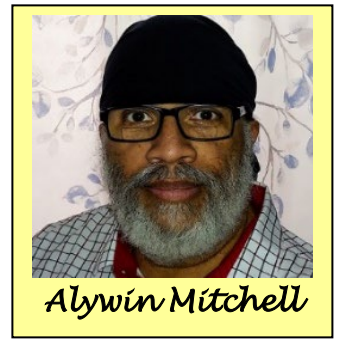
Thinking of you on Mother's Day,  
And saying a *Special* prayer...  
THAT GOD,  
Who knows how dear you are,  
Will keep you in HIS care.  
That He will *Bless* your daily life  
With *Joys* of every kind...  
With perfect health and happiness  
And *Peace* of  
HEART AND MIND. *John 14:27*

### *Happy Mother's Day!*



# What Was Before God?

I get a lot of different questions when I write articles or teach classes. Some people are curious, some seek answers, some seek wisdom, some seek understanding, and some want to be argumentative or confrontational. Some are just being ridiculous. There are two questions that I dislike the most. They are: "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin" and "Could God create a rock so heavy He could not lift it?"



The original intent of the question, "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin," was not to determine the answer. During the time approximately from the late 5th to the late 15th centuries, the scholastics contemplated the nature of angels, spirits, physical space, and other theological and philosophical concepts. How a person can be made right with God is far more important than how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. The question itself has become slang, referring to any unimportant academic discussion.

Could God create a rock so heavy He could not lift it? If the answer is yes, then He is not all-powerful because the rock would be stronger than God. If the answer is no, He is not omnipotent because there is something God could not do. Creating a rock so heavy He could not lift it is one of the things an omnipotent God cannot do since it would violate His very nature and definition as God. There are many things, lying, for example, that God cannot do, not because He is deficient in any way, but because such a suggestion would transgress His very nature and essence.

Jesus taught, "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). However, this is limited to all things that do not violate the very definition and nature of who God is.

In the line of frequency, the next question I get the most is, and is far more interesting to answer, "What was before God?"

Some may argue that if every effect has a cause, God must have a cause. But the eternal Lord God is not an effect. There never was a time when He was not. God's being is derived from nothing outside Himself, nor is He *dependent* on anything outside Himself. God requires nothing; He exists from all eternity.



Eternality goes forward as well as backward. There will never be a time when God will cease to exist. His being remains self-existent for all eternity. If anything exists, then something has always existed. Nothing could be now if there were nothing because you cannot get something from nothing. On the other hand, if there is something now, then that shows that there always was something. That is the One who has the power of being within Himself, the living God.

## What Was Before God? cont.

His eternality sets God apart from us. His Holiness refers not only to His transparency but also to His uniqueness or divine existence. One of the things we human beings have in common is that we are creatures, and because we are created, we are time-based.

We live in a physical world with four known space-time dimensions; length, width, height, and time. But God abides in the spirit realm, outside the observation of our physical senses. God is not limited by the physical laws and dimensions that govern our world.

When we die, we are buried, cremated, or whatever; our grave, tomb, urn, etc., are marked by some sort of marker or tombstone on which our name and the dates of our birth and death are written. We exist on this planet between those two dates: birth and death. There are no such dates for God. He is infinite not only regarding space but also regarding time. That which has the power of being in and of itself, and is not dependent on anything outside of itself, must have the power of being from all eternity. This is what distinguishes God from us.

There never was a time when God has not existed. He is from everlasting to everlasting. God is the alpha and the omega. God's eternality is inseparably related to His self-existence, His aseity. Aseity means that he is sufficient to himself, independent of anything outside himself.



The first sentence of the Word of God declares, *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth"* (Gen. 1:1). Everything in the universe, apart from God, is created. Everything in creation, in the universe, has a beginning in time. God alone is from everlasting to everlasting and possesses the attribute of eternality.

*"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable."* Isaiah 40:28

# Forgiven

I am sure it feels like you are living in hell to live every day in a prison cell, but in my case, I used to think it would be easier than what I was enduring. I realize that is a strange thing to say but just imagine killing three innocent people and getting away with it. I can't imagine what my family would say to me or feel if I had gone to prison for the murders. But I simply got away with it because in the eyes of the judicial system it didn't count as murder.



Everyone's life is filled with trauma, problems and mistakes that we make. We are humans and by default filled with sin. We don't have to be but we often choose the wrong side of the tracks and end up wrecked, broken and sometimes incarcerated. Prison can be physical, spiritual or sometimes both. My prison was spiritual, but I felt many times that it should have been both. After all that is what I deserved. So, by now you probably figured out that I had three abortions. None of these pregnancies were consensual so at the time all I could think about was how I was protecting the child by sending them back to heaven. I was being a good mother and making sure no one could ever hurt them like I was hurt. My thinking was entirely wrong. I was committing murder and deep down I knew it. My life of regret and asking for God's forgiveness took a very long time to get over. When I wasn't busy punishing myself for what I had done and just when I thought it was behind me here would come the thoughts again...until I let Jesus fully in. He was carrying me all the time. He was watching over me, consoling me and lifting me up but I refused him because of my guilt. I never forsake Him but I refused to accept what Jesus did on the cross for me. What a slap in the face to Jesus! Who was I to think that I could be the sacrificial lamb? God sent His only Son to die on the cross so that we may be saved from DEATH, SIN AND THE GRAVE. I can't forgive your sins, nor can anyone else, but Jesus can and will if you simply let Him. It is the most freeing thing ever! Let's pretend for a moment that one of my beautiful children got into trouble and is sitting in prison right now. This is what I would tell him/her:

"My Dearest Gabriel (that was a name I picked out later in life), it's just mom letting you know that I miss and love you. How are you doing since we last spoke? I could hear the struggle in your voice and the sadness you were feeling. Remember what we talked about. Situations on this earth are fleeting as is time. I know because, as I finally told you, three times I had to make decisions about keeping all of you due to the circumstances behind the pregnancies. I wanted to protect you from your father(s) and never wanted anyone to hurt you, lead you astray or make you feel like they made me feel. Those times seems like they lasted forever; constantly questioning whether I did the right thing for you. I pray you know, in your heart and mind, the answer to that question now. Gabriel you are the strongest and bravest person I know. I love you unconditionally just as Jesus loves you. The thing I am the proudest about is raising you to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior. You tell me many times how that is keeping you grounded and getting you through this. You see my dear, I worried needlessly about your father being in your life. God provided me a loving husband and you a different loving father because I chose to have you. I know this letter is pretty heavy, but I needed you to hear it after I finally told you the truth. I'm sorry it took me so long and I hope you understand why. You are the best of me.



## Forgiven cont.

You are my heart and soul. Most importantly you are a true reflection of God because you are fearfully and wonderfully made by Him. He doesn't hold a grudge about what you did to end up where you are right now. He just wants you to repent, forgive yourself, forgive others and start living for Him. I promise it will change your life. I realize I can't imagine what you go through in prison but you will have a home, a loving family and our support when you get out. Please don't make your prison sentence longer than it needs to be like I did to myself. I didn't accept Jesus' gift of total healing and forgiveness for 22 years of my life. It makes me wonder if I could have even been a better mother if I didn't hold on to that pain. That's just a stupid thing for me to write. Of course, I could have! I can't wait for us to talk again and for our next visit. You will be getting out then and your father and I have a great celebration ready for you! We are so proud of who you have become while in prison. You came to God and are helping so many people! Just remember forgiveness is the key to total freedom. It doesn't matter if you are in the cell or out in the world. If you don't forgive yourself or others, Jesus cannot fully enter your heart. Well, your mother better get going. I have a party to plan because my prodigal child is coming home! You are and always will be my heart. I'm here for you always and cannot wait to see the next chapter of your life! Love, Mom."

So, you see abortion IS killing a person. I feel that I should have served time in a physical prison. There are times abortion needs to be done for medical reasons, but they are few and far between. We are not so much different you and I (whomever is reading this). My self-imposed prison of 22 years nearly destroyed my life. But Jesus saved me. Let Him save you too!



Today I celebrate my children daily and can't wait to meet them in heaven one day. Since my dad passed, he is there being the grandpa he never was able to be and watching over them until I get home. "Therefore, I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." (NKJ Luke 7:47) God Is Absolutely Good and I am FORGIVEN!

# Little by Little

by *Sharol Gutierrez*

As I watch our Labrador puppy sawing patiently and happily on the twig of a lilac bush in our yard with her teeth to break it off and make it her own, I am reminded of something my mother-in-law has said to me many times over the years ....“Little by little, Sharol.”

This wise saying, which is mentioned in the bible by the way (Ex 23:30), has often been directed to me when I was confronted with a situation or task that I just wanted fixed and ‘Now!’ So, I would attack it with all of my brilliance, energy and resources until it was pulverized into oblivion or I became worn out trying, or broke (sometimes both). These efforts were often accompanied by frustration and impatience because the progress seemed slow and I was at times fearful the situation would never be resolved. Using the example of my puppy and the lilac twig, I’d have possibly gone after that small twig immediately with an industrial sized chainsaw and come away with sawdust and possibly some injuries. When trying to solve life’s problems in my own wisdom and run at it in fear at Mach 10 with my hair on fire the desired results, if they come at all, sometimes have come at unnecessary cost.

Where I’m going with this is, the Lord says that with ‘faith and patience we will inherit the promises’ (Heb 6) and in Ex 23:30 He said that ‘little by little HE would drive the enemy out before [His people] until they were able to possess the land’ [because too much too quickly would harm His people]. He has promises all throughout the bible and He is trustworthy to help us. He has fulfilled those promises more than amply through the Cross of Jesus. He also gave us the Holy Spirit who reveals wisdom we need when we ask (Jas 1:5). If we’re not enjoying the fullness of His generosity in our life in some area, it’s not because He hasn’t provided or that He’s slow, but because we may be lacking understanding about something in that situation and/or because the manifestation is still in process. So, we can go back and ask Him for clarity and more understanding, thanking Him that He cares and has the solution. He knows the problem, knows how it’s come about, who the players are. He has provided the answer through the Cross of Jesus ahead of time and has all the necessary resources to get to the best resolution. And He loves us. Additionally, the bible says He even gives us the patience we need because we got it at salvation as part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). So let’s all go to Him first and hear what He’s saying (John 10:3-5). Move as the Spirit directs, and rest knowing He loves us and is faithful. He will lead us to the victory that’s already ours in Jesus with dignity, grace, and peace.

Gal 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

# Confession

Dear Daughter,

I hope this letter finds you well, despite the circumstances. I've been thinking of you and wanted to reach out to let you know you are missed and loved. I know you're loved so deeply because our loving father stopped me in my tracks and asked me to write you an open letter to you and your sisters (in Christ).



If I am honest, I wasn't exactly sure what to say, then it dawned on me to write from my heart and experience. I recognize what it's like to lose present privileges (freedom) from past mistakes. Don't you just want to scream and throw your hands up in the air when someone reminds you of what you did, said, and you still have to pay the consequences today for what was done yesterday. I get it, but by the end of this letter I hope you'll be encouraged to see things differently. I pray your heart is open to hear a mother's wisdom.

I came through the door to my mother holding a piece of paper in her hand. The look on her face let me know, that something was bothering her. My mother slowly sat down in a wooden kitchen chair and said, "Chastity come here." Uncertain of my mother's tone and what the look of despair on her face meant, I nervously walked towards her. Tears filled her eyes while reading the paper in her hand and somberly she uttered, "Why didn't you tell me? I would've been there for you. I could've helped you make the right decision." In absolute shame my head lowered, and the feeling of warm salty tears dripped down my face as stains of guilt. My sin was a secret I never intended to tell anyone, especially not my mother. Now it was uncovered!

***"For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light." (Luke 8:17)***

The letter sent from the clinic revealed my secret! While confessing my heart to my mother, I realized I was bound by the secret of my abortion. I spent sleepless nights trying to conceal, hide, and I certainly gave my best attempt to forget what I had done in private. I told her everything, I left no detail out, it was the beginning of my healing journey and a life of freedom in Christ.

The lesson I want you to hear is the first step to freedom is breaking the shackles of imprisonment in your mind. You may still have to live out the consequences of your past, but you don't have to be defined by it. Daughter, You may be in prison, but you don't have to live with prison in you. If you haven't already confessed your sins to God that's how you start living a free life! Ask the Holy Spirit to renew your mind and learn from your mistakes.

***"Therefore, confess your sins to each other and PRAY for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16)***

To my surprise my mother placed me on her lap and told me she loved me and that God will forgive me if I ask for forgiveness. That's the same grace the Lord wants to show you when you fall short.

In the uncovering of the greatest mistake of my life at 16 years old, God's love came in as a bright light destroying the bondage of darkness. Confession sets you free! I challenge you this week to confess any un-repent sin in your life and watch God do something new in you.

I know that being in prison is not easy, but I hope you are finding ways to stay strong in the Lord, grow in your womanhood, and live a life of purpose. I want you to know that I am proud of you for facing this challenge with grace and courage. I am here for you, and I will continue to support you through periodically writing you letters of lessons I learned. Please don't hesitate to share your testimony.

Sending you all my love. Sincerely, Chastity AKA "Momma Chas"



# Just For Laughs!

You know you're a mom when... ..picking up another human to smell their butt is not only normal but totally necessary.

-----

While assembling furniture, Liz asked her friend's six-year-old son, Ricky, to bring her a screwdriver.

'Do you want a 'Daddy' screwdriver or a 'Mummy' screwdriver?' Ricky politely inquired.

Confused by the question, Liz responded with, 'Bring me a 'Mummy' screwdriver.'  
Ricky returned and handed her a butter knife.

-----

## What My Mother Taught Me

1. My mother taught me RELIGION.  
"You'd better pray that will come out of the carpet."
2. My mother taught me TIME TRAVEL.  
"If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"
3. My mother taught me FORESIGHT.  
"Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."
4. My mother taught me IRONY.  
"Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."
5. My mother taught me about CONTORTIONISM.  
"Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"
6. My mother taught me about WEATHER.  
"This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it."
7. My mother taught me about ENVY.  
"There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do."
8. My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION.  
"Just wait until we get home."
9. My mother taught me about RECEIVING.  
"You are going to get it when you get home!"
10. My mother taught me HUMOR.  
"When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."
11. My mother taught me WISDOM.  
"When you get to be my age, you'll understand."
12. My mother taught me about JUSTICE.  
"One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you".

# Closing Words – Remember, You Are Not Alone

**Deuteronomy 31:7-8** <sup>7</sup> Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. <sup>8</sup> The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

---



*Lonnie Johnson*  
GMI Executive Director

Imagine you just traveled hundreds of miles by foot over a period of 40 years. You have been following one of the greatest leaders known to your people, Moses. He turned a stick into a snake and back to a stick. He made water gush out of a rock when there was no water to be found just tapping on it with his stick. He went up a mountain and had a personal conversation with God. When they were almost the end of the journey, Moses gives this big, long speech as they are about to enter the promised land and tells everyone that he is not going to go with them. Now you get called by Moses and he tells you in front of everyone that for the last few miles of what has been almost an undoable journey, you have to make the winning touchdown. You have to lead a scared nation of people, possibly one million of them, into a land of giants. I am sure Joshua thought he was being punked.

Moses gave him his marching orders followed by the best thing he could give, a promise. **The Instruction:** *"Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. The Promise: The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."*

Because Joshua had witnessed God deliver them from unbelievable odds time after time throughout their journey, because Joshua saw how Moses' faith in God produced miracle after miracle, he had a lot that he could invest his own faith in. Joshua became the leader they needed. He succeeded at something he had not prepared for and seemed impossible for him.

There will be times when we will be called upon by people that believe in us or people that need us to step up. We may feel unprepared, incapable, or caught off guard. We may feel like we didn't sign up for this. It may be a task so big it feels like herding a million people into an unknown land. 😊 But we have to believe that if God sends you instructions, he is going to be there giving you what you need to be successful the entire time. The promise is that **he will never leave you**. So, when you walk into that assignment, know that he has your back the whole time. Know that not only is he with you, he is also already there waiting on you. He will never leave you. The other half of that promise is that **he will never forsake you**. That means he will not abandon you or give up on you. He will be with you even if you make a mistake in the process. Even if you think you cannot do it, he will be there pulling you through.

You may be saying that these instructions and promises were for Joshua. No, no, no. They are for you too. All of the bible is from the mind of God to you. God made sure this story made it in the bible so you would know this is the kind of God he is and be encouraged by it (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). God is not a respecter of person (**Romans 2:11**). What he does for others, he will do for you.

**You are not alone!**



## **Habakkuk 2:2** ESV

And the LORD answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it."

**Write Us** – We want to hear from you. We enjoy hearing from you. Here are some things you can write about.

- **Tell us about our magazine**

We want to know what you like about our magazine. What are some of the articles you want to see more of? Are there any specific types of stories that inspire you?

- **Send us something to publish**

Do you write poetry? Do you have a powerful testimony? Do you have a particular scripture that you want to share why it inspires you? Maybe you are an artist and want to share a drawing. Send it to us and let us check it out. If approved, we will publish it for others to see. Please refrain from any inappropriate material. We are a Christian organization and will not publish anything that is unsuitable for our readers.

- **Send us your prayer requests or issues you are dealing with**

Are you going through something right now. Write us so we can pray with you. We will respond to your letter with a prayer, scripture and guidance on your issue. We all need someone to touch and agree with us when we are faced with life's challenges.

  
**Growth Ministries Inc.**

**P.O. Box 4375  
Olathe, KS 66063  
[www.growthministriesinc.org](http://www.growthministriesinc.org)  
[info@growthministriesinc.org](mailto:info@growthministriesinc.org)**

*Changing the World One Life at a Time*

# Spring Word Search



B I B I R D S V U Z E P T O G C C F O Q  
E O D Z Z Z E O M Z I A B Q O T H S T Q  
B H W E W F A N L A B C Q L Y E F I I B  
J E K A Y I S S S P R I N G O N B Q C U  
R C E I E U T E F E W C W T P S X A O K  
L W E S T J E E S U N S H I N E S R L B  
T B R M T E R D Y Q T U L I P G Y O B U  
E G G S J Z S S H X N N P G W O O I M T  
U Q Z E E G A R D E N X C I N S J R F T  
S M P E B J K M Z X X V P L K L V U Q E  
P I C N I C Z Q M M C S E A S O N R D R  
F N E S T U M A H U M A F L O W E R S F  
D W A R M R A I N B O W Q U W Z I D T L  
O A C Z S L Y O S K A I K W B U N N Y Y  
G W F E J G R E E N Q V V F D M R J Q E  
G Q Y H F M O A P R I L D W E X G I R Z

NEST  
MAY  
BEES  
MARCH  
CHICK  
FLOWERS

SEASON  
SUNSHINE  
GREEN  
PICNIC  
WARM  
TULIP

BUNNY  
BLOSSOM  
RAINBOW  
SEEDS  
GARDEN  
APRIL

KITES  
BUTTERFLY  
EGGS  
EASTER  
BIRDS  
SPRING

# Spring Word Search



B I B I R D S V U Z E P T O G C C F O Q  
 E O D Z Z Z E O M Z I A B Q O T H S T Q  
 B H W E W F A N L A B C Q L Y E F I B  
 J E K A Y I S S S P R I N G O N B Q C U  
 R C E I E U T E F E W C W T P S X A O K  
 L W E S T J E E S U N S H I N E S R L B  
 T B R M T E R D Y Q T U L I P G Y O B U  
 E G G S J Z S S H X N N P G W O O I M T  
 U Q Z E E G A R D E N X C I N S J R F T  
 S M P E B J K M Z X X V P L K L V U Q E  
 P I C N I C Z Q M M C S E A S O N R D R  
 F N E S T U M A H U M A F L O W E R S F  
 D W A R M R A I N B O W Q U W Z I D T L  
 O A C Z S L Y O S K A I K W B U N N Y Y  
 G W F E J G R E E N Q V V F D M R J Q E  
 G Q Y H F M O A P R I L D W E X G I R Z

NEST  
 MAY  
 BEES  
 MARCH  
 CHICK  
 FLOWERS

SEASON  
 SUNSHINE  
 GREEN  
 PICNIC  
 WARM  
 TULIP

BUNNY  
 BLOSSOM  
 RAINBOW  
 SEEDS  
 GARDEN  
 APRIL

KITES  
 BUTTERFLY  
 EGGS  
 EASTER  
 BIRDS  
 SPRING