



# BECOMING A GIRL OF *Grace*

*A JOINT BIBLE STUDY FOR  
TWEEN GIRLS AND THEIR MOMS*

CATHERINE BIRD



## PRAISE FOR BECOMING A GIRL OF GRACE

“Capturing the unique relationship between mom and daughter, in *Becoming a Girl of Grace*, Catherine Bird weaves the wisdom in God’s Word into the fabric of a tween girl’s heart. This wonderful and unique resource helps set a firm foundation in the heart of a girl, and in her mom, for becoming a girl of grace.”

—**Lynn Cowell**, author of *Loved & Cherished*, member of the Proverbs 31 Ministries writing and speaking teams

“Catherine Bird is passionate about cultivating daughters and mothers who are grounded both in their faith and in their identity as beloved children of God. She communicates with a confident vulnerability that gives permission for families to share in kind. *Becoming a Girl of Grace* is a unique resource for mothers who want a deepening relationship with their daughters during a time when girls begin to explore the joys and perils of becoming their own women.”

—**Rev. Katie Meek**, United Methodist Missionary; lecturer at the Bishop Wenner School of Theology, United Methodist University Sierra Leone

“As a mom myself, I sometimes struggle with how to explain biblical concepts, like grace, to my growing daughter. Catherine Bird, however, has written a heartfelt, interactive, and biblically sound study that takes the guess work out of grace, making it understandable and desirable to both my daughter and me.”

—**Tracy Steel**, speaker and author of *A Redesigned Life: Uncovering God’s Purpose When Life Doesn’t Go as Planned* and *Images of His Beauty*

“Parenting tweenage girls is no easy task. Every lesson in *Becoming a Girl of Grace* has a ‘Mom and Me’ activity that is hands on fun, and perfectly illustrates the topic at hand. Girls of Grace ‘Heart Checks’ are also included in each lesson to open dialogue and discuss real life situations. I have taken this study with my own daughter and facilitated groups of tween girls and moms. What a joy to experience and witness tween girls forming stronger connections with their moms through Bible study!”

—**Jennifer Hall**, Director of Congregational Care and Adult Ministry, First United Methodist Church, Round Rock





*REVISED EDITION*

*CATHERINE BIRD*

Foreword by Ashley Bird



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*A Joint Bible Study for Tween Girls and Their Moms*



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## FOREWORD

By Ashley Bird

My mom has been one of the biggest role models in my life. Growing up, I learned a lot of things from her. She taught me how to be kind and generous. She taught me how to be courageous and bold. But most importantly, she taught me how to have faith. She taught me how to live in the ways of the Word instead of the ways of the world.

*Becoming a Girl of Grace* was written when I was in the fifth grade. At the time, I remember searching for Bible studies for Mom and me to do together. There weren't many options for tween girls, because most of the studies available at the time were for young children or older teenagers. I didn't fit into either category, and none of the studies we found fit quite right for the season of life I was living. It feels like we searched for months unsuccessfully.

One day, my mom sat down and told me she was going to write a Bible study for us to do together. This whole process is part of my mom's testimony, and because of her step in faith, it's part of mine now too. She closed her successful consulting business and began writing full-time—an action that speaks volumes about my mom's character. She loved my sister and me so much that she gave up her job to build a stronger relationship with us and to help us build a relationship with God. Believe me, I recognize what a gift this time with my mom was. Rare are the people who are able



and willing to lay down something really big and beautiful in complete obedience to God.

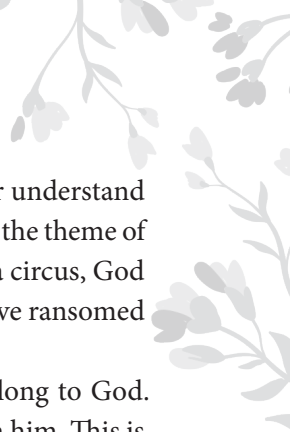
I'll admit, there have been times in my life where I thought the Bible was outdated and not applicable to my present situation. I have learned that the Word of God is timeless. The Bible is *always* relevant. *Becoming a Girl of Grace* models this truth by discussing the courageous women of the Bible and their walks of faith. While life was much different in biblical times, these women faced the same hardships and trials we face today. As my mom would say, "Mean girls aren't a new thing." *Becoming a Girl of Grace* taught me how to use my faith to deal with mean girls, loneliness, and the search for true friendship.

After *Becoming a Girl of Grace* was published, my mom hosted several retreats for moms and daughters. The purpose of these retreats was to provide moms and their daughters intentional time together to solidify their relationship with Christ and with each other. These weekends were always tons of fun, and it was cool to see other moms and daughters raising their hands in praise, worshipping together, laughing together, and building memories together.

I admit I don't always understand God's plan. The day before my mom's first retreat, one of her good friends was killed in a car accident. My mom woke up to the news of her death the morning she was to welcome more than a hundred moms and daughters for a weekend of worship and fun. It was an emotional weekend, to say the least, but it was also obvious that God was present with our group. Gosh, there was no better place for my mom to grieve for her friend than watching God move among all those moms and daughters in such a big way.

In October 2016, my mom hosted her last Girls of Grace retreat. This retreat holds a special place in my heart. Yet again, we started our retreat weekend with a tragic loss. Friday afternoon as we were setting up and preparing to welcome the moms and daughters, my parents sat me down in the pastor's office at the church and shared some heartbreaking news: my friend had taken his own life just the night before. My mom had gotten a call on her way to the retreat venue, and she and my dad knew they had to tell me. I will never forget hearing those words leave my mother's mouth. I cried a lot that weekend, and I could not comprehend why my friend made





such a choice. However, over the years, I have come to better understand his actions. My friend had forgotten his worth. Looking back, the theme of the retreat was so fitting for my situation: Even though life's a circus, God knows your name. Isaiah 43:1 says, "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine" (NLT).

*You are mine.* Wow, what a powerful statement. We belong to God. We are his children. Our worth and identity are found only in him. This is such a critical truth, and many people—children, tweens, teens, and adults alike—struggle to understand their worth. Society is full of negative messages that assault our self-confidence and cause many to doubt that their individuality is a gift.

I am in college now, and God gives me plenty of opportunities to practice standing firm in my faith. Being on my own, I realize the gift my mom gave me through all those Bible study nights and mom-and-daughter retreats. Our relationship goes so much deeper than all that, but those memories and those experiences are ours alone to share. Thanks to my mom (and dad), I feel comfortable approaching God. In fact, I *want* to spend time with him and can really tell the difference in my day-to-day life when I don't.

Most importantly, I am confident that God crafted me in his image. My identity is a reflection of my Heavenly Father, and I know he made me with love and purpose. I am still on a journey to becoming the girl of grace he has called me to be.

I hope and pray that the moms and daughters who pick up this study are immensely blessed. I pray you draw closer together as you study God's Word. I pray you laugh and make memories that are yours alone to share.

We are all called to live in the ways of the Word, not the ways of the world.

We can all live as girls of grace.

With love,  
Ashley Bird  
February 2021





## A GRANDMOTHER'S BLESSING

By Susan Coon

It is a solemn responsibility, a privilege, and a special blessing for every mother to share the Word of God with her children. As you embark on this study together, may you find wisdom and inspiration as you discover the stories of amazing women in the Bible. And most importantly, may God's Word be planted deeply, that each mom and daughter will draw closer to the Lord and to one another. It is my prayer that you are abundantly blessed with the priceless gift of the joy of Jesus in your heart . . . as you become a Girl of Grace.

**But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.**

 2 Peter 3:18





## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of *Becoming a Girl of Grace* is to take a closer look at some of the amazing ladies of the Bible and the character traits they model for modern tween girls. These women of yesterday have a lot to share with the girls of today! Mean girls, feeling left out of a group of friends, learning to like yourself, and dealing with bullies are not new social dilemmas. Even though the Bible doesn't specifically document struggles related to modern things like social media and technology, it is still full of examples of strong females who chose to follow God and pursue faith despite what was happening in their world and cultures.


This study is prayerfully and intentionally written for tween girls to share with their moms. God made each and every one of us uniquely in his image. That means that while we are all created in his image, every single one of us is different and special in our own way. This includes moms and daughters. A mom and daughter may be part of the same family, but the inside of each person is special and unique. Working through this study is a great way for tween girls and their moms to connect and share what is in their own hearts and minds!

### EXPLAINING THE FORMAT OF THIS STUDY

*Becoming a Girl of Grace* is unique in that it is not broken down by daily reading and study. This is an eight-week-long study designed to facilitate joint Bible study and discussion between moms and daughters. Each week, we will examine a "Girl of Grace Character Trait" and discuss how



women from the Bible modeled these characteristics for modern girls. This includes reading pertinent Scripture passages and thinking about how these excerpts from God's Word are relevant for girls today.

Moms and daughters may approach weekly study however it fits into their schedules. Read and study a little bit each day or consolidate into fewer days. This study is intentionally flexible. Daughters and moms may choose to answer the questions in each chapter together or on their own. If participating with a group, a facilitator can lead moms and daughters through some interesting discussions and fun activities that relate to each week's topic. A facilitator's guide is included in the back of this book to help with small-group discussions. Facilitators will find discussion questions and activity ideas that correspond with each chapter. Activities that adapt well to virtual small-group study are noted within each weekly section. Look for the virtual study icon  for special tips and tricks.

## MOM AND ME ACTIVITIES

Another unique component of this Bible study is the Mom and Me weekly activity included in each chapter. These activities are meant to be enjoyable and inclusive for all family members. While this element of the Bible study is completely optional, it's sure to be entertaining!



## CHAPTER ONE

# GIRL OF GRACE CHARACTERISTIC:

# LOVE

### CREATED OUT OF LOVE

Has anyone ever told you, “Wow, you look *just* like your mother!”? Or maybe someone has said to you, “I can see your father in you!” Genetics, the study of how traits are passed on from parent to child, is actually a pretty cool thing. Even if you grew in another tummy before being placed with your parents, there are still family traits and characteristics that are passed down from parent to child. How fun is that?

One of my favorite things to do as a young girl was sifting through all of my family’s old pictures. I would look at my baby picture and compare it to my brothers’ baby pictures, and then compare those to photos of my mom and dad. There were even pictures of my grandmother and great-grandmother. My mom patiently answered tons of my questions like, “Who do people think YOU looked like when you were my age, Mom? Do I really have my grandmother’s mouth? Why is my brother the only one in our family with blond hair?”

#### GOD’S PERFECT PLAN

Family is a gift. Whether your family is biological, adopted, or blended, God brought you together with love and purpose. Even though your brother or sister may not always feel like a joy, remember your heavenly Father carefully and lovingly crafted your family tree. Name three ways your family is a blessing to you!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Have you ever wondered why you look the way you do? What about the way you act? Have you ever been told something like, “You inherited your dad’s sense of humor” or “You have your grandmother’s temper”?

Throughout this study, we’re going to talk about the traits that can bring us closer to God and ultimately help us become girls of grace! Let’s start with how we are made. You may get your baby-blue eyes from your mom or your wicked sense of humor from your dad, but your genetic code doesn’t actually begin with your parents. It begins with God.

**So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**

 Genesis 1:27 (NLT)

The very first example we have of a girl of grace is evident in the creation of Eve. She was created out of love for love. Remember that Eve was created using one of Adam’s ribs. He made Adam fall into a deep sleep and removed one of his ribs while he rested (Gen. 2:21–22). How amazing that God crafted a helper from Adam using a bone from his body! God had a special purpose for her, too—just as he has a special purpose for every single one of us. Eve was to be a helper, a wife, a friend, a mother, a cultivator, a caretaker, an encourager, and a leader.

Yes, yes—we know Eve made a big mistake when she took the forbidden fruit from the serpent in the Garden of Eden, but that doesn’t change the loving purpose for which she was created. Like Eve, God created each one of us out of love for love.



We are created uniquely in God’s image for a special purpose.





## GIRL OF GRACE HEART CHECK .....



1. Read Genesis 2:18–23. Why do you think God chose to make Eve from one of Adam's ribs instead of making her from dust as he made all the other creatures of the world?
2. Eve was created out of love for love. God has a loving purpose for you, too. Being young doesn't mean you have nothing to offer the world yet. Talk with your mom about the desires God has placed on your heart. What do you think it means for God to have a purpose for you? Jot some of your thoughts in the space below.
3. Do the people around you support the idea that you are unique and special?
4. Do you believe that God made you with purpose for a special purpose? Is there anything about yourself that you wish was different? (Moms: This is your chance to talk with your daughters about how society's ideals and social norms often do not align with God's definition of beauty. God does not make mistakes, so our individual quirks and uniqueness are crafted as such with good reason by our loving Father.)





## AN ACTIVITY FOR MOM AND ME: GOD'S FAMILY TREE

- ♥ Find a good-sized twig (at least 12–16 inches).
- ♥ Using clay in the bottom of a flowerpot, stick the twig firmly into the clay.
- ♥ Cut out leaf shapes from construction paper (you can use green, yellow, red—whatever color you like!)
- ♥ Write as many family members' names as you can remember (use copies of photos if you like!). Each person gets their own leaf.
- ♥ Punch a hole at the bottom of the leaf and use string to tie the leaves to the twig.

NOTE: This is a great activity to learn more about your family history; but remember—at the top of your family tree is God!



**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

 Acts 20:35

### ROAD TRIP!

Sometimes, playing a game when you're traveling a long way from home can make the time go by much faster. Do you think Mahlon and Kilion played games? If so, what kind of games do you think they played when they traveled from Bethlehem to Moab? Maybe they played their own version of "I Spy." What kind of games do you play on trips with your family? My brother would probably say his favorite game was, "Pick on my baby sister!"

Let's take a look at another example of love the Bible shares with us. One of my most favorite Bible stories growing up was the story of Naomi and Ruth. Talk about loving through difficult times! Naomi lost everything—her husband and both her sons, and she was in a foreign land when all this happened. Gosh, can you imagine?

Naomi and her husband, Elimelech, were Israelites who left Bethlehem—the Promised Land where people worshipped God. There was not enough food to eat because of a famine, and they had two boys to feed in addition to themselves. Many of us don't know what it's like to go completely without food, and what a blessing that is. Can you imagine having to pick up and leave



everything you know because there wasn't enough food to eat? Picture in your mind what it must be like traveling to another country with practically no possessions—just your family. And traveling would be rough! No airplanes, no cars, no iPad, no Switch, nada!



## PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Take a moment and look up Ephesians 6:18;  
then write it in the space below:

Praying for others is one of the ways we show love for one another, which Jesus said was the second most important commandment (Matt. 22:36–40). We can pray for others we don't even know. Think about your favorite yummy snack and how often your family is able to fill your cupboards with food. There are so many families who are unable to provide for themselves. Like Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, and Kilion had to do, plenty of people today must leave their homes and communities in search of new ways to earn money so they can put food on their tables. Take a few minutes now to pray for these neighbors. It's okay that you don't know their names. God does!

Well, that's what Naomi and her husband did. They moved with their sons, Mahlon and Kilion, to the country of Moab, a land where people worshipped false gods and idols. As if moving wasn't difficult enough, Naomi's husband died a short time after they moved to their new home. She was left to care for her two boys alone. Moms in those days didn't have great-paying jobs. There weren't play groups and social clubs where Naomi could meet other moms with little boys. Nonetheless, Mahlon and Kilion grew to be men and married Moabite women. Sadly, both of Naomi's sons died after living in Moab for about ten years. This sounds like a sad story, doesn't it?

Naomi was an outsider in a foreign country with no way to provide for herself. Envision how lonesome for home she must have been! Since



the famine had ended in Israel, Naomi decided to return to her homeland and birthplace. She and her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, packed their bags and prepared to hit the road for Judah.

But Naomi knew she could not care for her sons' wives. These women were from Moab, and the country Naomi was ready to leave was all these young girls knew. Can you fathom leaving your home? The only way of life you've ever known? Naomi knew this was too much to ask, so she blessed each daughter-in-law and asked them to return to their own families.

Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband."

Then she kissed them and they wept aloud and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has turned against me!"

At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her.

"Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

 Ruth 1:8-17



Naomi tried to send her daughters back to their families, but they resisted. When Naomi was persistent, Orpah packed her bags and hit the road. But Ruth did not. Ruth lovingly followed Naomi to Bethlehem in the land of Judah. Even though she must have felt scared and unsure about leaving the only home she had ever known, she made that journey with great heart. Ruth wanted to care for Naomi, who had lost her husband and both her sons.

Naomi and Ruth exhibit the girls of grace character trait love in the most selfless way. Naomi, who loved her daughters-in-law, sent them back to their families because she wanted them to be safe and happy. Ruth loved Naomi so deeply that she left her homeland. Ruth chose to worship Naomi's God over the false gods and idols she had been raised to believe in.

When Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem, the barley fields were ready for harvest. Ruth asked Naomi if she could go behind the harvesters to gather any leftover grain so that she and Naomi would have something to eat. The characteristic of love is also reflected in the service of stewardship and care. Both of these women cared for one another when they had nothing more to offer than love and loyalty. This is also a beautiful example of how God takes awful circumstances and turns them into something wonderful.

## GIRL OF GRACE HEART CHECK .....

1. Naomi and Ruth both show us what it means to be a loving friend to family members. How can you take what you have read in their story and apply it to your life today?
2. Family relationships are important, but it's not always easy to share the best of yourself with the people who live under the same roof as you. Why do you think that is?



3. Can you think of a time when you showed anger or frustration with a family member when it wasn't really that person who upset you? How did you resolve the situation?
  
4. Talk with your mom about what stewardship means to both of you. You may have different thoughts on what it means to love and care for something or someone. It's not the first time you and your mom will look at something from different points of view. That's also not to say that one of you is right and one of you is wrong. You just may happen to have different perspectives about a topic of conversation. And guess what? That is okay! Remember you are two different people, crafted with love for two different purposes. While you love one another very much, you will not always agree. There's grace in that!
  
5. Despite the differences you may encounter, what can you learn from Naomi and Ruth that can help strengthen the relationship between you and your mom?

What can you take away about love and stewardship? You may be young, but you have much to offer. God created each and every one of us with great love and detail. We are unique, yet God's image is reflected in every single one of us. Maybe your unique purpose is yet to be revealed to you, but rest assured, sweet friend: you are important to God's kingdom.





## FROM A MOMMY'S HEART . . .

Dear Mamas,

What does it mean to love unconditionally? As young girls and not-so-young girls, we have all made choices that disappointed our parents at one time or another. I can remember one choice in particular that made me question if my parents would still love me the same as they did before I made that awful choice.

When I was a freshman in high school, I became good friends with another girl, who encouraged me to skip school and make choices that I knew in my heart didn't honor God, my parents, or me. I had a very happy childhood with loving parents who didn't talk with me about a lot of the activities that other kids my age found cool. Maybe it was because I was the youngest child, and they thought I knew from watching my older brothers. Maybe it was because I was a girl, and they wanted to protect me. Maybe it was because they truly weren't aware of the potential for peer pressure. Regardless, I was unprepared to address the pressures of indulging in some of these activities—because ultimately, I cared a lot about what my friends thought of me.

In preparation for a fun night out, my friend and I arranged to spend the night at each other's houses. Translation—my parents thought I was staying at her house and her parents thought she was staying at mine. To make a long story short . . . we got caught. And afterward, I remember being so relieved that I could talk with my parents about the events that had unfolded. I wanted my independence, but I needed the security of my parents' supervision as well. I didn't know how to ask for both.

I can still remember sitting in my parents' living room and listening to my dad as he said how disappointed he was



in me. In that moment, I felt as though my parents didn't understand how I felt and would no longer be able to look at me and love me as they had the day before. That was a fallacy that Satan planted in my mind and that our world cultivates among our youth.

It simply wasn't true. My parents did still love me and later I realized there was nothing I could do to ever change the way they felt. Parents are designed to love their children unconditionally. Since we are molded in God's image, this makes perfect sense.

Was God disappointed when Adam and Eve sinned? Yes! Did he punish them? Yes! Did he stop loving them? No!

The mother/daughter relationship is so unique and special. In today's world, so many external sources and temptations compete for our children's attention. Social media is undeniably prevalent, and the influence this new outlet wields over our children is frighteningly real. No matter what age our daughters are, they are susceptible to hearing and believing that their mothers don't understand how they feel and don't care what they think.

It is important to me, as the mother of two daughters, to debunk the myths that the world tries to feed my girls. That is the heart behind writing this study—to help mothers and daughters strengthen their relationships through studying Scripture together. We may not always agree with our daughters, and that is absolutely okay. But we can instill in these sweet girls the confidence that their mothers will always be present with sympathetic ears, open minds, and loving hearts.

Much love,

Cat