

A  
Young  
Woman  
Who Reflects  
the Heart  
of Jesus

*Elizabeth George*



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## A YOUNG WOMAN WHO REFLECTS THE HEART OF JESUS

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*An Invitation to...  
Become More Like Jesus*

*Dear Friend,*

If you are even holding this book in your hands, I already know you are special! That's because you must be interested in Jesus. Maybe, like me, you want with all your heart to become more and more like Him. Well, good news! This book is packed with information and help that will show you how to move further down the path toward growing more like Jesus. As we walk that path together, here are a few things that will make the journey even sweeter.

*Open your book...* and enjoy it! It's just a book. And I wrote it so you can carry it with you and learn more about your Savior in little bits here and there. So put it in your backpack by day, and on your nightstand when you get home. If you're going on a trip, take it along. You don't need your Bible because I've included plenty of verses right in the book to help you know more about Jesus. And you don't need to answer any

questions if you're not able to or don't want to while you are reading. Just read it like you would any other book and let the truths about Jesus do their transforming work as they flood into your heart.

*Open your heart. . .* to your friends. Encourage them to get books too. Then you will each be growing, which means your friendships will grow in the right direction—in the things of the Lord. So invite others to join you. I can only imagine the great talks you'll have about Jesus!

*Open your heart. . .* and look around. Are there any girls you don't know very well—at school, in your neighborhood, or even in your youth group at church—who you can invite to join you in your study? Girls who need the Savior? Who need guidelines and role models like Jesus for their lives? Who need a friend—like you and Jesus? Whisper a prayer to God and be bold. Reach out and invite someone to get together with you, someone you would like to know better—and someone you would like to help know Jesus better.

*Open your heart. . .* to the Savior. Let Him show you the way to live, how to treat people, how to love others, how to be a great daughter and sister, and how to grow into a godly young woman. Let Him tell you what a wonderful creation you are because you know Him!

*Open your heart. . .* through prayer to the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to make His Word clear. Ask Him to help you understand your relationship with Jesus and the importance of following Him with all your heart.

*Open your heart...* and dream! Dream of the woman you yearn to be—a woman who reflects the character of Jesus.

And now let's put feet on those dreams! It is the prayer of my heart that the contents of this book about Jesus, the most special Person who ever lived, will encourage you, excite you, instruct you, and inspire you to love Him even more passionately.

In His great and amazing love,  
Your friend and sister in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth George". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Elizabeth George



# Confident

## You Can Do It!



Jessica's confidence (which wasn't very high to begin with!) was slipping even further down the scale toward rock bottom. She hadn't always been so fearful. It all started last month when she had to give a report after her American history class had taken a field trip to the state capital. She had frozen during her speech, forgotten most of what she was supposed to say, and made a complete fool of herself as she stumbled through her report. (Never mind that she had slapped her report together during study hall and hadn't even glanced at it before giving her speech!)

Then there was the incident near her locker, when she tried to defend another girl from some hateful comments made by a mean-girl group that was bullying the poor girl because of the clothes she was wearing. (True, they were a little odd, but they were nothing that deserved the treatment this gang of girls dished out.) *Boy*, Jessica thought

afterward, *did they ever let me have it for interfering! Now I'm on their mean list for sure, and that's not a list I wanted to be on!*

And Jessica still regretted her run-in with Tiffany, one of the “cool girls,” who asked her face-to-face, “Are you one of those Christian goodie-two-shoes?” Knowing full well it would be the end of her chance for a cool social life, Jessica had said *yes*. (She wasn't so sure about the “goodie” part of the accusation, but she was a Christian and didn't want to lie about it.)

It's no wonder Jessica decided, “Nope, I'm never going to speak up in class again. It's not worth the embarrassment!” With great resolve she added, “And when it comes to speaking up when I see or hear something that's wrong, I'll be minding my own business from now on.” Then Jessica concluded with equal firmness, “And for sure when it comes to my Christian faith, I'm gonna keep a low profile. Then maybe no one will ask me about it and ask me questions I can't really answer.

“Nope, I don't want to look like a fool or be embarrassed about anything ever again.”

These were the thoughts running through Jessica's mind as she strolled into the youth center for the first meeting of a new Bible study on the life of Jesus.

### *Reflecting on Confidence*

You've probably read or heard about people who have a serious “phobia,” an extreme or irrational fear of something. Like these people—and like Jessica—you probably have

your very own personal areas of fear or concern about some aspect of life. Now, your “fears” and concerns might not fall in the phobia category, but you are probably like most teens who are very hesitant about certain things because they’re just scary for you. Maybe you’re uneasy about speaking in public or performing at a recital or in an athletic competition. Or you border on panic when you have an exam. Or you’ve been studying for your driver’s license exam and are wondering how in the world you’ll ever remember all those laws and statistics. Whatever your fear is, you are less than confident about participating in that area of concern.

We might not be able to cure you of your area of concern. But as you read on and look at Jesus, you will gain some insight into the importance of trust and learn how it relates to what the Bible says about confidence.

### *Jesus Shows You the Way*

Welcome to this study about Jesus and the powerful qualities in His life that He wants in yours too. I think you can guess that this study starts with confidence, something Jessica—and you—needs a lot of. Confidence is a character quality that gave Jesus the courage to live out God’s will during His time on earth. It gave Him the boldness to go through whatever God wanted Him to do. From Him you’ll learn how to handle your challenges and fears—whether it involves your home life, your time at school, or just living like Jesus and being a witness for Him.

As you read, keep in mind the meaning of confidence. First of all, confidence begins with trust. Many people trust

in their own abilities. These “self-made” people rely on their personalities, education, abilities, athletic skills, looks, health, and money. Their confidence in themselves makes them seem cool. It looks as if they have no problems. They don’t appear to doubt themselves at all. They show no fear of embarrassment because they just know they will be successful. As long as they can trust in themselves, they believe there’s nothing they can’t accomplish.

But there’s another kind of confidence—the best kind. It’s also based on trust. However, it’s not a trust in yourself, but a trust in God. The best example of the confidence that comes from trusting God is seen in God’s only Son, the Lord Jesus. We first observe this character quality boldly lived out in Jesus at an early age.

### *Who Am I?*

As you know all too well, preteen and teen years can be an extremely awkward age. Even torture! I know...and I remember. You want to grow up so badly, yet when you’re given opportunities to accept more adult responsibilities, it’s easy to want to retreat back into your safety zone. Your desire to be more grown-up and act like an adult is pushed aside by your fear of growing up and risking failure in new areas. Your fear of falling on your face is too strong.

But the young Jesus was different. Read about Him now and learn a lesson or two!

*Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. After the Feast was over, while*

*his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:41-49).*

If you have a pencil, do a mini-Bible study by circling or underlining or writing out the who, what, where, and when of this story.

Who was Jesus traveling with?

What was the occasion?

Where did this incident occur?

When did it occur?

During this incident that occurred at the age of 12, Jesus’ confidence became obvious to Mary (His mother)

and Joseph. When His mother questioned Him after finding Him in the temple courts, Jesus was surprised she didn't understand why He was doing what He was doing, and that she had forgotten His role as the Son of God. After all, the angel Gabriel had communicated to Mary exactly who her baby was (Luke 1:30-33). At the early age of 12, Jesus had a clear awareness of His identity. He already showed bold confidence in His mission. And He was already busy preparing to do the special work the Father had for Him.

*A question for your heart:* Like the Lord's confidence in His Father, your confidence must come from your identity in and with Jesus as your Savior. He has made you a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) and given you a fresh start. Your past has been forgiven. The slate of your sins has been erased. You now have the power of Jesus' Spirit. And your future is guaranteed for all eternity. You are one with Christ. Therefore you have no need to be fearful of anything.

Oh, you should have a healthy respect for the fragility of life and the need for wisdom and safety. And you'll always need to do your part when it comes to responsibilities (like taking your class report seriously!). But there's no reason to be anxious about your everyday activities. Just remember that confidence is based on trust. If your confidence for some challenge is wavering, maybe you've lost sight of who you are to trust. Trusting in yourself is shaky ground. Trust instead in the rock that is solid, in Jesus Christ.

Now the question is this: Have you put your trust in Jesus, God's Son, who died for your sins? Answer from your heart. If you belong to Christ, thank God and live

for Him with confidence. If the answer is *no* or you aren't sure, we'll be talking more about knowing Jesus as Savior as we go through this book. Ask God to make His plan of salvation clear to you as you seek Him with all your heart.

### *Life Is Scary!*

In another scene in the Bible, Jesus prayed all night and then chose 12 disciples to follow Him and be trained for future ministry (Matthew 10:16-26). Before sending them out to do ministry work, Jesus cautioned them, explaining, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves" (verse 16). He then ran through a list of all sorts of horrible things that might happen to them as they served in His name. They would even be accused of working for Satan (verses 17-26)!

This doesn't seem like a very good way to boost the confidence level of a new team, does it? A talk like that would be enough to make most people quit before they even began! But Jesus wanted to give His disciples a true picture of what they would face. He told them the truth. He prepared them and made them wiser about what was really out there. It was a sobering heads-up speech.

But Jesus wasn't finished. On the heels of the negative came the positive. To ensure that their confidence wouldn't waver, He ended His pep talk with the promise of God's care. He told the disciples that the same God who takes care of the unimportant little sparrow would surely take care of them. Then He said, "So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:31).

Think about it! God places great value on you. In fact, you are so valuable that He sent His only Son to die for

you (John 3:16). And because of God's love, you never need to be afraid of personal threats or difficult trials—or the mean girls at school. This should cause you to have a different view of your life. Yes, times of trouble will come, but instead of cowering in fear, remember Jesus' words, "Don't be afraid." Have the confidence to trust your loving heavenly Father. Yes, the wolves are out there. But the Good Shepherd knows that you are one of His sheep. He is always there with you and for you.

*A question for your heart:* How do you view yourself? As unimportant? As someone who hasn't found her niche? As nothing very special? As a loser? Look at the following verses and note what you should be thinking about yourself.

*God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son* (John 3:16).

*I am fearfully and wonderfully made* (Psalm 139:14).

*He [God] made us accepted in the Beloved [Jesus]*  
(Ephesians 1:6 NKJV).

### *Where Is Your Confidence Now?*

Here's a key fact about the 12 disciples-in-training: They were confident only as long as they were in Jesus' presence. But during their last supper together, when Jesus told them that He was leaving, they were shaken to the core. Their confidence fell to an all-time low. This is what Jesus said to instruct His troubled disciples not to worry. Be sure to underline what you need to remember the next time you are worried or afraid.

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God;  
trust also in me* (John 14:1).

And a few days later, the disciples' confidence returned after Jesus rose from the grave and after the Holy Spirit came upon them. Amazingly, from that point onward, these men who had been so afraid “spoke the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31). They went on to become men who “turned the world upside down” for Jesus (17:6 NKJV).

What happened? The disciples finally realized that their trust had to be in Jesus, not themselves. If Jesus is your Savior, then you too have hope for the future. Whatever might happen in the days to come, it doesn't really matter. Why? Because you have placed your trust in a strong and mighty Savior who has promised to strengthen you all the

days of your life. He has already given you all His great and precious promises and everything you need to live for Him (2 Peter 1:3-4). You are indeed blessed!

### *How to Handle Tough Times*

Jesus showed total resolve and confidence every day of His earthly ministry. He put up with constant accusations and mistreatment from the religious leaders in Israel. He ministered to those who sought Him out and crossed His path. Yet He never hesitated in His forward movement toward the cross.

On the night before His betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and death, Jesus fought His own battle with following through on God's plan for Him. How did He fight and win this battle? He prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

Before you move on, jot down the answers to a few quick questions:

What did Jesus do when He struggled to follow God's will?

What did Jesus first ask the Father?

What was the desire of Jesus' heart?

The conflict was over and the battle was won! The confidence Jesus was seeking was there. After praying and talking with God, all was settled.

Like Jesus, you will have times when you have a difficult decision to make or something hard to do. During these times of crisis, follow Jesus' example. Pray! Take your questions and fears to the Father. Ask Him for the confidence you need to do what's right in spite of your fears and doubts. And most of all, tell God that your greatest desire is to do His will, not yours. God will be honored and you will be blessed when you trust Him and do His will with full confidence.

### *Meet Your Number One Helper*

The disciples often struggled with confidence. Perhaps their all-time low was when they fled in fear after Jesus was arrested. Later they came back and gathered around Jesus after He rose from the dead. But they were still hesitant and fearful, even to the time of Jesus' return to heaven. So, as a final confidence booster, Jesus made one last promise to the disciples before ascending into heaven. He promised, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

When this promise of the Holy Spirit came true, the unsure disciples were completely transformed! They boldly preached the good news of Jesus, and thousands believed. This threatened the religious leaders so much that they rounded up the disciples and questioned them. They were looking for some kind of explanation for the new power and confidence the disciples suddenly possessed. And what happened? “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

What do you learn here about boldness and confidence?

How are Peter and John described (and do you ever feel like that)?

What was the only explanation for Peter and John’s confidence and impact on others?

We know what made a difference in the attitudes of the

disciples, don't we? They went from being cowards to confident spokesmen for Christ. How did this happen? They had received the power of the Holy Spirit. It was the Spirit's confidence that empowered them. "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4:31).

The apostle Paul also realized the source of his confidence as he preached Christ with boldness. Here's how he explained it: "I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).

How does Paul describe himself (and have you ever felt like this)?

How does he describe his preaching?

How does he explain the impact his preaching made?

Paul's confidence was not in his keen intellect or speaking ability. No, instead, his confidence was in the Holy Spirit. He knew the Spirit was working in the hearts of those who listened and, at the same time, was empowering and guiding him as he obeyed God and did what God asked him to do.

### *Reflecting the Heart of Jesus*

Confidence. It's a quality everyone desires and anyone can possess. Yet amazingly, few have it! You can take classes or receive special training to help you become more self-assured and bold. Anyone can become more confident. But the confidence that comes from Jesus is based on trust—trust in Him alone.

Here's something to reflect on, to think about: When things are new or scary, where do you usually place your trust? In Jesus...or in yourself? In general, is your confidence going steadily up as you count on Christ to help you, or have you forgotten to look to Jesus for strength and assurance? When you remember to look to Jesus, lean on Him, and do His will, there is no reason for self-doubt or timidity.

Make a goal of taking your eyes off of yourself and off of the challenge in front of you and redirecting your focus onto Jesus. It's true that you can have confidence in Him. You can trust in His power to assist you through whatever is ahead and whatever is required of you. He is all you need for a bold confident life. Why? Because, as He explained to His disciples after His resurrection, "All

authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18). Therefore go forward into the wonderful life that is in front of you with confidence—confidence in Jesus. He’ll be right there beside you all the way.

### *~ A Prayer to Pray ~*

Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You give me the power I need to do what You want me to do and be what You want me to be. Thank You that I can have confidence in everything that I do because You are with me. I’m so glad that You know every step I will take and You will help me, no matter what I face. Great are You, Lord, and greatly to be praised! Amen.

### *Want to Know More About... Being Confident?*

Share what these verses say about confidence and its source. Write out the parts of the verses that instruct you about how to be more confident and the source of your confidence.

Psalm 23:4—

Psalm 56:3—

Psalm 56:4—

1 Corinthians 2:4—

Ephesians 2:10—

Ephesians 3:20—

Philippians 4:13—

Which of these verses were your favorites or the most challenging, and why?