

A GIRL'S GUIDE TO
Best Friends
AND Mean
Girls

Dannah
Gresh &
Suzy Weibel



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A GIRL'S GUIDE TO BEST FRIENDS AND MEAN GIRLS

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To all of our
Secret Keeper Girl fans.
We love meeting you
when we get the chance.



This book on friendship took a lot of friends to write! And we want to say thanks to those friends and to God for giving them to us.



First, we are thrilled to thank God for the friendship he has given us in each other. It's so fun to get to work with one of your best friends!



It's also a lot of fun to work with people who are friends with Jesus, and that makes us good friends no matter how far apart we may live. Mike Keil is the man who helped us meet our friends at Harvest House (our publishers). The friends there who have worked hard on this project include LaRae Weikert, Terry Glaspey, Barb Sherrill, Paul Gossard, and more. Our friends Julia Ryan and Andy Mylin made this book fantastic by designing it to be beautiful!



And thanks to our best friends on this earth, Bob and Jonathan, our husbands.



But mostly thanks to the best friend a girl can have, Jesus! We hope you meet him in the pages of this book or get to hang with him like you never have before.



Dannah and Suzy





CONTENTS



A Note from Dannah and Suzy . . . 6

PART ONE: About BFFs and Mean Girls

Chapter 1	Choosing Your Team	10
Chapter 2	Being a Friend.	14
Chapter 3	Green with Envy	18
Chapter 4	The Wounds of a Friend	23
Chapter 5	Crazy but True: I Can Be Jesus' Friend!	29
Chapter 6	The Friend of a Friend	35

PART TWO: My Best Friend, Jesus – Bible Study

	<i>Getting Ready to Dig In to Bible Study</i>	<i>42</i>
Meditation 1	How Did Jesus Pick Friends for Keeps?	51
Meditation 2	How Did Jesus “Do” Friendship?	60
Meditation 3	What Did Jesus Do When His Friends Got Jealous?	69
Meditation 4	What Did Jesus Do When His Friends Hurt Him?	79
Meditation 5	How Can I Be a Good Friend to Jesus?	86
Meditation 6	Who Needs to Meet My Friend Jesus?	94

Do You Know Jesus? . . . 109

Extra Ideas for the Bible Study . . . 110

Answers to Puzzle Crazes! . . . 111



A Note from Dannah and Suzy

friendships sure can be messy. We know. We're friends, and sometimes we're messy. Maybe you have some friendships that are messy. Mean-girl moments? Jealousy? BFF tug-of-war? Well, that's why we wrote this book. We've experienced all those things and lived to tell about it.

It's going to be okay.

God's Word gives us really clear guidelines about friendships and examples of people who knew how to handle friendship. But the hard part about reading the Bible is applying it to the life you live today. So, we've created the Secret Keeper Girl Series. These books are part modern-girl self-help and part Bible study, so you can think through how God's truth can work in your real life.

Part 1 of this book—About BFFs and Mean Girls—is "self-help" and is written by Suzy.

Self-help" is the kind of book your parents read when they want to be a better parent or bookkeeper or gardener. In this case, you're reading it



because you want to be a better friend. Self-help books advise you on certain topics. You'll read a lot of them in your lifetime.

Don't worry if this is your first self-help book. You may be used to chapter books and fiction. Suzy writes in that style and her chapters will be fun to read. You can do this part of the book alone.

**Part 2 of this book—My Best Friend,
Jesus—is a Bible study
and is written by Dannah.**

A Bible study guides you through God's Word on a certain topic or book and enables you to do your own studying. You'll be reading Bible verses and answering questions about them, applying them to your life. There are even quizzes and games in the second section. It's going to be fun. You have to put some work in to feel the thrill in your belly for this kind of fun! You can do the second part of the book alone, but it's much better if you do it with your mom or a group of other girls.



FRIEND!



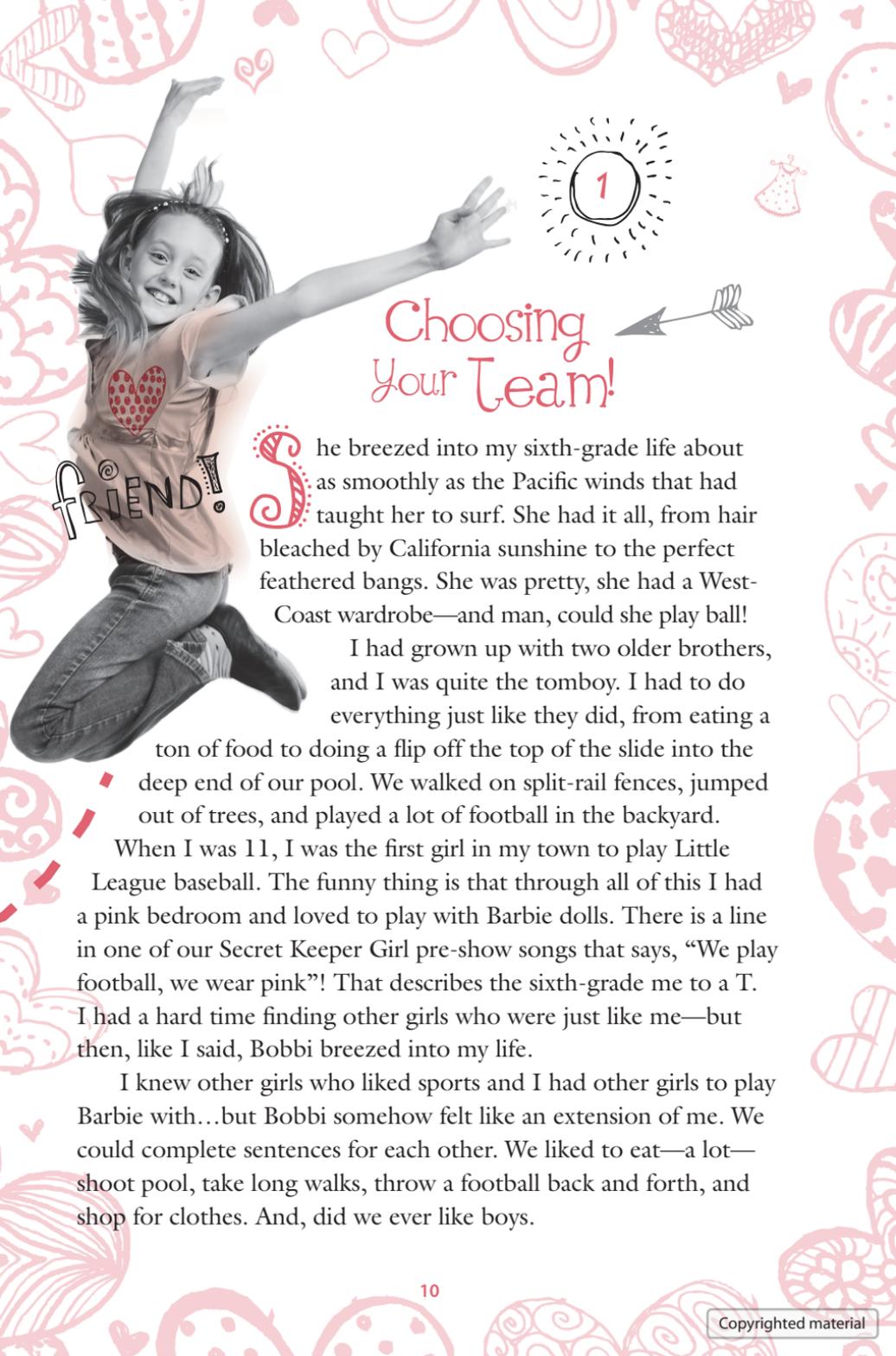


PART 1

About BFFs and Mean Girls

BY SUZY
WEIBEL





Choosing Your Team!



FRIEND!

She breezed into my sixth-grade life about as smoothly as the Pacific winds that had taught her to surf. She had it all, from hair bleached by California sunshine to the perfect feathered bangs. She was pretty, she had a West-Coast wardrobe—and man, could she play ball!

I had grown up with two older brothers, and I was quite the tomboy. I had to do everything just like they did, from eating a ton of food to doing a flip off the top of the slide into the deep end of our pool. We walked on split-rail fences, jumped out of trees, and played a lot of football in the backyard.

When I was 11, I was the first girl in my town to play Little League baseball. The funny thing is that through all of this I had a pink bedroom and loved to play with Barbie dolls. There is a line in one of our Secret Keeper Girl pre-show songs that says, “We play football, we wear pink”! That describes the sixth-grade me to a T. I had a hard time finding other girls who were just like me—but then, like I said, Bobbi breezed into my life.

I knew other girls who liked sports and I had other girls to play Barbie with...but Bobbi somehow felt like an extension of me. We could complete sentences for each other. We liked to eat—a lot—shoot pool, take long walks, throw a football back and forth, and shop for clothes. And, did we ever like boys.

You can tell a lot about a person from the friends they choose. Friends not only reflect who we are, but they also say a lot about who we are becoming. I always considered Bobbi the leader in our relationship. She was more of an extrovert (she thrived on being around a lot of people), while I was a little quieter. She was the idea person and I was the one who made things happen.

One time Bobbi decided we should soap windows on Halloween. We gathered up our soap and snuck around in the night drawing soapy pictures on the windows of homes with no lights on. Every time we heard a car or voices, or were caught in the sudden flicker of a porch light, we would head giggling for the nearest ditch. Our escapades were sometimes foolish, but we were headed the same direction in life. We loved our families, we loved school, and we were honestly trying to love God too. We were just a little fuzzy in our decision making now and then! Today we are both pastors' wives. How about that!

T HINK ABOUT IT

The most popular kids, the ones who kind of rule the school, are not often the ones who make the biggest splash in the world as adults. A lot of influential people, in fact, have reported being very unpopular in school.

My Friend Choice

Every choice in life impacts us, not just our friendships. For instance, when I go to a restaurant, I get to choose what I order, right? (Well, unless Mom and Dad are paying the bill. Then that big old steak may not be an option!) If I order something I'm allergic to, there will be a consequence. It will change the status of my health. If my eyes are bigger than my tummy, food goes to waste. It's never good to waste food.

Not every decision we make is life-altering. But it's good to be aware of the truth. Friends will change you, mold you, impact you, and either help or hinder you along the way.

Do you know what a “queen bee” is? Some call her a mean girl. She is the girl who rules over all the other “wanna-bees.” She may be regarded as the prettiest or the coolest girl of all, but the way she has achieved her reputation is *not* pretty. She is the queen and she knows it. If anyone threatens her position at the top, she will quickly arrange for all of the other girls to help her send a strong message...you are *out* of the group. Now that’s mean! When looking to choose your team of friends, the queen bee is not likely to be a good first pick.

THINK ABOUT IT

A true friend is one who chooses friendship over popularity, money, or image.



I sometimes protected other girls from the queen bee when I was in school. I knew enough not to think she could be my true friend, though I tried to be friends with everyone. I do remember one day I gave the “queen bee” a piece of gum and was glad to do so. It’s nice when the most popular girl in school talks to you...well, that’s what I thought. Later in the day, thinking that stick of gum had sealed our friendship, I approached the “queen” and another popular girl. I was well-liked

myself, so I was surprised when the two girls turned their backs on me and giggled. I guess they were mean girls too. It was intentional and it was mean. I went home and wrote in my diary, “See if I ever give her a stick of gum again. Who does she think she is?”

A lot of girls are confused by the queen bee. It seems she would be the best kind of friend to have, because she defines “popular.” But “popular” isn’t real. It can’t be measured, it’s more of an opinion, it is always changing, and it definitely isn’t what Jesus was looking for in friends.

Jesus' Friend Choice

Does it amaze you that Jesus says this about you? “I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn’t confide in his slaves. Now

you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me” (John 15:15). In the very next verse Jesus points out that we didn’t choose him. He chose us. He picked you to be his friend. So here we have the King of kings and he has chosen *you* as a friend. I don’t know about you, but I’m really nothing special. I’d think the King would want to have movie stars and great athletes, presidents and other kings for his best buddies...but he has chosen us.

choose your own team



You get to choose your own team when it comes to friends. No one else can do it for you. And Jesus gave us a great lesson in friend selection by choosing us. He didn’t pick the most popular or powerful people to

make him look better. No, Jesus chose his friends carefully.

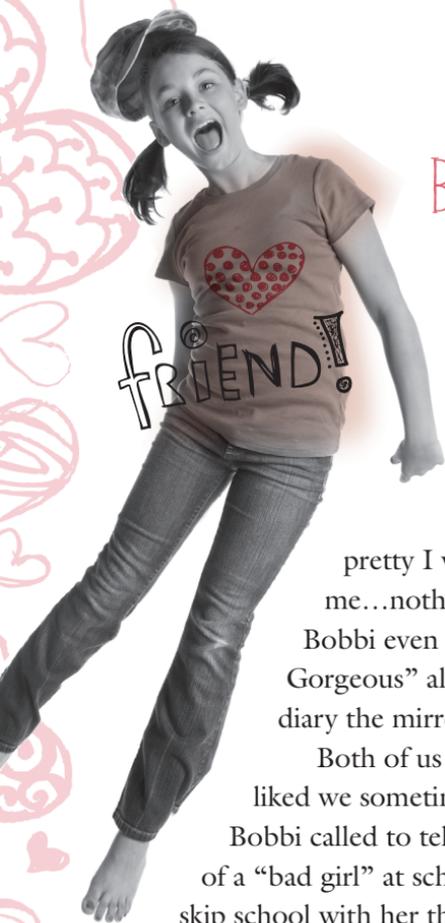
There were a lot of people who wanted to be with him, but he knew that not all of them had what it took to be a good friend. One guy in Matthew 19 came to Jesus promising that the two of them had a lot in common. He had kept all of God’s commandments and had great wealth. Like many people, he suspected Jesus was a king, and who doesn’t want to be the king’s buddy? But Jesus knew one thing about this potential friend—he would always put his money ahead of his friendship with Jesus.

It’s tempting, isn’t it, to choose friends based on how important they seem? Some girls spend hour after painful hour trying to prove they belong with the “in” crowd. If Jesus didn’t waste his time there, maybe we shouldn’t either! Instead, he looked for people who were simple, quiet, loyal, steady...and in need of friends. We all need friends. Jesus needed them too. I think it’s an awesome thing that he taught us how to look for true friends!

Really
THINK ABOUT IT!

Go to Meditation #1
in Part 2: How did
Jesus pick friends
for keeps?





Being a Friend!

Bobbi flat out knew I struggled with liking myself. She could see it. She heard me talking about it. And it made her sad, because she really and truly loved me. She made a habit of telling me how pretty I was, how much she liked being with me...nothing seemed to help. In eighth grade Bobbi even bought me a mirror that said, “I’m Gorgeous” all around the frame. I confessed to my diary the mirror wasn’t doing me any good.

Both of us were so eager to make friends and be liked we sometimes made bad decisions. One night Bobbi called to tell me that a girl known for being a bit of a “bad girl” at school had called her and wanted her to skip school with her the next day. Bobbi was hesitant. This kind of thing wasn’t in our DNA—it didn’t come naturally to either of us. But that’s the thing about wanting friends soooooo badly—you tend to lose all sense of reason. Anything to be liked!

Fortunately I was able to convince Bobbi what a dumb idea skipping school would be. I reminded her of all the trouble she could get into and how important it was to have the trust of our parents and teachers. All of that goes away if you skip school! Plus, did she want to get the same reputation the other girl had?

What happened next was actually kind of funny. Bobbi snapped back to her senses so hard that she ran downstairs and fell into her parents' arms, confessing to them what she had almost done.

Even though Bobbi's family moved thousands of miles away after eighth grade, she and I went through a lot of highs and lows, celebrations and tears together. We kept each other's secrets and occasionally found ways to close the distance and spend time together. We still do.

One of the main things the Bible sets out to teach us is how to be a friend. Jesus calls us friends, and his word is a blueprint for how to be just like him. So there you have it—the Bible is one of the world's premiere textbooks on how to be a friend!

There are a lot of keys to good friendships. Friendships take work, just like everything else that's alive and breathing! You can't forget to water a plant, or soon you'll find a pot full of dried-up twigs you might just mistake for an earring tree! A new puppy has to be fed and walked and played with or you will have a disobedient monster on your hands. Here are a few areas where Jesus taught us to throw ourselves into friendships.

Area 1: Time

Can you imagine trying to convince someone you like them if you never make time for them? Wouldn't really fly, would it?

Friendships thrive on time spent together. The very wise Winnie the Pooh said, "If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you." Researchers tell us that people who spend time with friends experience more happiness than people who are lonely! That's no

THINK ABOUT IT

Euripides said, "It is a good thing to be rich, and it is a good thing to be strong, but it is a better thing to be loved of many friends." Euripides was a classical Greek author who lived almost 500 years before Jesus!



real surprise, is it? And happiness is good for our health. Therefore... spending time with friends is good for us. Proverbs 17:22 actually says “a cheerful heart is good medicine”!

Area 2: Influence



“The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense” (Proverbs 27:9). Have you ever had a friend who was a bad influence on you? That’s a pretty common experience, because friends tend to influence our behavior more than anyone else once we reach a certain age. One thing unique about Jesus and his friendships is he did all the influencing. He had friends he hung out with, and homes he frequented for dinner and parties, but he was always talking to his friends about the kingdom of God.

sweet as perfume!



You can be an influencer too. In fact, if you are a good friend you’ll always be cheering on what is best for your buddies. Be sure your friends are able to encourage you using truth from God’s Word. But if you have a friend (or two) who doesn’t know God (having a friend like that isn’t a bad idea, really) just be sure she is willing to *hear* God’s word. If a girl wants nothing to do with truth, she’s not going to make great friend material just yet. There are some relationships that need to be put on a back burner or out to pasture...and we need to know there is nothing ungodly about that.

Area 3: "Co-Misery"

“Co” is a prefix meaning “together”...and we all know what misery is, don’t we? You have cried. I have cried. Misery. Doing it together is to “commiserate.” There’s your big vocab word of the day!

When a friend is hurting we often feel uncomfortable. What do you say to make it all go away or feel better? The truth is, words aren’t likely to do the trick. When a friend is hurting, the best thing



we can do is stay by their side and simply hurt with them. You may think saying things like “It’ll be okay” or “Things will get better” are most helpful, but the most helpful response is to do what Jesus did. He wept. When he lost his friend Lazarus, he and the others who loved Lazarus mourned together. They just cried.

Area 4: Prayer

Do you pray for your friend? Do you pray with her? Granted, praying out loud is not the most comfortable thing in the world for many people, but prayer is a sign of authentic friendship.

What to pray? Pray that she will love God with her whole heart. Pray she will be a good friend to you and you to her. Pray she will make good choices. Pray she will realize when God gives her good things, that she will work hard, and that she will know she is loved by God. Pray about everything!

Your friend-prayers don’t have to be long or fancy. Just talk to God like you talk to your friends. This should be easy to do, seeing as he counts you as one of his friends. Why is prayer so important? Because without Jesus *we can’t do anything*...including be a good friend! Maybe this is why we see so many friendships falling apart. What do you think?

Really
THINK ABOUT IT!

Go to Meditation #2 in
Part 2: How did Jesus
“do” friendship?



When we love our friends in these four areas, we can know for certain we are the real deal. These are the things a friend does. This is how a friend loves. After all, there is only one true motivation for friendship, and that is *love*.