

5
MINUTES
IN THE
BIBLE
FOR WOMEN

EMILIE BARNES



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*To seven of my most enduring women friends.
You have given me great legacy moments
in the past and in the present, and you certainly will in the future.
You are women who give me real purpose in life.*

*Jenny Whitney
(my daughter)*

*Christine Ianni
(Jenny's daughter; my first granddaughter)*

*Emi Ianni
(Christine's daughter; my first great-granddaughter)*

*Stephanie Barnes
(wife of my son, Brad)*

*Erica Merrihew
(wife of my first grandson, Chad)*

*Lucy May Merrihew
(daughter of Chad and Erica; my second great-granddaughter)*

*Erica Merrihew
(wife of my second grandson, Bevan)*

*God has blessed me with you, such dear, godly women
who want to know and apply biblical principles in your lives.*

*Long after I'm gone to be with the Lord,
I know you will carry on the traditions of our faith.*

A Note from Emilie

Time is such a big factor in our lives. All of us are struggling to fit everything we have to do into twenty-four-hour segments of time. The stresses and burdens of that struggle are not what God wants for us. If you examine your biggest worries, chances are they're tied to actions or choices that you've made a priority rather than being tied to requests God has made in your life. That's why I've learned to say "No" to good things and save my "Yes" for the best.

While doing this, I've established priorities for what needs to be done and relates to what really matters most in my life. One of my prized choices has been to give some valuable time each day to reading materials that will help me grow in my faith. In addition to reading the Bible, I've found it helpful to have resources that encourage the habit of daily reflection and understanding. I pray this book will be that kind of companion for you in your quiet time.

Giving God five minutes a day is not asking too much! Yet, it does take intention and practice to turn this into a regular part of your routine. When I make this time with God a regular morning routine, I find I have a much better day. I feel more connected to God's heart and will, I accomplish more of what I need to get done, and I am more sensitive to taking moments to pray and be still before Him. It takes twenty-one days to form a new habit in life. Why not start developing this new habit of spending five minutes with God daily?

May you be blessed as you read through these short, daily thoughts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Emilie Danner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17





Begin Each Day with God

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming (Matthew 25:13 NKJV).

It takes twenty-one consecutive days to form a new habit. If you aren't used to starting the day off with God, today will be your first day. Only twenty more days and you'll have a new routine. That length of time helps you to impress on your life this added priority.

I've found that the most amazing infusions of God's strength happen when I'm taking the risk of obeying God. I'm astonished at how my Lord can take my tiny step of faith and turn it into a strong leap for His kingdom.

You may be a mom whose teenagers are in trouble. You may be struggling with an illness or working at a job that saps your spirit. Whatever set of circumstances you face today, purpose in your heart and daily routine to hear the voice of God through reading Scripture and praying each day before heading off to the events that face you.

We need to exercise our faith by turning to God when life seems too much. The Bible tells us the truth about these circumstances. We may be weak, but He is strong. His arms are extending to you and all your troubles. He is also there during your periods of praise. As a mom you love to hear "Thank you" from your children—and so does God.

All you have to do is be still and take a few minutes to hear what He has to say to you. God is not to be considered your Santa Claus. He isn't waiting for your shopping list, but He does want to hear about your hopes and needs. He isn't to be used as a fire extinguisher, only reached for when troubles are burning out of control. He wants you to reach for Him every day—and when you have praises too!

He is your Father in heaven, and He longs to spend time with you. As you turn to Him faithfully and this new habit becomes an integral part of your life's rhythm, you'll become more motivated to go to God with everything going on. And you'll inspire your family and others to do the same.

Father God, before I get busy with another day, I want to spend time with You. Our communication will help my attitude before I engage with the world and remind me of Your love and available wisdom. How grateful I am that I can come to You anytime and know You care about what I have to say... and You care about what You have to share with me. Amen.

Take Action

Start your journey toward developing a habit of prayer and praise today. If you don't know where to begin, I suggest the book of Proverbs. And make *Five Minutes in the Bible for Women* part of your journey. Together we can move you toward a great new habit.

Your Reflections





Get More from Your Bible Reading

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you (John 14:26).

There is much to gain, learn from, and reflect on in the Bible. In order to glean as much of God's message for you and to take it to heart, you might want to consider the following steps as guidelines for your reading time. I believe they'll help you as you venture out on this journey of spending time in the Word.

First, pick a book of the Bible to read. For each chapter ask these questions and write out your answers.

1. *What is this chapter in this book about?* Through your reading, get a general overview of what the author is saying. What is the main message?
2. *What does this chapter teach about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit?* Now go back again and read more slowly with the thought of searching for this specific answer.
3. *What sin is there to confess, and what is a behavior or belief to avoid?* The writer is usually teaching a specific principle concerning the Christian walk.
4. *What example is there to follow?* To get this answer, you might need to reread the selection several times. What step in your Christian walk might this scripture be suggesting you take?
5. *What command is there to obey?* The Bible doesn't give "maybes" or "suggestions." The writers are usually direct in delivering God's messages.

6. *What promise is there to believe and trust in?* If you search hard enough, you'll find the needle in the haystack.
7. *What is my favorite verse in this book?* I encourage you to write it on an index card and memorize it this week. Include why it's special to you. You'll be amazed at all the riches you'll gather over time.
8. *What does this book communicate to me?* Pray for guidance and help in understanding what God is saying to you. As you read through the chapter, *listen* carefully for His message. Thank Him for speaking to you as you ask for His help to change.

Father God, give me the desire to follow these simple steps to better understand Your Word and be patient as I dive deeper into the heart of Your messages. Open my eyes so I can see how Your truths and wisdom can become my foundation for daily living. Help me draw closer to You as I grow in You. Amen.

Take Action

Choose a portion of Scripture to read and ask these questions. As you begin, go through the guidelines twice so addressing the questions becomes a natural process.

Your Reflections



God's Peace in Our Insecure World

Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper (Proverbs 13:4 NLT).

Everyone is talking about security these days. We want it, but we don't always want the structure and restrictions that come with security measures. We can see human efforts to create security in our airports and in our neighborhoods. In Southern California, many of the new housing communities are constructed behind fences or walls with guard gates to pass through for entry. And there are often security guards who patrol the streets and check up on those who do go through the gates.

So many people are saying they don't feel safe anymore, even with these extra measures. I believe our "default" mode is to pursue the worldly ways to feel safe and protected. Most folks are looking for more ways to separate themselves from potential physical harm and destruction. It isn't surprising that those physical measures do little to ease their restless hearts and minds.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we can take the secure path to God's heart and His sanctuary. We can surrender to Him in spirit. As Christians, we can know and enjoy the peace of God in this insecure world. When we're diligent and work hard to grow our faith, the result is a deep knowing of God's rest and care. My husband, Bob, and I know from our difficult walk through my cancer journey that God can give us peace beyond all human understanding.

I believe God has a record of all my prayers and His answers. I need to remember that even on those days when God seems far away, His peace is nearby and available. As you and I awaken each morning,

we can be assured that our heavenly Father will be the same today as the one before. Our God is never too busy to hear from us. There are no busy signals, voice-mail messages, or disconnections when we call on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father God, may I enter Your peace today with joy. Help me trust You with my life, my marriage, my family, and my possessions. You shepherd me through uncertain valleys, and You bring me back to Your path when I've lost my way. Thank You for always hearing my calls and for never leaving me behind. Amen.

Take Action

Think about the ways you've tried to create physical and financial security in your life. Now think about the ways you want to start investing in *spiritual* security...by growing your faith in the Lord.

Your Reflections





Developing a Life of Faith

“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend (James 2:23).

Wow! Abraham must have been a great man to be a friend of God. I would certainly like to be in that circle of friends. But wait... *I am!* Not only am I a friend of God’s, but I am a child of His too. My hope is that I will be considered a person of great faith just as Abraham was.

Throughout his life, Abraham exhibited his strong faith in God. He learned that God would provide, and his dependence on and faith in God grew. You and I probably won’t have the same challenges facing us in life that Abraham did, but the same principles are applicable for our successes in life. We are to know that God will provide. In Hebrews 11:8-9, two words that stand out are “by faith”:

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. *By faith* he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

In most situations Abraham encountered, he applied this basic principle of living a life of faith: God will provide. In order for us to live lives that are worthy to follow, we must leave a legacy that shows to the people watching us that we truly believe God will provide.

What are we going to put on our altars of life? Our families, our jobs, our homes, our possessions? On and on, each day we worry

about what we have and want. Why do we worry so much? One Barnes family motto is “God is good *all* the time.” And I believe this with all of my heart. I’ve witnessed His mercy and goodness throughout my lifetime, and I’ve spoken with countless women who also have been blessed to be witnesses of God’s great grace and love.

If we really believe that God will provide, then why do we invest so much of ourselves into things that don’t have eternal value or lead us into His peace? Let’s shift our perspectives so we’re living by faith and not by fear or so we are living by faith and not by unfocused, unintentional choices.

Father God, give me Your discernment to demonstrate to those around me that I truly believe You will provide. Give me the courage to live by faith in You. Amen.

Take Action

By faith, trust God to provide for a specific need you have. Lift up that need today in prayer.

Your Reflections

