

THE
Help Club
FOR
Moms

Deb Weakly

and the Help Club for Moms Team



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The Wise Woman Cultivates Her Spirit

Dear sister, I don't have to tell you that being a mom is exhausting. You are constantly giving and giving out to your family. You change diapers, wipe noses, break up sibling squabbles, cook a thousand meals, drive the kids everywhere, and—oh, my goodness—clean the messes. Something always needs cleaning! I remember being so tired when my kids were little that I couldn't wait until bedtime so I could crawl into my cool sheets and lay my head on my comfy pillow.

During one particularly busy season, I lamented to an older mom friend about how tired I felt and how I had nothing left to give to my husband in the evening. She said something that I will never forget: “Deb, you can't give from an empty well. You have to fill up with Jesus before you can give out to anyone else.” When we fill up with Jesus each day, the Holy Spirit energizes us and gives us what we need to love and care for our families.

The Help Club for Moms loves encouraging moms to know Jesus better, so we wrote the following easy-to-read but thought-provoking articles. They are written by ordinary moms and designed to help you learn to fill up with Jesus each day so you can give out to the precious ones in your life.

Love, Deb

Wave the White Flag

..... DEB WEAKLY

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

A Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't.

Charles H. Spurgeon

My daughter was four years old and my son was one. It had been another hard day. I felt overwhelmed. I lost my temper, and once again I knew I had failed. Even though I woke up with good intentions each day, desperately wanting to be a strong Christian mom, I didn't know what I was doing or what I should change. I knew I had fallen short in one way or another. This went on for a while, until finally I came to that place you might have come to before—I was at the end of myself. I began to kneel beside my daughter's bed each night after she had gone to sleep. Through tears, I prayed over her, crying out to God for help because I realized I could not be a good mom on my own.

Like a weary soldier, I waved my white flag and surrendered my fears, anxieties, and mistakes to God. Each night I repeated the phrases that weighed most heavily on my heart: "I feel lost. I don't know what I'm doing. Help me, Lord." Our good and faithful God answered me and spoke these simple words to my heart: "Deb, spend time with Me."

And so I did. I began arising fifteen to thirty minutes before my kids to meet with God: to pray, read my Bible, and journal. I always asked God for my marching orders and for wisdom to know what to do with my kids each day.

Even as I write this book, I'm reminded of all the times I went to Him over and over asking for help and wisdom, and how He answered me so faithfully. At the end of each quiet time, I wrote down what God spoke to my heart as I read the Bible and prayed. I probably have twenty-five journals, filled with prayers for myself, my kids, my husband, and our home. It's sweet to look back on the various stages of life that we experienced as a family and see God's faithfulness covering it all.

One of my favorite verses during this season was John 15:5. It says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." What a beautiful promise straight from Jesus to those who choose to follow Him. We are not alone! In fact, He says that we can do nothing good or bear fruit apart from Him. We can't raise children up to know Jesus, have a successful Christian marriage, or do *anything* apart from Him. Reading this verse brought me peace and allowed me to simply come to God each day for my daily bread.

Sister, it takes humility to surrender your life and come to Jesus, not trying to do anything on your own, but I can assure you that this is the way we were meant to live in relationship with Him—in daily fellowship, coming into His presence and seeking Him through the Bible and talking with Him through prayer as we would talk to our very best friend. Jesus is a friend like no other. He knows you, your children, your husband, and your circumstances better than anyone else. He has access to your family's hearts and can help you understand how to love them well. He wants you to do as I did and wave your white flag and surrender all your cares and concerns to Him. Jesus doesn't want you to be a wife, mom, daughter, or friend on your own. He wants you to let Him into your life, your pain, your fears, and your struggles so He can make beauty from the ashes of your life and bring healing to your hurting heart.

FAITH-FILLED IDEA:

Establish the Habit of a Daily Quiet Time

If we were together in person and I was able to be completely honest with you, I would say that getting into the habit of spending regular time with God is *hard* because you are such a busy mom. But I would also say that having time with God is *crucial*—especially since you are a busy mom. If you have trouble finding time to spend with the Lord, pray and ask Him to help you get started. Here's my schedule from when my kids were little. This may be good for you, or you might want your time with God to look differently. Remember, you do you!

Twenty Minutes a Day to a Christ-Centered Home

- *Five minutes for prayer:* Commit your day to God. Ask for wisdom and help from Him.
- *Ten minutes of Bible reading:* Jot down a verse that stands out to you in your journal.
- *Five minutes to plan your day:* Write out the six most important things you need to accomplish that day, and cross them off as you complete them.

Let God Lead You

..... DEB WEAKLY

I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

Isaiah 42:16

Be assured, if you walk with Him and look to Him, and expect help from Him, He will never fail you.

George Müller

When my kids were growing up, I felt like a little lost puppy as I went from house to house, looking for answers on how to have a Christian home. I desperately wanted to figure out what I should be doing with my kids, so I observed the other moms that I knew. I looked over the books they had on their shelves, asked what activities they had their kids in, and took note of how they did things in their homes. I never felt like my family had it together as much as the other mothers' families did. Deep down, I knew it was dangerous to compare, as it made me feel like a failure as a mom and that my kids always fell short, but I couldn't stop noticing how confident these women were! I was so desperate to know what other people were doing in their homes because I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't want to mess up my kids or give them a childhood like

the one I had, which was sad and disappointing. Because my childhood was so dysfunctional, I made lots of mistakes before I came to Jesus, and I worried that my kids would somehow do the same.

I remember one time when I felt so discouraged that I just couldn't sleep. I went downstairs in the middle of the night and broke down and cried out my heart to God because I felt like I was just not doing this "mom thing" right. I was so scared that I was going to ruin my kids and cause them to turn away from God. This scary thought made me feel debilitated and hopeless.

As I sat that night crying, I saw my Bible sitting on the table next to my chair and decided to read a few Scriptures to encourage myself. I opened to the book of Isaiah and thumbed through chapter 42 and came to verse 16 (the key at the beginning of this article). I was amazed as I read the words; they immediately went deep into my heart. There was my encouragement!

Did I feel blind and was I venturing out into unknown territory? You betcha! But through these verses, God told me He saw me and He knew I felt lost and alone. And most of all, He told me again that He would help me become the mom He created me to be. Even though I had no Christian upbringing, and in spite of my many mistakes, He said He would help me, and He encouraged me to just keep trusting Him and letting Him lead me. Knowing God met me where I was caused me to feel at peace and enabled me to keep going. He knew what my kids needed, so I needed to filter all those ideas I was seeing through Him by praying and asking.

This is a picture of the practical way we walk with Jesus and how we raise our kids with Him, one day at a time. As you read this book, get into the habit of asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you as you first crack open the pages. You will be amazed at how much you will learn if you involve God in your reading right here, right now. The Bible says that as believers, we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us, and He teaches us all the time—all we have to do is ask. Yes, we will still make mistakes because we are human, but your life will be so much better because you walked each day with Jesus.

FAITH-FILLED IDEA: Pray to Know God Better

For years I have prayed Ephesians 1:17-19 out loud to myself. These powerful Scriptures talk about the fact that we have immense power living inside of us as Christians, but we have to *pray and keep praying* to even understand it. We even have to *pray* to understand God better! It takes a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe (Ephesians 1:17-19).

Keep Going, Mama

..... MARI JO MAST

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:40

Trying to do the Lord's work in your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting, and tedious of all work. But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you.

Corrie Ten Boom

I often find myself reminiscing about my early mothering years; the difficulty took me by surprise! I regularly told my husband how discouraged and hopeless I felt. Many times I would say "I'm not cut out for this" or "I cannot do this one more day." Parenting was grueling—a constant giving and serving without ever being served. On top of that, exhaustion plagued my body because my hormones were out of whack. For more than two years, I frequently struggled with panic attacks that woke and terrorized me during the night.

During this season, it seemed everything I created or crafted was either eaten, messed up, or destroyed daily. By the end of the day, I felt I literally could not make one more meal, wash one more dish, speak one more kind word, teach one more lesson, pick up one more toy, solve one more dispute, kiss one more soft cheek, or read one more Bible story.

Hopelessness became the catalyst for God to do a deep work inside of me. From the core of my heart, I prayed for the Holy Spirit to give strength, to teach, and to help, because every single day felt exhausting with no hope of change in sight. This heart cry went on for years. I actually envied my husband, who went to work and came home with a paycheck. At least at the end of the day, whatever he constructed stayed beautiful, untouched, and appreciated. Ha!

Do you feel the same?

Mama, I want you to know, the Holy Spirit taught me and stayed close this whole grueling season, even when I did not deserve it or could not feel Him. Though I'm *still* not at the finish line (the endless giving will truly never be over for us moms), I've realized our children grow, the demands ease up over time, and you forget the hardship more and more. If you are currently in a similar stage of mothering, please believe me: The raw feelings of discouragement and hopelessness eventually soften because you grow. Life's constant ebb and flow of seasons becomes more constant when we trust God. The Holy Spirit teaches us what we need to know if we ask and stay patient believing He's there. Nothing pleases Him more than when we activate our faith in Him. He heals more fully than we think possible as we continually invite Him into our mess. Today I have older, married kids who are my best friends. They thank, serve, and give back, even though ten years ago this seemed impossible.

Discouraged, weary mom, please know that every cup of cold water given in the name of Jesus brings reward. You wash the feet of Jesus when you serve and minister to your children. God sees and notices, even when no one else does. Keep serving, keep obeying God, and keep pouring out love, no matter how you feel.

If you're like me, you might be afraid of not finishing well and messing up your kids. And you know what? *We do* mess up! However, we also know staying down and defeated isn't an option. We get back up after we fall down because the Holy Spirit meets us where we are in all our worries, failures, and sins. He's so good at forgiving and pouring out His tender mercies on us every single day. God gave us His Spirit for this very reason—to help us navigate through life's journey! So take

courage and try to keep the end goal in mind: What do you want your children to value and remember when they grow up?

Above all, think about this: God forgave your past, He stays active in your present, and He will help you finish strong in your future. I'm so glad He never, ever leaves us! Do not be weary in well-doing, but keep on blazing a faithful trail and stay close to Him. Your beautiful rewards are on the way—they are coming soon. When you see the eternal investment you've made in your children, you will be pleasantly surprised and blown away by the goodness of God!

FAITH-FILLED IDEA:
Use Your Imagination in Prayer

God gave us an imagination to draw us closer to Him—it's a powerful tool we can utilize to connect our spirit with His Spirit. Close your eyes and imagine yourself standing in front of Jesus at the end of your life. Ask Him to speak to you. Take a notebook or journal and write down the important things He relays to you. Ask Him to help you live out daily what He says. Make a few copies of your notes and place them in strategic places in your home where you can be reminded of them daily.