

DANNAH GRESH & SUZY WEIBEL





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#### A GIRL'S GUIDE TO BEST FRIENDS AND MEAN GIRLS

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his 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. The friends who have worked hard on this project include LaRae Weikert, Terry Glaspey, Barb Sherrill, and more. They are part of the team at our publisher, Harvest House. 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.



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# A Note from Dannah and Suzy

riendships 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 True 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.

# That's Suzy on the left Side. She's a super cool, brown-haired tomboy who can shoot hoops with the best of the guys but also thinks it's great to be a girl and would not have it any other way.

And that's Dannah on the right. She's a natural born blonde who lives on a hobby farm with horses, llamas, fainting goats, peacocks, one lonely mini-donkey, and her beloved dog, Moose.





# PART 1 of this book—about BFFs and Mean Girls— is "self-help" but we like to call it God-help.

(This part of the book was 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 know how to be a better friend. Self-help books advise you on certain topics. You'll read a lot of them in your lifetime.

To be honest, we don't love what bookstores call this "genre." (That's the big word they use to describe a certain kind of book.) Because we are not going to offer you help you can do yourself. We just don't think the answer is ever within ourselves. So, we like to call our books God-help books.

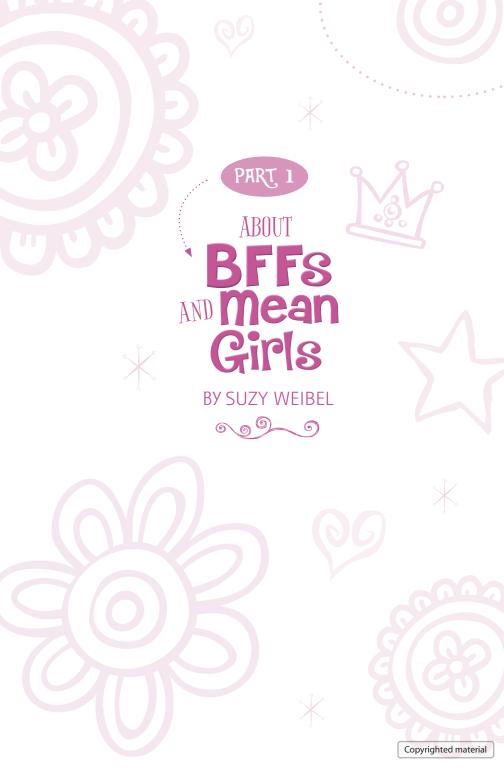
Don't worry if this is your first of its kind. You may be more used to chapter books and fiction. So Suzy's written it in that style and it will be fun to read. You can do this part of the book alone.

### PART 2 of this book—My Best Friend, Jesus—is a Bible study.

(This part of the book was written by Dannah.)

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.







### Choosing Your Team

he 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 a song we used to play during our True Girl pre-show that says, "We play football, we wear pink"! That describes the sixthgrade 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.

Once 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. (We probably would not do that again today.) 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!

## Think 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



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

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

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). Does it amaze you that He says that about you? 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.

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.

aaa

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!



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

