

I Choose Truth

CHALLENGE



EXPERIENCE THE FREEDOM OF WALKING
IN THE TRUTH IN EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE.



© 2018 *Revive Our Hearts*
ISBN 978-1-934718-72-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in other works and reviews.

Edited by Erin Davis, Mindy Kroesche, and Hayley Mullins. Design by Lauren Davis.

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission.

Scripture marked NKJV taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™ All rights reserved.

Contents



Day 1: Welcome to the I Choose Truth Challenge!	2
Day 2: I Choose to Believe That God's Word Is Truth	4
Day 3: How to Avoid Being Shipwrecked	6
Day 4: Align Your Head and Heart	8
Day 5: Rest & Reflect	10
Day 6: Can I Trust That My Father Knows Best?	12
Day 7: No Masks Needed	14
Day 8: Stop Running After Squirrels!	16
Day 9: How to Build a Firm Foundation	18
Day 10: There's No Mistake About It	20
Day 11: A Strong Arm to Hold You Up	22
Day 12: Rest & Reflect	24
Day 13: Your Bill's Been Paid For	26
Day 14: You're Dead. Own It.	28
Day 15: You've Been Made New	30
Day 16: You're a Powerhouse!	32
Day 17: They've Hurt Me Too Much	34
Day 18: No One Too Difficult to Love	36
Day 19: Rest & Reflect	38
Day 20: Can I Be Thankful for This?	40
Day 21: A Muscle We Must Learn to Flex	42
Day 22: I'm Responsible for Me	44
Day 23: What's Growing in Your Garden?	46
Day 24: Finding Joy by Letting Go	48
Day 25: The Blessing of Submission	50
Day 26: Rest & Reflect	52
Day 27: True Joy, Not Mere Sprinkles	54
Day 28: The Only Route to Godliness	56
Day 29: It Can Only Get Better	58
Day 30: Exit Centerstage	60
Conclusion, Let's Start Building!	62
Author Bios	64

DAY ONE



“ . . . and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” — John 8:32

Your Challenge:

In thirty days experience the freedom and joy of walking in the Truth in every area of your life.

Warning: Your quiet time has become a blast zone.

This is more than just a devotional. It's a stick of dynamite. Don't be alarmed! By picking up this 30-day challenge, you've lit a fuse that we're praying will explode into greater freedom, fullness, and fruitfulness in Christ.

Dynamite was invented by Alfred Nobel. That name should have a familiar ring to it. Alfred donated the millions made from his explosive invention to form a series of international prizes to recognize the top discoveries in the fields of physics, chemistry, literature, medicine, and, most notably—peace.

So it is with Truth! God's Word works like dynamite, blasting out lies we've believed until only the bedrock of God's Word remains. When Truth is exposed, true *peace* can be built upon that solid foundation.

We're thrilled that you've accepted this 30-Day Truth Challenge! In each day's reading, you'll find:

- a challenge
- a verse highlighting a specific Truth from God's Word

- a short devotional
- and reflection questions

Over the course of this challenge, you'll hear from women in different seasons of life who have been deeply impacted by an explosion of Truth in their own lives. This is intentional because the Truth challenge will find you, the readers, experiencing life on every point of the spectrum. Yet we are all united by our need for God's Truth. Our blended voices reflect your varied experiences and work like a symphony, declaring in harmony, "We choose Truth, too!"

This is not a laundry list. You don't have to accept every challenge and assignment. Lean on the Holy Spirit, asking Him to use this challenge to expose areas where you've fallen for lies and need a fresh dose of God's Truth.

And if you want to go deeper, throughout the journey we'll help you build on the foundation of God's Truth with additional resources. Don't worry if you miss a day or fall behind. Getting God's Truth into your life is the goal, not checking each day off the list. We will also include a day to "rest and reflect" each week so that you can carefully consider any lies that have been exposed through the power of God's Word.

Your thirty-day journey begins today. We're praying God will use this time to ignite an explosion of Truth in your life!

— Erin Davis

Reflect and Respond:

- What has been the impact of Truth on your life already? _____

- What primary ways has God exposed you to His Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Set aside some time to pray, asking the Lord to use this challenge to blast lies out of your life and replace them with His Truth. Ask Him to expose any areas of your life where you have not been choosing Truth and to give you the courage and desire to cling to His Word in that area. Consider repeating the prayer Jesus prayed for us in the Garden for yourself and the many other women who will take this challenge.

"Sanctify [us] in the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17). Amen.

DAY TWO



Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. — John 17:17

Your Challenge:

Believe that God's Word is the source of Truth. Choose to open your Bible daily looking for Truth about who God is and who He has made you to be.

The moment of His crucifixion was so close, He could almost feel His captors breathing down His neck. And yet . . .

Jesus did not run.
He did not hide.
He knelt and prayed.

In John 17 we find the words Jesus uttered to the Father immediately before His arrest. Like the priests in the Holy of Holies before Him, Jesus interceded for the people of God. He looked forward through the ages and prayed—for us, asking the Father to anchor our feet firmly in Truth.

“Sanctify them in the truth;
your word is truth” (John 17:17).

To sanctify means to purify, to cleanse . . . to set apart. Jesus knew there was one thing that would set us apart from those who do not know Him—the Truth.

While the culture may beat the drum of “my truth” and “your truth,” Jesus made it clear there is one source of Truth—the Word of God.

As we begin this 30-day challenge together, we’re asking you to commit to open your Bible daily. Rather than searching for truth within ourselves or running first to others, we will turn toward the Word of God as the ultimate source of Truth.

Reflect and Respond:

- Do you believe that Truth is absolute or subject to change? _____

- How has God used His Word in the past to impact your understanding of what is true? _____

- In what areas of your life are you searching for Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Look up the following passages. What does each one reveal to us about the source of Truth?

- Psalm 119:160 — The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.
- John 4:24 — “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”
- John 14:6 — Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- Ephesians 6:14 — Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

Based on these verses, write out a definition of the word Truth.

DAY THREE



You are good and do good; teach me your statutes. — Psalm 119:68

Your Challenge:

I believe that God is good and that He is good to me.

It's not something we'd ever say aloud, but I've sat across the table from enough tearful women (and been that tearful woman enough times myself) to know that deep down we have a hunch—a hunch that God is not really good. Or at least we wonder, *Will God be good to **me**?*

It's a lie we've been falling for since the Garden of Eden.

The consequences have always been devastating. Without the bedrock conviction that God is good, our hearts are easily shipwrecked, tossed against the rocks by the storms of life.

But feelings aren't facts. Our fear that God is not good or that He will not be good to us doesn't change His nature.

Like the Psalmist, we can choose to declare, "You are good and do good" (119:68). That conviction is an anchor that holds in every storm.

DAY FOUR



For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. — Romans 8:38–39

Your Challenge:

I will be confident that God loves me because Jesus has shown me His love.

Do you have this problem? What I know intellectually often doesn't match my emotions. I come to passages like Romans 8 where Paul revels in God's love and ask, Why don't I feel that excited? Sure, I know God loves me. I've been singing that Truth since I was a little girl ("Jesus loves me this I know. For the Bible tells me so . . ."). But I don't always feel loved or loveable.

Paul could declare God's love with confidence because he had learned with both his head and his heart that God delighted in him.

He knew the Truth: Jesus became man to demonstrate God's love to him, died to atone for his sins, and rose again to sanctify him. And Paul had experienced this love firsthand when Jesus interrupted his life.

By preaching the Truth of God’s love in Christ to himself and others, Paul reviewed that experience until it wove itself into his heartstrings.

So to connect the Truth in your head with your feelings, remember how you first experienced Jesus’ love. Rehearse it to yourself and others. As you do, it will invade your imagination, inspire your affections, and underscore your days, moving the Truth of God’s love from your head straight into your heart.

Reflect and Respond:

- What Truth about Jesus first captivated your heart? _____

- How did God first show His love to you personally? _____

- How can you rehearse that Truth and experience today? _____

Go Deeper:

- Take time to reflect on your experience of God’s love. Then journal your thoughts or create something—a blog post, painting, audio recording, etc.—to celebrate and remember.
- Read these blog posts at ReviveOurHearts.com:
When God’s Love Is Confusing
Reasons to Remember
- Study (or memorize) Romans 8. It’s a powerful gospel truth passage.

DAY FIVE



“ . . . and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” — John 8:32

Your Challenge:

Rest and reflect on God's Truth today.

Set aside some time today to reflect on the Truths you've encountered through the challenge this week. Remember, this challenge is not a race, nor is it a to-do list. Instead, it's a choice to turn toward God's Word, asking Him to reveal Truth because Truth always leads to freedom. Take time to pray through each of the daily challenges, asking God for wisdom to identify where you need to choose Truth.

- **Challenge:** Experience the freedom and joy of walking in Truth in every area of your life. (John 8:32)
- **Challenge:** I choose to believe that God's Word is Truth. (John 17:17)

- **Challenge:** I believe that God is good and that He is good to me. (Psalm 119:68)
- **Challenge:** I will be confident that God loves me because Jesus has shown me His love. (Rom. 8:38–39)

As you meditate again on these vital Truths, rest in Jesus' promise that Truth is *knowable* and *life-changing*.

Reflect and Respond:

- In what areas of your life do you long to experience greater freedom? _____

- Do any of the Truths from this week speak directly to that need? _____

- Did this week's challenge help you identify a specific area where you need to choose Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Look up the following passages as a preview to next week's challenge.

Romans 8:32–33 _____

Ephesians 1:4–6 _____

Psalm 23:1 _____

Isaiah 28:16 _____

Isaiah 46:9–10 _____

2 Corinthians 12:9 _____

DAY SIX



He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all,
how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? — Romans 8:32

Your Challenge:

I choose to trust that God is working through my circumstances for my best—whether I understand what He’s doing or not.

I love to give presents to my children and see their faces light up. But there are times when my “gifts” aren’t received so well. They ask for chips . . . and I give them vegetables. They want hours of TV . . . but I make them finish chores instead.

They want one thing, but I give them another—for their good.

Like our heavenly Father, I want to give my children what’s best for them. But here’s a big difference: while I sometimes struggle to know what’s best for my kids, God always knows what I truly need.

I mostly respond to God’s gifts in two ways. As His child, sometimes I receive His will for me with joy

and thankfulness . . . or I act like He’s making me eat my carrots. I forget that this God is Someone who can be trusted to give me good things.

While I may not always understand what He’s doing, I know that God is working out His good for my life. I can trust Him in the ups, the downs, and the daily drudgeries—because He has already given me the ultimate *best* gift of His Son.

Reflect and Respond:

- How do you struggle to see that God is working out His best for you? _____

- Today, how can you choose to trust that God wants to give you good things? _____

- What Scripture verses can you use to remind yourself that God wants you to have His best? _____

Go Deeper:

Take time to read and meditate on the following verses. How do they reinforce the truth that God wants you to have His best?

- Psalm 103:1–5 — Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
- Romans 8:28 — And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- Philippians 2:13 — for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Perhaps pop in your earbuds and listen to the *Revive Our Hearts* broadcast, “Is God Really Good” as you study. (Available at ReviveOurHearts.com.)

DAY SEVEN



... even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. — Ephesians 1:4–6

Your Challenge:

I believe that God's acceptance of me is real and enough. I don't need to keep striving.

Have you ever walked into a room where you could fully be yourself? No masks needed? No walls up? Where there are people who embrace you and are genuinely glad to see you? If you have ever tasted that sweetness once, you probably keep looking for it. (I know I do.)

Here's the Truth: In Christ, God gives you that kind of welcome. If you believe in what Jesus has done for you, He has accepted you without pretense. You don't have to keep searching—you can rest!

There are no fake smiles or hypocritical kindnesses in God. You, with all your weaknesses and imperfections, are wanted and welcomed. No pretending or earning needed. Nothing will make Him turn on you or turn you away. He embraces you as a true Father, who not only welcomes you in with delight, but He has done everything needed to provide what you lack.

Reflect and Respond:

- Have you ever experienced full acceptance? How does looking through that lens at God's relationship to you change your perspective? _____

- What parts of your life do you hide from God and others out of fear of rejection? _____

- How do you try to earn the welcome and acceptance of God? _____

Go Deeper:

Read Ephesians 1:3–14 and 2:1–10 several times, thinking about the questions below. Write your thoughts or mark sections that stand out in your Bible:

How does God describe you before Jesus saved you? _____

What has God done for you through His Son? _____

How does God now describe you in Christ? _____

DAY EIGHT



The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. — Psalm 23:1

Your Challenge:

I will pursue Jesus as my only source of true fulfillment and joy.

“Daddy! I. Want. A. Squirrel!”

If you’ve read the children’s classic *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, you know exactly who said that. Veruca Salt is a selfish, spoiled heiress, who wins a trip to Willy Wonka’s magical candy factory.

After seeing Wonka’s trained squirrels in action, she can’t be satisfied with the ridiculous number of pets her rich daddy’s bought for her.

The girl’s father is unsuccessful in purchasing one of the rodents, leading Veruca to screech, “If you won’t get me a squirrel, I’ll get one *myself!*” Needless to say, it doesn’t end well. The very squirrel she pursues becomes the means to her destruction.

Perhaps you see such a scene and are both entertained and horrified. *How can anybody be such a brat?* But really . . . we're all Veruca. Our well-worded prayers can easily mask a heart that says, *I. Want. It. Now!* And when God says "no," our actions often scream, *If you won't give it to me, Lord, I'll get it myself.* Desire thwarted. God rejected. Squirrels chased. Destruction.

Friend, when we look to anything but Jesus for fulfillment, we'll always come up short. Our desires become our downfall. But when we believe and live the Truth that "God is enough," the satisfaction He gives is better than a trained squirrel any day. Guaranteed.

Reflect and Respond:

- How do you respond when God says "no"? _____

- What "squirrels" are you chasing? What is the end they're leading you to? _____

- What desire do you need Jesus, your good Shepherd, to fill for you today? Cry out to Him with a humble spirit. He's listening. _____

Go Deeper:

Take some time to be honest before God. Why are your "squirrels" so appealing to you? What do you feel you're missing out on? Speak what's in your heart, no matter how raw or painful, and ask Him to fulfill those needs for you.

DAY NINE



Therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’” — Isaiah 28:16

Your Challenge:

I will build my life on the firm foundation that Christ can be trusted.

Pouring the foundation isn’t the most exciting part of building a house. (I’d much rather pick out the furniture!) But it is the most critical.

Since the foundation is the base upon which the entire house must stand, it is the architectural element that demands the most attention to detail and accuracy. This is as true for our lives as it is for our homes.

A cracked, haphazard, or neglected foundation will make it impossible to stand.

We see architectural language woven throughout all of Scripture. Surely it was no accident that Jesus was the son of a carpenter, though Joseph didn’t need to teach Him how to build things well. He’s been doing it since the beginning of time.

- It was Christ who poured the foundations of the earth.
... when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth (Prov. 8:29).

- He has laid for us a “precious cornerstone” and a “sure foundation”.

*Therefore thus says the Lord God,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’” (Isa. 28:16)*

- He, Himself is that cornerstone.
The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. (Ps. 118:22)
- And He calls us to be “living stones” built upon the foundation of Him.
*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:
“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” (1 Peter 2:4–6).*

When we choose to believe that Christ is trustworthy and that His Word is the foundation upon which we can erect our entire lives, we are able to stand firm. Without that bedrock Truth, the walls are destined to crumble around us.

Reflect and Respond:

- Who is a woman you know who clearly trusts the Lord? _____

- How do you see this firm foundation demonstrated in the way that she lives? _____

- Consider making a coffee date with this woman soon to hear how her trust in the Lord has solidified and what advice she can offer to help you trust Him more.

Go Deeper:

In Luke 6:47–49, Jesus gives us a word picture for what it means to trust Him. Spend time meditating on this passage this week, asking the Lord to:

- Reveal areas of your life where you are not trusting Him. _____

- Use this challenge to strengthen your foundation with Truth.

DAY TEN



... remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.” — Isaiah 46:9–10

Your Challenge:

No matter what today brings, I will trust that God is working out His eternal purposes in my life.

God, are You sure about this? Maybe this would have been a better job for someone else.

As the parent of an adopted child who sometimes struggles, this thought often pops into my mind. I love my son unconditionally but often feel inadequate for some of the challenges we face. That leads me to question whether he would have been better off with someone else. Am I really the best mom for him? Was it a mistake that I was chosen to raise him?

But then I remember one of the verses God put on our hearts when our son joined our family:

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD,
plans for welfare and not for evil,
to give you a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11).

That verse underscored everything we felt about our long struggle with infertility and waiting to adopt—God had a plan, and it was a good one. And while we don’t necessarily see how things always fit together along the journey, we can trust Him.

In the midst of my uncertainty about how to help my son—and the many other uncertainties of life—here’s Truth I can hang on to: God doesn’t make mistakes. He knew exactly what He was doing when He chose me to be my son’s mom, and He knows exactly what He’s doing through the other circumstances I face. Because my life belongs to Him, He will work out His eternal purposes for me—and nothing or no one can stop Him.

Reflect and Respond:

- Are there any circumstances in your life where you feel like God might have made a mistake? How can you broaden your perspective in order to see God’s purpose for you in these areas?

- How does knowing that nothing or no one can stop God’s purposes for your life help you in your current situation? _____

- What practical steps could you take today to remind yourself that God doesn’t make mistakes?

Go Deeper:

If you need a tangible reminder that God doesn’t make mistakes write out Isaiah 46:9–10 on a notecard and put it where you’ll be able to see it throughout the day. Take time to praise God that His “counsel shall stand, and [He] will accomplish all [His] purpose.”

If you visit ReviveOurHearts.com, you can also print off a Truth That Sets Us Free bookmark to remind yourself of the Truth that God doesn’t make mistakes. (Along with many other essential Truths!)

DAY ELEVEN



But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. — 2 Corinthians 12:9

Your Challenge:

I choose to rely on God’s sufficient grace, not my own strength, to face what today holds.

“Really, God? I have to struggle with *this*, too?”

I had been walking with Jesus for less than a year, and this temptation I was experiencing felt unbearable. My emotions ranged from absolute disgust, to paralyzing shame, to anger at God.

Taking my cues from the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 12:7–10), I prayed with desperation and tears over the next week, begging God to take away my same-sex attraction. But just like God said “no” to removing Paul’s thorn in the flesh (whatever it was), I saw no sign that my struggle with temptation was going away either. And for a time, I gave up on asking God to change me. (Side note: I’ve learned since then that the problem isn’t the *asking*, it’s making an *idol* out of the outcome you’re asking for.)

But even in my immature frustration, I still believed God’s promise: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” If God wouldn’t change me instantly, He would help me. His strength—His grace—could step in where I am weak.

And it has. This promise is still true. Though my battle with this temptation has changed, it has not disappeared. (Come quickly, Lord Jesus!) I have often stumbled by trying to be self-sufficient, but when I rely on His grace, it always gives me the strength I need.

Friend, God's grace is sufficient for whatever trial or temptation you face today, no matter how painful it is. You don't have to collapse. You don't have to give into sin. His strong arm is there, waiting to hold you up.

Reflect and Respond:

- What do you need strength for today? (Circumstances? Temptations? Physical, emotional, or spiritual struggles?) _____

- Do you truly believe that His grace is sufficient for you? _____

- What small step can you take to rely more fully on His grace and strength? _____

Go Deeper:

Using the lines below, label one column "I am" and label the other "God is." Then write down your areas of weakness and how God provides strength. (Example: I am . . . weak. God is . . . my strength.) Wherever possible, add Scripture references to your "God is" list.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

DAY TWELVE



Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. — John 15:4

Your Challenge:

Rest and reflect on God's Truth today.

Set aside some time today to reflect on the Truths you've encountered through the challenge this week. Remember, this challenge is not a race, nor is it a to-do list. Instead, it's a choice to turn toward God's Word, asking Him to reveal Truth because Truth always leads to freedom. Take time to pray through each of the daily challenges, asking God for wisdom to identify where you need to choose Truth.

- **Challenge:** I choose to trust that God is working through my circumstances for my best—whether I understand what He's doing or not. (Rom. 8:32)
- **Challenge:** I believe that God's acceptance of me is real and enough. I don't need to keep striving. (Eph. 1:4–6)
- **Challenge:** I will pursue Jesus as my only source of true fulfillment and joy. (Ps. 23:1)
- **Challenge:** I will build my life on the firm foundation that Christ can be trusted. (Is. 28:16)
- **Challenge:** No matter what today brings, I will trust that God is working out His eternal purposes in my life. (Isa. 46:9–10)
- **Challenge:** I choose to rely on God's sufficient grace, not my own strength, to face what today holds. (2 Cor. 12:9)

As you meditate again on these vital Truths, choose to abide, or cling to God's promise that when we cling to Him, He produces fruit in our lives.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me" (John 15:4).

Reflect and Respond:

- In what areas of your life do you long to experience greater freedom? _____

- Do any of the Truths from this week speak directly to that need? _____

- Did this week's challenge help you identify a specific area where you need to choose Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Look up the following passages as a preview to next week's challenge.

1 John 1:7 _____

Romans 6:6-7 _____

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 _____

Philippians 2:13 _____

Mark 11:25 _____

Matthew 5:44 _____

DAY THIRTEEN



But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. — 1 John 1:7

Your Challenge:

I choose to believe that Jesus' blood is enough. I don't need to pay for my sins.

A coworker and I have a standing meeting—with tacos. Our favorite place is also the favorite of everyone at the office, so it wasn't unusual when we saw a friendly face waving at us. We said "hello" to our friend, Sue, sat down at another table, ordered, and ate. As we went up to pay, our server informed us, "Your meal's already been covered . . . by that lady over there." We looked over at Sue, who smiled sweetly at us. We smiled back with gratitude.

Now imagine if I had turned around and said, "I know this has already been paid for, but I feel like I need to contribute." My server probably would have thought I was joking! Or what if I had gone up to Sue and said, "Thank you, but you shouldn't have to pay for my tacos. Let me repay you." That response would be rude and ungrateful! Pride gone amok!

DAY FOURTEEN



We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. — Romans 6:6–7

Your Challenge:

I believe that I am now dead to sin, alive to God, and in Christ Jesus.

Did you know you died with Jesus in AD 30? Oh, I know you weren't even a thought in your mother's mind yet, but Scripture is clear that because of your union with Christ, this did take place:

We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin (Rom. 6:6–7).

You are no longer a slave to sin because . . . dead people can't sin! Jesus did the hard work for you. Now, here's your part:

DAY FIFTEEN



Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. — Isaiah 46:9–10

Your Challenge:

I can find assurance in God's promise that my past sins are forgiven through Christ and I have been made new.

It tends to happen at bedtime. About once a week, my daughter comes wandering out of her room, bothered by something she's done. "I feel so bad, Mom," she says. "I just can't stop thinking about it."

It might be a sin she committed that day or something that happened over a year ago. Her eight-year-old "past" continues to haunt her.

As I pray with her and remind her of God's promise of forgiveness, I know I need this Truth for my forty-something-year-old self as well. When remembrances of past sin come into my mind, I can either let them control my thoughts, obsessing over how I messed up and despairing of ever getting it right . . . or I can choose to remember I've been washed pure in the blood of the Lamb and God has removed my sins as far as the east is from the west (Rev. 7:14; Ps. 103:12).

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul reminds the Corinthian church that once upon a time, they were separated from God by their sin. But in Christ, they've been made new.

Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God (vv. 9–11).

I have sinned in the past. But that's where it lies—in the past. Because of Jesus, that stain is gone. My sins are forgiven. I am free to move forward and serve Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's a Truth that can help us all to rest easy at night.

Reflect and Respond:

- What past sins continue to plague you? What is your normal reaction when they come to mind?

- What steps do you need to take to remind yourself that you've been forgiven and made new through Christ? _____

- In what ways does God want to you leave your sin behind and move forward in serving Him?

Go Deeper:

Write out Philippians 3:13–14 in your journal, on a card, blackboard, or somewhere else:

DAY SIXTEEN



For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work
for his good pleasure. — Philippians 2:13

Your Challenge:

I will cooperate with the Holy Spirit in keeping God's commands.

When you trusted in Christ, He made His home in you. That means the same powerful Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead now lives in you. You're a powerhouse!

You used to have just one way of living—it was always and only a life controlled by your selfish, sinful desires.

Now, though, you have another option! You can “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

Each day, each moment, you can either:

1. Operate in the *flesh*, or
2. Operate in the *Spirit*.

Which will it be? While your justification (forgiveness of sin) was all God's work, your sanctification (the process of you being freed from the power of sin) is a working partnership between you and the Spirit of God. Will you cooperate with Him in order to become more and more like His beautiful Son, Jesus?

Reflect and Respond:

- How often do you pause and remember that God has made His home in you? How would doing this help? _____

- When you sin, are you more likely to: _____
 - a. Give up and assume you can't keep God's commands, or
 - b. Quickly repent and ask the Holy Spirit to empower you the next time?_____

Go Deeper:

God has given us a list of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:19–23 so we can clearly know who we're letting be in control. Read over these two lists to determine whether you are operating in the flesh or in the Spirit.

DAY SEVENTEEN



“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” — Mark 11:25

Your Challenge:

I choose to forgive the one who has sinned against me—not because their sin hasn’t caused me great pain but because God has forgiven *all* my sins.

Do you have a situation where forgiveness seems impossible? Perhaps you’re thinking, *He’s hurt me too deeply.*

I wouldn’t begin to deny your hurt. But we must ask ourselves, *Is my ability or willingness to forgive based on the magnitude of the offense?*

Scripture reminds us that God has “cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (Mic. 7:19). Not some, but all.

You may not feel any natural “great love” toward the one who brought such shipwreck into your life. No one would expect you to. The power and beauty of the Christian life is that “it is God who works in you both to *will* and to *do* for his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13 NKJV).

Remember, when it comes to forgiveness, our Lord would not command us to do something that He would not enable us to do—or that He hasn’t done Himself.

Reflect and Respond:

- Because God has forgiven you—and because of His boundless life which now indwells you—*what offense is too great for you to forgive?* _____

- What fears, feelings, or reservations have kept you from forgiving the person who sinned against you? How does God’s Word address these concerns? _____

Go Deeper:

If you want to dig deeper into what forgiveness is and isn’t—the promises and the myths—check out Nancy’s book *Choosing Forgiveness: Your Journey to Freedom* or listen to the radio series “Seeking Him: Setting Your Captives Free” on ReviveOurHearts.com.

DAY EIGHTEEN



But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. — Matthew 5:44

Your Challenge:

I believe that love isn't merely a feeling; it's an action. I will let this shape the way I love those who are difficult in my life.

No one is impossible for you to love. That's because love is not merely a feeling.

You and I won't feel warm fuzzies toward everyone, and that's okay. God's Word defines love as an *action*:

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters (1 John 3:16 NIV).

We don't learn what true love is by listening to the latest Taylor Swift hit. We learn what true love is by looking to Jesus. He laid down His perfect life for us . . . when we were His *enemies* (Rom. 5:10)!

Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf shows us that love means seeking another's best at our expense. This is actually possible because *the God who is love* now resides within us! No one is now too difficult for us to love.

Reflect and Respond:

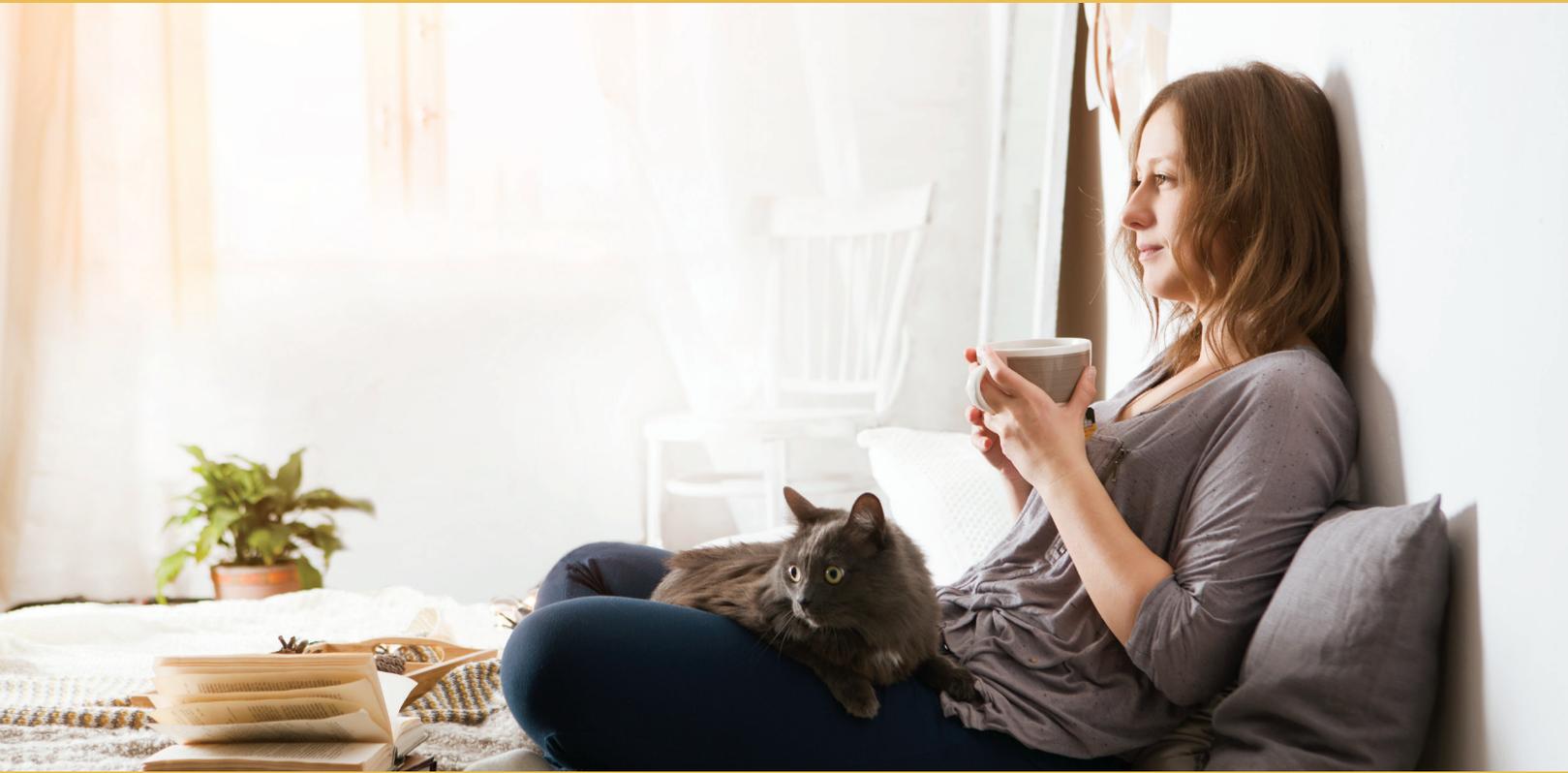
- When is the last time I sought someone else's best *at my expense*? Is this something I do regularly? _____

- Who are the most difficult people for me to love right now, and what can I tangibly do to bless them? _____

Go Deeper:

Having trouble loving people? If so, prayerfully read or listen to the book of 1 John. (It's a fairly short book with just five chapters. You can do this!)

DAY NINETEEN



Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. — Matthew 11:28–30

Your Challenge:

Rest and reflect on God's Truth today.

Set aside some time today to reflect on the Truths you've encountered through the challenge this week. Remember, this challenge is not a race, nor is it a to-do list. Instead, it's a choice to turn toward God's Word, asking Him to reveal Truth because Truth always leads to freedom. Take time to pray through each of the daily challenges, asking God for wisdom to identify where you need to choose Truth.

- **Challenge:** I choose to believe that Jesus' blood is enough. I don't need to pay for my sins (1 John 1:7).
- **Challenge:** I believe that I am now dead to sin, alive to God, and in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:6–7).
- **Challenge:** I can find assurance in God's promise that my past sins are forgiven through Christ and I have been made new (1 Cor. 6:9–11).
- **Challenge:** I will cooperate with the Holy Spirit in keeping God's commands (Phil. 2:13).
- **Challenge:** I choose to forgive the one who has sinned against me—not because their sin hasn't caused me great pain but because God has forgiven all my sins (Mark 11:25).

- **Challenge:** I believe that love isn't merely a feeling; it's an action. I will let this shape the way I love those who are difficult in my life (Matt. 5:44).

As you meditate again on these vital Truths, enjoy Jesus' invitation to come away with Him to rest.

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28–30).

Reflect and Respond:

- In what areas of your life do you long to experience greater freedom? _____

- Do any of the Truths from this week speak directly to that need? _____

- Did this week's challenge help you identify a specific area where you need to choose Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Look up the following passages as a preview to next week's challenge.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 _____

Hebrews 13:5 _____

Ezekiel 18:19–22 _____

Galatians 6:7–8 _____

Matthew 16:25 _____

Ephesians 5:21 _____

DAY TWENTY



Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. — 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Your Challenge:

I choose to find ways to thank the Lord in the midst of all things He brings my way—both the good and the hard.

Thank you.

It's a phrase I say countless times throughout the day to numerous people. And it's something I tell God a lot, too.

- *“Thank You, God, for my family.”*
- *“Thank You for a comfortable home.”*
- *“Thank You for a job I love.”*

God has blessed me with so much. I can't help but thank Him. But there are other areas where gratitude doesn't come so easily.

- That difficult neighbor who I've tried making friends with to no avail.
- An ongoing health issue with no relief in sight.
- A parent dying from cancer.

In response to the hard things in life, it's difficult to feel grateful. But the Truth is that giving thanks is what God wants me to do—in fact, the Bible says it's His will for me.

First Thessalonians 5:18 says that we are to “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

I can't always be thankful for the hard things in life, but I can find things to be thankful for in the midst of them. It doesn't necessarily make things any less difficult, but it does help to change my perspective into trust that God is using these (and all) circumstances to conform me to the image of His Son.

And that is definitely something to be thankful for.

Reflect and Respond:

- What are you finding hard to give thanks for to God today? _____

- How can choosing to give thanks in the midst of these circumstances help to change how you think about them? _____

Go Deeper:

If you're finding it hard to “give thanks in all circumstances” today, check out the radio program, “Thankful When It's Difficult,” from Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth at ReviveOurHearts.com.

DAY TWENTY-ONE



Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” — Hebrews 13:5

Your Challenge:

Rather than allowing circumstances to dictate my mood, I choose to be content because Christ is with me.

We study to learn science, math, and other languages.

We practice to learn skills that are new to us.

But somehow, we expect *contentment* to be something the Lord simply downloads into our hearts through an invisible USB drive.

Contentment is a muscle we must practice flexing. It’s one Paul proclaimed he had “learned” in the laboratory of life (Phil. 4:11–12). Contentment isn’t a spiritual gift, given to only a few. It’s a *choice* based on what we know to be true about God.

The writer of Hebrews gives contentment as the what, “be content with what you have” (13:5), but he doesn’t leave us guessing on the why, “for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”

We may lose money. We may lose friends. We may lose opportunities we desperately want. But we can never lose Jesus. No, not ever. His presence and promises are enough to override any temporary pain or setback.

Paul lays out an important equation for us. Godliness (being like God) + contentment (valuing God's presence over our circumstances) = great gain (1 Tim. 6:6–8). When we refuse to allow our circumstances to dictate our mood but rather choose contentment because Christ is always with us, the gain is great indeed.

Reflect and Respond:

- What are you finding hard to give thanks for to God today? _____

- What circumstances in your life threaten your contentment right now? _____

- What's one promise from Scripture you can hold onto tightly to remind yourself that God is better than your circumstances? _____

Go Deeper:

Pop in your earbuds and listen to these past *Revive Our Hearts* broadcasts on the subject of contentment. While you're stretching your contentment muscles, consider giving your other muscles a workout, too. Listen while you walk, and ponder the gifts God has provided all around you.

- You Can Develop a Contented Heart
- Contentment or Bitterness

Download them at ReviveOurHearts.com

DAY TWENTY-TWO



“Yet you say, ‘Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?’ When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

“But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live.” — Ezekiel 18:19-22

Your Challenge:

I choose to take responsibility for my own actions, no matter how other people might treat me.

I had a teacher in elementary school who would often remind our class there was no such animal as a “yabbit.” You know, “yeah, but . . .”—the common excuse we often make for our behavior.

Even though I’m long past school age, this excuse still pops up in my interactions with others.

- I lose my temper with my kids. “Yeah, but they were pushing my buttons!”
- I get impatient with the driver in front of me. “Yeah, but they are going so slow!”
- I have a rift in a relationship with a family member. “Yeah, but I tried to apologize, and she won’t forgive me.”

At the end of the day, I need to exterminate the “yabbit” from my life and accept this truth: I’m responsible before God for my behavior and choices.

I can’t control how other people act or respond to me. I can’t even make them accept my apology. What I can control is my own behavior, words, and actions. I will need to give an account to God for those things.

And when I live this way, I will truly be set free.

Reflect and Respond:

- Where do you tend to use the excuse, “yeah, but . . .”? _____

- How do you need to take responsibility for your own actions instead? _____

- How can taking personal responsibility help you find freedom? _____

Go Deeper:

Want to know more about this liberating truth? Check out this True Woman blog post, “You Are Responsible for Your Own Actions,” from Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth at ReviveOurHearts.com.

DAY TWENTY-THREE



Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. — Galatians 6:7-8

Your Challenge:

I will choose to invest in the things that produce spiritual fruit.

So many deep, spiritual truths have been seared into my heart with a garden trowel.

For example, in Galatians 6:7 Paul warns us, “God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

Every gardener knows this to be true. We plant pumpkin seeds and expect a pumpkin crop. We plant beans to grow, well . . . beans. One hundred percent of the time what we plant grows into what we pick.

So it is with our spiritual lives. Paul reminds us that when we sow choices that feed our flesh, more flesh is what we can expect in return. When we sow choices that feed the spirit, it is the Spirit that sprouts up more and more in our lives.

This principle always holds true. We cannot feed and nurture our flesh and expect our spirit to grow. Likewise, when we commit to feed our spirit through God's Word (like you are through this challenge), we *will* grow to be more like Christ.

Let's roll up our proverbial sleeves and get our spiritual hands dirty, digging in to God's Word together in these days. When we do, we can rest in God's promise that He will produce much fruit in us.

Reflect and Respond:

- In what ways are you tempted to sow (or feed) your flesh? _____

- In what ways does God's Word encourage us to sow (or feed) the spirit? _____

- What evidence have you seen in your own life, and the lives of others, that feeding the spirit always causes Christ-like growth? _____

Go Deeper:

Feed your spirit by spending time exploring these additional gardening metaphors found in Scripture. What does each one teach us about who God is and how He asks us to live?

Isaiah 5:1–7 _____

Matthew 13:1–23 _____

John 15:1–11 _____

DAY TWENTY-FOUR



For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. — Matthew 16:25

Your Challenge:

I choose to surrender control of my life to God and accept the plan He has for me.

There's a poem by missionary Amy Carmichael that describes our age-old struggle as humans to try and control the pain we experience in this world. Throughout the stanzas, the author lists several possibilities for finding peace.

Trying to forget, hard work, withdrawal from the world—all conclusions she eventually labels as vain. But finally, she discovers the one action that helps: “For in acceptance lieth peace.”

Every time in life I've tried to control circumstances to get the outcome I want, it hasn't gone well. I've managed, manipulated, and maneuvered, but all I got in the end was anxiety, turmoil, and heartache.

The Truth is that despite my attempts, I wasn't in control and never could be—and the sooner I embraced that reality, the better. God is both the Author and Designer of my life. All those times I was trying to make things happen, I was really trying to wrest control from Him—the One whom I'd surrendered to decades earlier.

During difficult circumstances, it is when I finally surrender again to Him that I find peace and re-learn this important Truth: The pathway to true joy is to relinquish control.

Reflect and Respond:

- What areas of life have you tried to control? _____

- Where is God asking you to let go and accept the circumstances He's placed you in? _____

- What difference would it make to relinquish control to Him? _____

Go Deeper:

Spend time reflecting on and memorizing Matthew 16:25:

“For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Let this Truth from God's Word sink into your heart as you learn to relinquish control to Him.

DAY TWENTY-FIVE



Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. — Ephesians 5:21

Your Challenge:

I will submit to authority joyfully as an expression of my faith in Christ.

If there is an animal on the planet that reminds me most of me, it's probably the bulldog. I tend to be more aggressive than passive. I've been known to let out a growl or two when things aren't going my way. I've never been one to roll over and settle for a belly rub when I could bare my teeth instead.

While my tenacity and boldness are virtues I embrace as God-given, I've also learned to enjoy the beauty of submission. That's not because submission comes easily to me (it doesn't) or because it always feels good (nope again), but because God's Word is clear: My willingness to submit to others is clear evidence of my willingness to submit to Christ.

You see . . .

- “There is no authority except from God” (Rom. 13:1).
- Submission is the fruit of humility (1 Peter 5:5).
- And ultimately we submit to each other out of reverence for *Christ* (Eph. 5:21).

Rather than seeing submission as a chain I must yank against, I am free to embrace it, knowing that God is my ultimate authority and He is able to care for me in every circumstance.

Reflect and Respond:

- What messages does our culture teach most often in regard to submission and authority? _____

- How do these messages contrast with what we read in Scripture? _____

- In what areas of your life are you struggling to submit to God’s authority? _____

Go Deeper:

Make a list of the human authorities God has placed in your life (husband, boss, pastor, etc.). Commit to pray for these authorities this week, asking the Lord to grant them wisdom and you a willingness to submit out of reverence to Him.

For further study, check out this broadcast at ReviveOurHearts.com: “He Bowed His Head.”

DAY TWENTY-SIX



But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name,
he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance
all that I have said to you. — Matthew 11:28–30

Your Challenge:

Rest and reflect on God's Truth today.

Set aside some time today to reflect on the Truths you've encountered through the challenge this week. Remember, this challenge is not a race, nor is it a to-do list. Instead, it's a choice to turn toward God's Word, asking Him to reveal Truth because Truth always leads to freedom. Take time to pray through each of the daily challenges, asking God for wisdom to identify where you need to choose Truth.

- **Challenge:** I choose to find ways to thank the Lord in the midst of all things He brings my way—both the good and the hard (1 Thess. 5:18).
- **Challenge:** Rather than allowing circumstances to dictate my mood, I choose to be content because Christ is with me (Heb. 13:5).
- **Challenge:** I choose to take responsibility for my own actions, no matter how other people might treat me (Ezek. 18:19–22).
- **Challenge:** I choose to surrender control of my life to God and accept the plan He has for me (Matt. 16:25).

- **Challenge:** I will submit to authority joyfully as an expression of my faith in Christ (Eph. 5:21).

As you meditate again on these vital Truths, enjoy Jesus' invitation to come away with Him to rest.

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26).

Reflect and Respond:

- In what areas of your life do you long to experience greater freedom? _____

- Do any of the Truths from this week speak directly to that need? _____

- Did this week's challenge help you identify a specific area where you need to choose Truth? _____

Go Deeper:

Look up the following passages as a preview to next week's challenge.

Ephesians 5:26–27 _____

1 Peter 5:10 _____

2 Corinthians 4:17–18 _____

Colossians 1:16–18 _____

DAY TWENTY-SEVEN



That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. — Ephesians 5:26-27

Your Challenge:

I believe that the path to holiness and God's glory requires suffering, but it provides infinite, eternal joy.

It's easy to think that God's love looks something like a cupcake—all sugar and frosting and sprinkles. If that's true, following Jesus means we can get through life with no problems and no pain. But let's be real. Life rarely works that way.

Instead, Scripture tells us that God's love actually looks like a naked, pain-wracked man with gory wounds, dying to sanctify His people (Rom. 5:8; Eph. 5:25–26).

If God's love meant such suffering for Christ, what does His love mean for us? What does it require for Him to sanctify us?

- “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Tim. 3:12)
- “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you face trials of various kinds.” (James 1:2)
- “Blessed are you when others revile you on my account.” (Matt. 5:11)

That doesn’t sound like an easy life.

There will be darkness, not just sugary sweetness. But remember the good news: God loves you. Those hard moments show that He’s in the business of making you more like Jesus and bringing glory to Himself. Nothing is more important than this.

Yes, life with God can be painful and choosing the path of holiness requires sacrifice. But here’s the beauty. Jesus will never leave you, and He promises to give you true joy—not mere sprinkles—as He makes you more like Him.

Reflect and Respond:

- What do you usually picture when you think of God’s love? _____

- How has God used suffering to grow and change you? _____

- What hard, sacrificial obedience is He calling you to? How can you cling to Him and His joy in the midst of it? _____

Go Deeper:

Listen to the “Hope When It Hurts” radio series with authors Kristen Wetherell and Sarah Walton. Through their battles with Lyme disease, these women well understand the refining process of suffering. Sit back, hear, and take in Truth-filled wisdom from some women who’ve been there. Visit ReviveOurHearts.com to listen.

DAY TWENTY-EIGHT



And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. — 1 Peter 5:10

Your Challenge:

I will embrace the difficulties God sends my way today as necessary means for my growth and joy in Christ.

Suffering comes in all shapes and sizes. I wonder what yours looks like right now.

Earlier this year, mine came in the form of relational conflict. I cried and moaned . . . until God reminded me of the bigger picture:

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope (Rom. 5:3–4).

Could anyone else out there use more perseverance, character, and hope?

Just before reading this verse I had bemoaned to a friend, “I’m such a wimp. I have no perseverance!”

“Don’t beat yourself up,” my friend responded. “*You haven’t had enough hardships to grow that perseverance.*”

Oh, right! Perseverance is produced through *suffering*. As is Christ-like character. And even hope. All suffering is ultimately temporary, and God is using it to make us more like Him.

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you (1 Peter 5:10).

There are no shortcuts. Suffering is the only route to godliness.

Do you want the fortitude you see that woman exhibiting in the midst of chemo treatments? Do you long for the peace you see in that strong, single mom? Do you crave deeper intimacy with God? Then embrace the difficulties He sends your way today as necessary means for your growth and joy in Christ.

It's the only way. Suffering only lasts for a little while, and God will use it to establish us, transforming us from wimps to warriors.

Reflect and Respond:

- Do you believe it's possible to become godly without suffering? If so, how? _____

- Do you see a need for greater perseverance, character, and hope in your life? Why or why not?

- What suffering has God currently gifted you with in order to help you become more like Him and enjoy Him more fully? _____

Go Deeper:

If you're wondering how it's possible to "rejoice" or "count it all joy . . . when you meet trials of various kinds" (James 1:2), check out the message "A True Woman Chooses Joy" by James MacDonald at ReviveOurHearts.com.

DAY TWENTY-NINE



For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.. — 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Your Challenge:

I will remember that suffering is temporary but the gifts of God last forever.

“This is the worst hell I’ll ever be in.”

These are the words my friend Andrea said to me as we stood together in her kitchen. Andrea knows a thing or two about suffering. She and her children suffer from chronic illness with symptoms ranging from debilitating exhaustion to out-of-control emotions. Lots of days, just getting out of bed requires all the oomph they can muster.

And yet Andrea has never once invited me to a pity party in her honor. Her perspective is that even if she suffers for the rest of her life, that won’t be long compared to spending forever free of pain and

suffering in the presence of Jesus. She knows, deep down in her core, that this is the worst it will ever get. One day she will trade the pain that comes with life in a broken world for a pain-free eternity.

We all have pain points, areas of our life where we feel the weight of our brokenness intensely, and yet the Bible describes our suffering as “light and momentary” (2 Cor. 4:17) afflictions. God is not making light of our suffering but rather reminding us that for the followers of Christ, things can only get better. What we see and suffer is transient and destined to pass away soon. But what is unseen—the fulfillment of the beautiful promises of God—that will last forever and ever.

Reflect and Respond:

- Who do you know who has suffered exceptionally gracefully? Consider asking her what Truths she clings to most often from God’s Word. _____

- How does knowing that suffering is ultimately temporary help us to endure? _____

Go Deeper:

Read through all of Revelation 21. Consider the bold promises of God made in this passage. Thank God for the future He has for you, and ask Him to shift your focus away from your current sufferings and toward all that He has in store for you.

DAY THIRTY



For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. — Colossians 1:16-18

Your Challenge:

By God's grace, I will live as a Christ-centered woman rather than a self-centered woman.

Colossians 1:15–20 shines a blazing spotlight directly on Jesus. And in so doing, you and I are compelled to exit centerstage. Someone far worthier has just arrived. The red carpet is being unrolled for *Him*.

Who is this all-deserving One?

First, He is the Creator of all that exists—both of the visible and the invisible realms (v. 16). Second, Jesus is the Head of the new creation, the Church. He alone has made it possible for us to be reconciled to the Father. He has made peace between us by His precious lifeblood (v. 20).

CONCLUSION



As we write this, soon we'll exchange our fall decor and pumpkin spice lattes for Thanksgiving feasts and Christmas traditions, yet our need to choose Truth never goes out of season. We want to challenge you to run to God's Word daily and to choose Truth 365 days of the year.

Throughout this challenge, it's been a joy to jump into your life each day to consider together how God's Word empowers us to abandon lies and choose instead to live in the freedom, fullness, and fruitfulness that comes from clinging to God's Word.

On day one, we invited you to think of God's Word like a stick of dynamite, capable of blasting out the lies you've believed until only the bedrock of God's Word remains.

Yet in construction blasting out the bad stuff is only the first phase of the project. Once the rubble has been cleared, there's an opportunity to build something new and strong on a solid foundation. This is our hope for you.

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock” (Matt. 7:24–25).

Once the lies have been exposed, you are free to invite God to build something new in your life, constructed on the unshakable foundation of Truth!

We’ve done plenty of blasting. Now it’s time to start building. As we continue to run from lies and toward God’s Word, He will rebuild our lives on the solid rock of Truth.

As this challenge comes to a close, consider taking another of our 30-Day Challenges. From encouraging your husband to kick-starting a Bible reading habit, there’s a variety of challenges to help you choose Truth in a specific area of your life. Visit ReviveOurHearts.com/Challenges to sign up.

Rooting for you,

The *Revive Our Hearts* Team

AUTHORS



Erin Davis

Erin lives on a working sheep farm with her husband and four boys. She likes early mornings, holding hands with her husband, and dirt underneath her fingernails. Erin stands on this truth: “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

Erin wrote days 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 12, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, and 29.



Mindy Kroesche

Mindy lives in a small city in the Midwest, but she’s really a country girl at heart. Married with two children, she likes relaxing at the lake with her family, curling up with a cozy mystery, and finding out what coffee shops serve the best raspberry mochas. Mindy stands on this truth: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Prov. 3:5–6).

Mindy wrote days 6, 10, 15, 20, 22, and 24.



Paula Marsteller

Paula lives in Syracuse, New York, with her hubby, son, and baby-on-the-way. She likes reading in the hammock, attempting new things in the kitchen, and practicing hospitality with her husband. Paula stands on this truth: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

Paula wrote days 14, 16, 18, 28, and 30.



Hayley Mullins

Hayley lives in Indiana with her roommates, a herd of cats, and a mini schnauzer. She likes reading thought-provoking books, talking for hours with friends, and exploring new places. Hayley stands on this truth: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9).

Hayley wrote days 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 27.



Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

Nancy and her husband Robert live in southwest Michigan. She enjoys riding a pontoon boat on the St. Joseph River, Chicago Cubs baseball, and doing pretty much anything with Robert. Nancy stands on this truth: “Heaven rules” (Daniel 4:26)!

Nancy wrote day 17.



Revive Our Hearts™

ReviveOurHearts.com