

# *The Secret to Confidence*

A CHRISTIAN WOMAN'S GUIDE TO  
DITCHING YOUR INSECURITIES AND  
DISCOVERING YOUR REAL SELF



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Hi! My name is **Melissa Clark**. I'm a wife, mom, and a professional counselor. It's my desire to help amazing people, just like you, discover your God-given talents and how to live with vision, passion, and purpose. This life isn't reserved for a select few. I believe within each of us is a God-sized dream woven within the blueprint of our identity.

For years I struggled with the same lie that so many of my clients talk about struggling with too. I, for far too long, believed a lie. The lie that I was "too much" or "not enough", often at the very same time. This left me feeling exhausted because I tried so hard. But it never felt like enough or I would be told by others that I love to stop trying so hard. It seemed like no matter what I did, I was left with a sinking feeling that it wasn't enough.

Social media reinforced these lies.

Comparison added fuel to the fire.

I'm on a mission now to tell anyone and everyone who will listen, that **your life matters**. You are one-of-a-kind custom creation. There is no one else quite like you. Science actually backs this up.

I want to share some simple truths. Things you've likely thought about, but maybe didn't have the words to verbalize how you thought and felt. I don't just want to give you information. Thanks to Pinterest and the internet, you and I contain a surplus of information. Instead of more information, I want to give you tools to organize and execute your dreams by understanding who you are and how to connect through God.



If you only learn one thing from this book, I want it to be this:

**You are worthy.**  
**You are valuable.**  
**You are lovable.**

Not because of anything you can ever do, but simply because you bear the reflection of the One who made you.

God created you with a specific blueprint, a design meant uniquely for you. There is no one else like you. Within you represents an infinite amount of untapped power, unfulfilled dreams, unwrapped gifts ALL waiting to be harnessed and unleashed for kingdom purposes.

Within you is a God-sized, God-given dream written within the blueprint of your DNA. My pastor says it like this, **“You are a solution to a kingdom problem.”** Do you see yourself as a solution or a problem?

It may sound cheesy, but you were made with **a purpose, on purpose.** Jesus came so that you would have an abundant life. John 10:10 says “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

**Are you living a full life? An abundant Life?**



Unfortunately, events (big or small) may have occurred in your life that have left you hurt and confused and most likely believing false things about yourself, others, and God. You are more than what others say about you, and more than what you say about yourself.

**Based on my experience, both professionally and personally, I believe people don't have confidence because they don't know who they are.**

When we don't understand our true identity, we begin to feel lost, *questioning our existence*. When we don't understand our identity, it's impossible to feel significant or a sense of belonging.

If you don't know who you are, you certainly won't know whose you are, and this leaves you vulnerable to destructive patterns, toxic relationships, everything but the abundant life Jesus desires for you.

These are common questions I've asked and heard others ask indicating an identity crisis:

**Who am I?**

**What's the point of my life?**

**Why am I here?**

**Do I really matter?**

You may have asked these questions at some point in your life. We seek answers but often come up empty-handed or the answers we find don't satisfy. My hope is through reading this book you will get the answers to these questions by understanding your true self and remove toxic labels that are holding you back.





## **Are you ready to ditch insecurities and discover your real self?**

If so, you can't just read the following information. You'll need to take time to answer the questions and meditate on the scriptures.

### **Without further adieu let's begin.**

God took special care when he made you. Before he formed you he knew you (Jeremiah 1:5). In fact, He made you to reflect His own image (Genesis 1:27). We are the only ones in God's creation designed to bare his image. He sees the blueprint and design of who we really are.

Take a moment and let that sink in.

### **Now consider, how would your life be different if you looked in the mirror and instead of seeing everything that is wrong with you, you began to see the handiwork of your creator?**

Take a moment and record your thoughts below.

**Psalms 139:13-14 (MSG) states:**

"Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;  
you formed me in my mother's womb.  
I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!  
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!  
I worship in adoration—what a creation!  
You know me inside and out,  
you know every bone in my body;  
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,  
how I was sculpted from nothing into something."

**The same God that made the heavens  
and the stars made you.**

**Is this a struggle for you to believe?**



This is the truth we can rest in. It not always easy, and you may not even believe it's true at the moment, but this is the truth on which we were created.

You have been fearfully and wonderfully made. This is who you are. The sad reality is when we don't walk in this truth, our lives are drastically altered.

We are God's image-bearers (Genesis 1:27). This means human beings possess inherent worth and value like no other creation. And it's not because of anything you could ever do, but simply because you bear the reflection of the one who made you. **Your worth hinges on Him, not you.** Nothing you could ever do and nothing that has been done to you can increase or decrease your worth. Your worth is in him.

This can feel prideful to say "I'm worthy and valuable." Acknowledging your value and worth is simply acknowledging your Creator, and the work He has done in you. When you rest in the truth that it's about Him and not about your, it keeps you from pride and insecurity. You align yourself with your kingdom purpose and identity. And as a result, you experience true freedom. No more is your identity based on what others say about you, how you feel about yourself, or what you are doing. Imagine waking up every morning and this being your reality. How might your mornings change if you don't have to look a certain way to know you are beautiful and worthy? How would your work day be different believing that you've been made for a kingdom purpose (even though you may just be making copies or doing something boring?)

When you know who you are: a child of God made with a kingdom purpose, suddenly everything is filled with meaning and purpose. Your head is held a little higher, your shoulders pushed back, your eyes looking boldly ahead, your heart expectant. Sounds pretty amazing, right?

**Take a moment and think about this.  
Are you living according to this truth?  
If not, write down what is preventing you  
from believing your true worth.**



Genesis Chapter 3 details the first temptation in the Bible. Satan is talking to Eve tempting her to partake in that questionable piece of fruit. When you take a closer look at this encounter, you can see how this is all about identity. Satan questions God's identity and character. He began to plant seeds of doubt about God's nature and dismantling God's way by telling Eve who she was and what she needed.

Satan also tries to pull the same temptation on Jesus later on (do you notice how he uses the same temptations over and over again?) Satan says to Jesus, "**If** you really are the Son of God, **then** you can turn this stone into bread, and **if** you are Son of God, **then** you can jump off this cliff and angels will catch you," (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus doesn't fall for it.

Let's break this down, paying attention to the word "if" and the word "then." Satan wanted Jesus to question his identity. The Son of God is Jesus's identity and "if" is a conditional word. Satan was trying to get Jesus to question his identity. "Then" is how Satan wanted him to prove it. The goal was to get Jesus to jump through hoops and prove his worth. This obviously didn't work.

Jesus is the most secure person that has ever or will ever live. Jesus knew who he was, check out the references in the Gospel. Every time you see the word I am - that's statement of his identity. Here's a few examples - "I am the Son of God," "I am the Way," "I am the Vine." He knew his identity.

Jesus didn't have to prove anything. And neither do we because of what He did for us. Remember your worth hinges on Jesus not on you. Yes, we are on a process of transformation but we don't have to prove our worth.

Ephesians 2:10 states, if you are a believer then you have been made new in Christ Jesus.

The sad thing is, we fall for this temptation. We fall for it all the time.

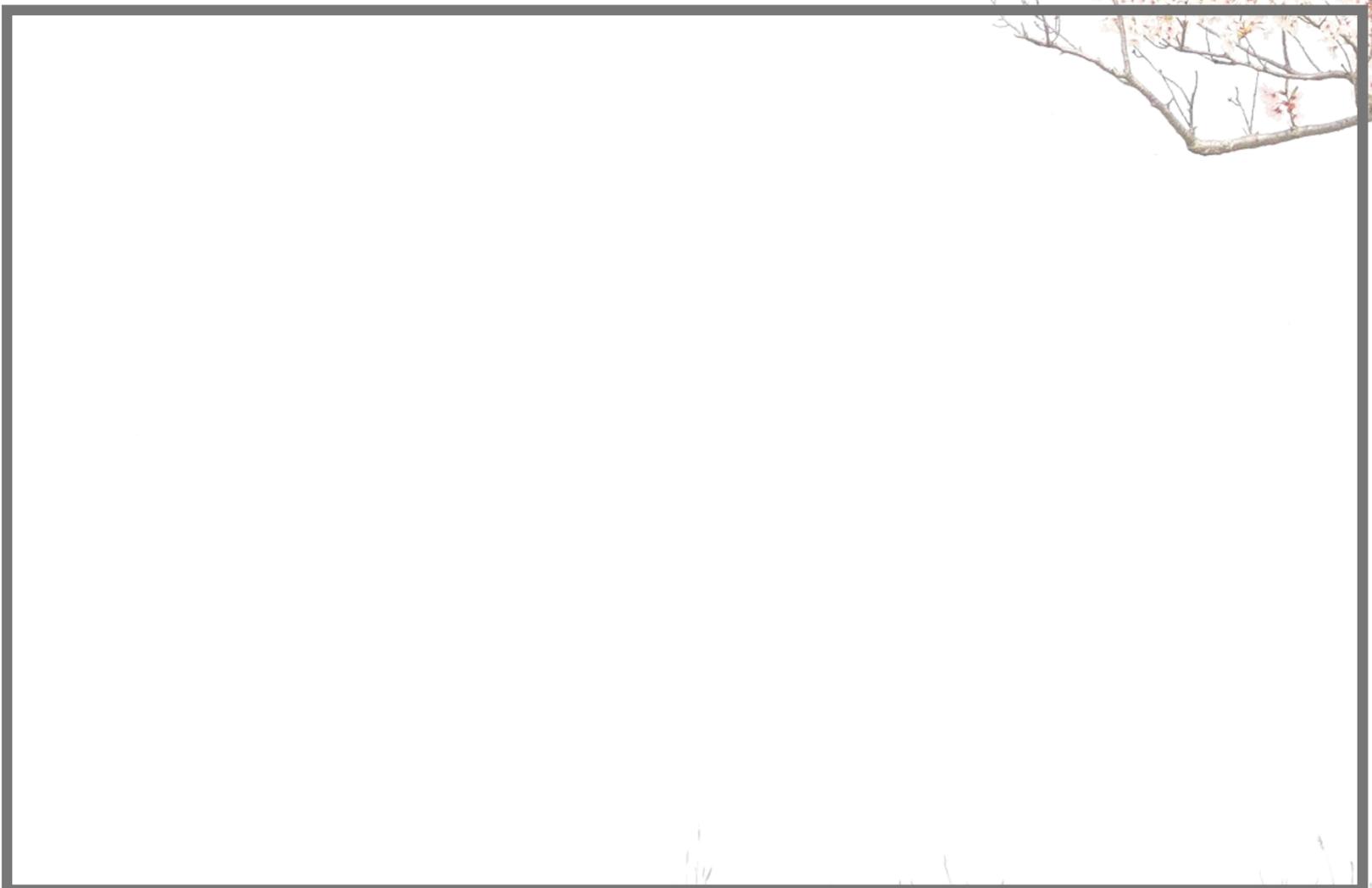


**What are the ways you are tempted to prove your worth?**



**Most of us try to prove our worth through our performance, perfection, appearance, and approval.**

**Do you need to add to the list of ways you try and prove your worth?**



But what happens when we can't measure up? When we fall short (like the Bible tells us we will), when we fail?

If you don't know who you are, these setbacks and bumps in the road will derail your destiny. Instead of making a mistake, you become a mistake (i.e. your identity). If you get a bad grade on a test, the grade becomes more than a grade. Suddenly it becomes a way to measure your worth. Similarly, a breakup or someone being upset becomes a thermometer.

**A God-given destiny in you is more powerful than any devastation that has happened to you.** As mysterious as God is, He does make some things very plain and straightforward.

Listen to this verse, Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:10 **"We are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."**

The Word says when we allow truth to permeate our hearts and minds, it produces freedom. When we know the truth, we begin to experience freedom.

Unfortunately, your reality and experience may be the opposite of God's truth. Maybe things have been done to you or you've done harmful things to yourself. Now you feel like a piece of garbage, trash, nothing. When left unchecked, these feelings start to become your reality. The lies feel like truth and the truth feels like a lie. What we believe about ourselves (i.e. our identity) goes on to produce thoughts, feelings, and actions.



**When you believe lies about yourself, you begin to create a course for your life that will result in supporting the lie.**

What we believe about ourselves goes on to produce thoughts, feelings, and actions. Common beliefs I hear and have believed myself are things like, "I'm stupid," "I'm not good enough, I'm unworthy."

Beliefs go on to produce thoughts. The beliefs I just mentioned go on to produce thoughts like:

I can't \_\_\_\_\_, I always \_\_\_\_\_,  
I'll never, \_\_\_\_\_, I should \_\_\_\_\_.

Thoughts go on to produce emotions. Emotions like shame, anxiety, depression, joy, hope, contentment.

Emotions go on to produce behaviors. If you don't like what you're doing, you most likely are believing false things about yourself, others, or God.

Your belief opens a door to life or destruction. What you believe matters. And I can show you how.

What you believe goes on to produce thoughts, which in turn produce feelings and actions.

**YOUR BELIEFS DETERMINE  
YOUR ACTIONS.**



I'm going to give you two different examples. One response will be positive, one negative, and one for you to fill in. As you do this exercise, pay attention to how you feel. Pay attention to any physical responses.

Our bodies tell us when we are stressed, worried, sad, etc. For example, do you notice a pit in your stomach, tightness in your chest, or your jaw clenching. These are powerful indicators of your emotions and may be telling you are believing a lie. These lies will trade your confidence for insecurity.

Imagine you're at work. Once again, your boss overlooks you. Instead of giving you credit for that awesome idea you had, your contributions were ignored and your co-worker is, once again, getting the spotlight.

- Belief:** I am worthy and capable.  
**Thoughts:** I am super mad at the situation and it feels unfair. It's going to be okay though. Yes, I got passed over, but there will be more opportunities. This moment does not define me.  
**Feelings:** I feel peaceful and assured.  
**Actions:** I'll keep coming up with amazing content and doing awesome work.

**How did you feel when reading? Yes, it's a little cheezy.  
But, did you feel more likely to keep going?**

Now here's another way of responding to the same situation.

- Beliefs:** I am stupid and so is the company.  
**Thoughts:** How dare they do this to me? They never see me! I always get passed up. This is so unfair!  
**Feelings:** Angry, powerless, defeated, bitter, offended, hurt  
**Actions:** Obsessive, ruminating thoughts. Overcompensating or the opposite withdrawal.

Now, you have the opportunity to discover the power of your beliefs and how they are influencing your actions. Be honest here - no one else but you is going to see this. You can use the work scenario or you can choose something different. Sometimes it's helpful to start with the behavior you don't like. Then see what feeling produced that action. For example, I ate a pint of ice cream last night. Emotion: I felt sad because \_\_\_\_\_ happened. Thought: I can't get it together. Belief: I am unworthy.



I want you to look at both the healthy and unhealthy behaviors in your life. You likely have healthy and unhealthy belief systems. The more aware you are of your behaviors, the less shame you feel, and the greater self acceptance and compassion you can offer yourself.

You may feel so frustrated with yourself for not changing or continuing to feel insecure. Understanding your beliefs becomes the key to your change.

Take a few moments. Write down the situation and then the beliefs, thoughts, feelings and at actions that follow.

**Beliefs** (I am)

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**Thoughts** (*I can, I'll never, I always, I should, I need to*)

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**Feelings**

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**Actions** (the behaviors you are making)

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These “I am” statements have great impact. Every time we speak those two little words, “I am”, we are inferring something about our identity. You are labeling yourself.

Are you speaking words of truth? Proverbs 18:21 states that our words have the power to bring life or bring death.

Did you know the words you speak and even the words you internally think have power?

## **What you believe about yourself alters the trajectory of your life.**

Your belief opens a door to life or destruction. What you believe matters.

Go back to the what the Word says about you:

**You are worthy.**

**He delights in you.**

**You are valuable.**

**You’ve been well-made.**

**You are a masterpiece.**

**You are one of a kind.**

**You’ve been made in God’s image.**

When you hear you are a masterpiece, well-made, God’s handiwork, **what happens inside?** You may hear a little voice, a mean little voice, that says “Yeah, but she doesn’t know about \_\_\_\_\_. If she knew that, then she’d know I’m really\_\_\_\_\_.”





Past mistakes, your performance, what others say about you, and what we say about ourselves often becomes how we define ourselves. But here's the reality – God is your Creator. You are His handiwork. He knit you together. He has a purpose for you. Your parents, your boss, your coaches didn't think you up or create you. God did. When you define yourself by what others say, your performance, how you look, etc., you take on a label that was never intended for you.

**Labels limit. But your identity, the person God created, unleashes limitless power.**

**Four Ways Labels Limit:**

1. Keep you trapped in sin patterns
2. Keep you from receiving God's forgiveness and grace (imperative to moving forward in a confidence)
3. As a result - Don't value or protect yourself
4. As a result - may experience depression, anxiety, low-self worth

Here are a few common labels:

**We label ourselves by our performance** - roles, failures or successes

**Other's approval or opinions** - what people say about us, what we say about ourselves

**Perfectionism** - living up to self-imposed expectation



Take a moment and think about the labels you have been called throughout your childhood and adulthood, and the names you call yourself silently.

**Be brave here - write them down.**

Now, imagine you're at a party introducing yourself. Instead of your name, you use the labels you wrote down above.

Hi! I'm \_\_\_\_\_.

Hi! I'm \_\_\_\_\_.

How does that make you feel?

Do these labels line up with what scripture tells you? That you are worthy, accepted, chosen, set apart, strong, more than conquerors? If not, why?

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Do these names produce life in the Spirit? If not, why?

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If you answered no to any of these questions, you are wearing a false name or label. **The identity you've given yourself is a FALSE IDENTITY.**

**Believing lies goes onto produce negative, toxic thinking.** Scripture says “For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he,” (Proverbs 23:7). What we think all day long, those secret thoughts we don’t tell anyone, over time begins to shape our identity. Scripture reminds us of the power of words. **Proverbs shows that our words have the power to bring life or death** (Proverbs 18:21). In the Message translation, it states, “words are either fruit or poison.”

As you were being formed, God shaped you with certain talents and abilities. These talents and abilities are your birthright. Scripture says it like this “treasures in jars of clay waiting to be unearthed” (2 Corinthians 4:7). These are part of your identity. Labels limit your ability to exist as God intends, to undergo that process of refinement. Labels make you want to duck and cover.

God shaped you and created you. He calls you by your name. Isaiah 45:3 says “I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name.”

### **He calls YOU by name.**

Take a moment now and pray, asking God to tell you what this name is that He’s given you. Truly, the only way we can establish our identity is by hearing the voice of God. I want you to know that God speaks. I don’t know what your prayer life is, but regardless of where you are at spiritually, God wants to connect with you.



### 3 common ways that we hear God are through:

- Words that come to mind.
- Images that come to mind.
- Impressions that we sense God.

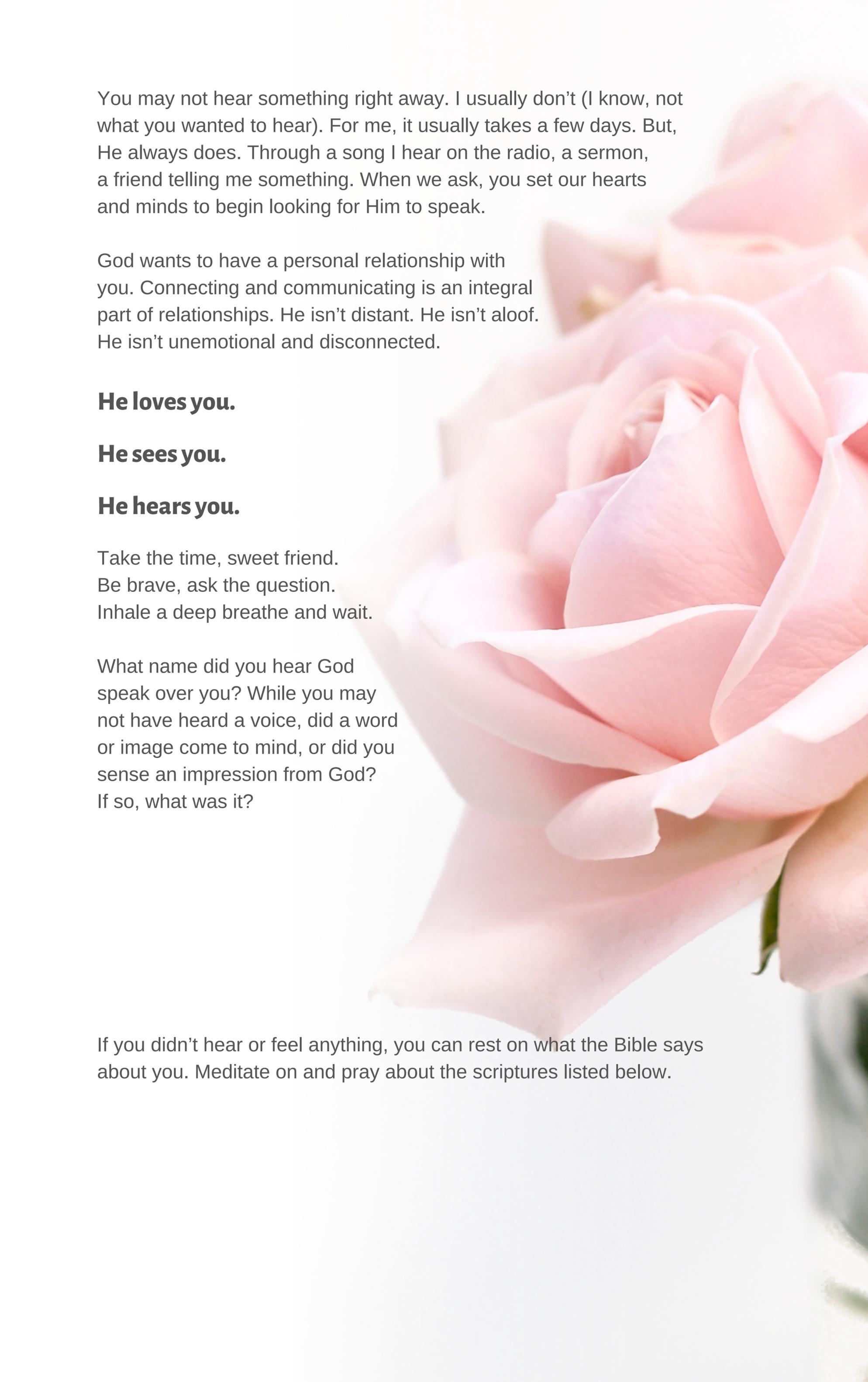
You can trust it's from God if what you are thinking lines up with the Word, produces fruit of the spirit, and leads you to freedom.

If you don't hear, feel, or sense anything, don't be discouraged. Also, don't try and come up with the name. Simply ask God, "What is my name?" and wait.

This can feel so scary. Waiting for God to answer feels incredibly intimidating...what if He doesn't answer, what if He's like, "Yep, you aren't that great", what if...? You may think or feel something along these lines. I get it, it's a risk to ask. It's a bigger risk to wait.

When I go against something that I've agreed to with my daughter, she says, in a very strong southern twang, "You said \_\_\_\_." She points her finger and has her hand on her hip. Full sass. But you know what, I remember and I love the fact she is trusting that I will do the right thing. God, doesn't forget. But His timeline isn't our timeline. When we ask him for things, sometimes we have to say things like: "You said you would never leave me or forsake me, so please answer me." "You said, you would draw near to those who draw near to you, I am trying to hear you please speak." "You said you are even better parent than an earthly parent, so please encourage me now."





You may not hear something right away. I usually don't (I know, not what you wanted to hear). For me, it usually takes a few days. But, He always does. Through a song I hear on the radio, a sermon, a friend telling me something. When we ask, you set our hearts and minds to begin looking for Him to speak.

God wants to have a personal relationship with you. Connecting and communicating is an integral part of relationships. He isn't distant. He isn't aloof. He isn't unemotional and disconnected.

**He loves you.**

**He sees you.**

**He hears you.**

Take the time, sweet friend.  
Be brave, ask the question.  
Inhale a deep breathe and wait.

What name did you hear God speak over you? While you may not have heard a voice, did a word or image come to mind, or did you sense an impression from God? If so, what was it?

If you didn't hear or feel anything, you can rest on what the Bible says about you. Meditate on and pray about the scriptures listed below.

Now, I'd like for you to think about the labels you wrote down a moment ago. I want you to release any name that isn't a true reflection of who you are. Any name that isn't congruent with scripture, doesn't produce the fruit of the spirit, doesn't produce freedom. I want you to release that label or false name.

How do the lies you believe prevent you from believing/accepting God's plan for your life?

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What are two things you can do this week to begin embracing this new name?

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God has a unique plan for your life. Share what you believe this plan may be.

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What are two ways for you to begin embracing this plan?

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This week, begin calling yourself by your TRUE name.

**I am WORTHY.**

**I am VALUABLE.**

**I am LOVABLE.**

**I am LOVED.**

**I am ACCEPTED.**

**I am GOD'S FRIEND.**

**I am VICTORIOUS.**

**I am CAPABLE.**



**As you move forward, use these scriptures to pray over and consider:**

Genesis 1:27 - *“So God created man in his own image.”*

Psalms 139:13-14 - *“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”*

Proverbs 13:19a - *“Souls who follow their hearts thrive.”*

Proverbs 19:21 - *“Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.”*

Jeremiah 1:5 - *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”*

Ephesians 2:10 - *“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

### **Recommended Reading:**

Wild and Free by Jess Connolly and Hayley Morgan

Who I Am in Christ by Neil T. Anderson

The Search for Significance by Robert McGee

Without Rival by Lisa Bevere

### **Prayer:**

*Father, I thank you that before the dawn of time, you knew me. I praise you that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I thank you that before you created me, you knew me and created a plan for my life. I ask that you would give me wisdom and discernment for discovering this plan. Be with me on this journey learning more about you as Creator and the creation you have made. Help me to live a life of vision, passion, and purpose. Amen.*



Thank you so much for taking the time to read and interact with this ebook. If this book was helpful, would you mind dropping me a note at [melissa@melissaclarkcounseling.com](mailto:melissa@melissaclarkcounseling.com)?



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I'd love to hear from you!

Blessings,  
Melissa

