

BRAVE

WHAT IS COURAGE, AND WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT IT?

It takes REAL bravery to be a REAL woman. Bravery is demonstrated by our actions, but it really starts in our hearts. This study in bravery is meant to help you develop the bravery in your heart that will help you become the leader you were created to be.

Every great woman in history began to fulfill her purpose before she even knew what it was, by being brave. Brave enough to be different. Brave enough to pursue her passion in spite of all the odds. Brave enough to stand up against injustice. Brave enough to bear whatever hardship came her way, because she knew what she was doing was right--that she was born for such a time as this. You must have courage to be a leader.

When we hear the word "courage," we think of firefighters, police officers and soldiers...women like Esther, Joan of Ark, Rosa Parks... and Katniss, of course...These women have a common factor, and it's not fearlessness. Had they not been challenged with some kind of adversity, we would never have heard of them. They had troubles (big-time), fears, and issues, just like we do. They aren't heroes because they were immune to fear or hardship--they are heroes

because they overcame them. Courage isn't the absence of fear, it's about staring your fears in the face, and with faith, conquering them so you can move on.

We all wonder--and doubt--what we are made of, until we can see those challenges in the rear view mirror.

As emotionally-wired creatures, we women are motivated through every situation by one of two mind-sets---either fear or courage. So, in our quest for courage, we must start by facing our fears.

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

It's safe to say the number one fear, beneath every pang of guilt, every blush of embarrassment, and every time you're silent or frozen when you ought to speak up or step out, is fear of rejection. This is, however, one thing we should never fear -- not for any REAL reason.

Psalm 27:10 says:

"Even if my father and mother abandon me,
the Lord will hold me close."

You don't have to earn God's love. You already have it. You don't have to earn his approval. He loves you, just the way he made you--the way your hair gets frizzy when it rains, the way you freckle in the summer, or sing off-key, or trip when you play football. None of that matters. And what's more, He loved you so much that he sent his son to die for you, even when you were a sinner. Before you even knew or cared who Jesus was, He knew you, and loved you.

He has promised never to leave you, or turn his back on you, no matter what. Those friends who are on-again and off-again, or all those other people that let you down -- God is not one of them. In fact, no matter what we've done, or where we come from, God's love and mercy can reach us there--to be there for us, always.

Psalm 139 tells us:

"I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me."

4 KEY POINTS ABOUT BRAVERY

- I. BRAVERY ORIGINATES IN THE HEART
- II. BRAVERY IS THE MARK OF A GREAT LEADER
- III. BRAVERY IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF FEAR
- IV. BEING A REAL WOMAN REQUIRES BRAVERY.

THIS WAY TO A HEART FULL OF COURAGE

4 KEY VERSES:

WHAT, THEN, SHALL WE SAY TO THESE THINGS? IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?
(ROMANS 8:31)

FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF FEAR AND TIMIDITY, BUT OF POWER, LOVE, AND SELF-DISCIPLINE.
(2 TIMOTHY 1:7)

THE WICKED RUN AWAY WHEN NO ONE IS CHASING THEM, BUT THE GODLY ARE AS BOLD AS LIONS.
(PROVERBS 28:1)

THIS IS MY COMMAND - BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS! DO NOT BE AFRAID OR DISCOURAGED, FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO!
(JOSHUA 1:9)

"Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? ...We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained."

-- Marie Curie, Scientist

Marie Curie was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize, the first person and only woman to win twice, the only person to win twice in multiple sciences. Her achievements included the development of the theory of radioactivity, and the discovery of radium.

"Courage is the most important of all virtues, because without courage, you cannot practice any of the other virtues consistently. "

-- Maya Angelou, Poet

Maya Angelou published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, and several books of poetry. She was also a noted civil rights activist. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees.

"Courage is fear that has said its prayers, and has decided to go forward anyways. "

-- Joyce Meyer, Author

Joyce Meyer is a Christian Speaker and Author, with many best-sellers.

RECOMMENDED

READING:

"BATTLE ELD OF THE MIND"



FOR AN INSTANT DOSE OF COURAGE, WRITE DOWN THESE SCRIPTURES ON SOME NOTE CARDS AND MEMORIZE THEM!



BRAVE

1. BRAVERY BEGINS IN THE HEART

TO UNDERSTAND WHAT BRAVERY IS, LET US TALK ABOUT WHAT BRAVERY IS NOT...

It's not being reckless or dangerous -- taking a dare, wearing something way too sexy just to shock people or get attention, "speaking your mind" when it would be wiser to stay silent, doing something you know is wrong, or risky, when your friends are mocking you for being afraid to have a little fun. That's just foolishness.

Bravery is an attitude of your heart that fights to do the right thing, even when it's the hardest thing to do. (It usually is!)

The word "courage" comes from the Latin word "Cor," which translates to English as "heart." Courage is just another word for bravery. The word courage means having heart. Once we realize that our heart is the seat of courage, we begin examining the state of our heart. Is it full of fear, or is strong, and full of courage?

BRAVERY IS THE FORCE THAT OVERCOMES FEAR.

It tells us to move ahead when everything inside us is telling us to run away. Bravery is the power that we summon

to say "no" to fear and in spite of fear, respond in boldness, courage and strength.

As a young woman, there will be many times when fear will try to stop you from doing the right thing. In all of these cases, you must try to respond with bravery in spite of your fear.

During these times of moral failure across every country of the world, when girls are pressured to give up the standards they have set, it's time to be brave and stand strong against the temptation to just give in. When you give in, you give up -- on the goals you hope to achieve, on the kind of woman you always wanted to be--and were always meant to become.

God continually commanded us, throughout the Bible, to take heart, or take courage. The more we allow God's Holy Spirit to fill our hearts, the more courageous we become.

It's funny that the disciple Peter, who denied Jesus when confronted by a little teenage servant girl, later stands up in front of a crowd of 5,000 people and boldly tells them all they need to repent for crucifying Jesus.

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John, and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they

were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)

The difference between Peter from the first situation to the second, is that, by letting the Spirit fill his heart, he became changed, converted, and empowered.

You may feel like the Peter who was intimidated by a little girl at times, but spending more time with Jesus, and inviting his Holy Spirit to fill our hearts, is the way to find your courageous heart.

As the Spirit fills our hearts, something amazing happens. It doesn't matter how ordinary you think you are -- you can become like no other. Our hearts grow larger to make more room. Room for courage, room for compassion, room for understanding fully who Jesus is, and who you are, in Him



BRAVERY SNAPSHOT: DANIEL

“Courage isn’t courage,
until it’s TESTED...and SUCCEEDS.”

WHEN WE SPEND TIME WITH JESUS, WE BECOME MORE COURAGEOUS

The religious leaders of Jesus’ day were amazed at his teaching because he did not teach like anyone else. He taught with authority. In other words, he knew how to make it real in a way that made sense to people -- when they heard it, they knew it was the truth. He could say, with piercing conviction, what needed to be said, even when it wasn’t the popular thing to say.

Jesus had the hugest heart of all, and he had authority like no other, because he had courage like no other.

CAN YOU FIND ALL THE “BRAVE” WORDS?

R S T U G Z S T E S L A
M O G Y N R B R P U E U
X W N H S O E U O R I D
K I K O L T D S H E N N
F A H D H N R T O E A K
E L T T A B C O F O D Y
X O U T D O O E N V H M
K N S A U O D G W G S C
L E V R S T E A D Y N G
H I A T R A E H A F O G
D G S W O R D R A D I R
E S E E K W P A T M L J

ALONE	DEFEND	SEEK GOD
BATTLE	GUTS	STAND
BOLD	HEART	STEADY
CHOOSE	HONOR	STRONG
COURAGE	HOPE	SURE
DANIEL	LIONS	SWORD
DAVID	PRAY	TRUST

BRAVE ENOUGH TO FACE THE LIONS!

Daniel was a bright young man, an ordinary guy, who was hand-picked for a sort of scholarship, to be educated and groomed for leadership, right in the King’s palace! He made some bold choices along the way, like refusing to eat the rich, fancy food at the palace, in favor of the plain wholesome stuff he was used to. Daniel and his three closest friends turned out stronger and healthier than their peers, who were obsessed with the fine food and wine at the palace, and probably forgot to focus on their studies.

Daniel became wiser, smarter, and more trusted than all his peers, until he was one of the highest leaders in the Kingdom. This made his peers jealous, and determined to take him down. They tricked the King into passing a law that said whoever prayed to anyone but the King would be thrown into the Lion’s den. Ever faithful, Daniel continued his daily prayers, with the windows wide open for everyone to see and hear. That was brave! Of course, he was caught, and the king was very sorry he had passed that law, but there was no way to

revoke it. Daniel was thrown into the Lion’s den. But he remained brave, even as they shut him into the dark pit with those hungry, growling beasts.

When the sun rose, King Darius rushed to see what had happened to Daniel.

There he was, without a scratch. The lions resting all around him. Just as Daniel said, his God would rescue him. Even if he had not, Daniel would rather die true to God, than live and deny him.

2. bravery IS THE MARK OF A GREAT LEADER

INTEGRITY: BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO STAND OUT

Integrity means BEING WHO we say we are. In the axioms, we say that we "do the right thing, because it's the right thing to do."

Integrity is the foundation of your character. Imagine the biggest concrete bridge you can think of. Highly skilled engineers and architects spent countless hours to design it to make sure it would stand strong for a very, very long time. Then, steelworkers, concrete companies, and many other types of tradesmen worked together to fulfill the building plans with strong attention to every detail, taking multiple measurements, double-checking each other, and calling in quality control engineers, all along the way, to be sure it was done right. The whole integrity of the bridge depended on how well everyone had done his or her job. Finally, when it was opened, people drove across the bridge with confidence, never even thinking about whether it was safe--they trusted in its integrity. It looked solid, it must be solid.

Now imagine the same bridge, where workers took shortcuts, failed to double-check the measure-

ments, used the cheapest materials, watered down the concrete, rushed through it, and covered all their poor work with a nice coat of paint. The bridge looks solid, but it's not. Sometimes, sadly, people are the same way.

Jesus spent a lot of time talking with people. One day, the Pharisees--church leaders--began criticizing his disciples for not following their old hand-washing ceremony -- a tradition that they established long ago, to show others they had properly cleansed their hands (it was really all very showy) before a meal. It was a ritual.

Jesus pointed out to them, right away, that they had it all backwards.

Mark 7:5-14

"So the Pharisees and teachers of religious law asked him, "Why don't your disciples follow our age-old tradition? They eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony." 6 Jesus replied, "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

7 Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.'[d]

8 For you ignore God's law and substitute your own tradition."

...14 Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. "All of you listen," he said, "and try to understand. 15 It's not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart.[h]"

Before you step into leadership, you have to have the courage to dare to be different. Lots of people pretend to be "good" but God knows what is in your heart -- and that is where he defines you.

Yes, GOD defines you. He made you, and He made you to be different--to stand out. So don't' shy away from that. You're SUPPOSED to be different.

Following Jesus calls us to "come out and be separate." We need to be brave enough to refuse to compromise, no matter what.



BRAVERY
SNAPSHOT:
ESTHER

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face." -- Eleanor Roosevelt

A REAL CINDERELLA STORY: ESTHER, THE BRAVE QUEEN

Thousands of years ago, in a land far away -- during the reign of King Xerxes I of Persia, around 486-465 BC, to be exact -- lived a young Jewish orphan girl named Hadassah. She was of Hebrew descent, being raised by her older cousin Mordecai, who had adopted her.

Now, the Jewish people had been taken captive into a foreign country. King Xerxes ruled a large kingdom, over 127 provinces spanning from India to Ethiopia. Being so wealthy, he loved to throw lavish parties.

One night, as he sat around with all of his friends at a feast, he asked for his Queen, Vashti, to come in and dazzle everyone with her beauty. Queen Vashti was busy entertaining friends, herself, and was pretty much insulted by his request--was she supposed to drop everything, get all dressed up, and run over to the palace, just so all those guys could look at her, like some kind of trophy? She told the messenger to send the king her message -- she was NOT coming. She didn't want to.

King Xerxes was furious. Aside from the fact this was way before women had any rights at all, he was embarrassed in front of his friends that she refused his command. "You have to do something about this," they advised him, "or all the women will hear about it, and we will have a revolt on our hands!"

To show the Queen "who was boss," King Xerxes booted her out of the palace, and told everyone he would find a new queen.

He asked his agents to go all over the land and find the loveliest girls they could find, and bring them to the palace. There, they went through months of beauty treatments, lessons, and probably all kinds of "how-to-be-a-queen" coaching until, at last, he chose Hadassah -- who now called herself Esther to conceal her Jewish heritage.

No one knew in the palace, that she was one of the captive nation. Her cousin Mordecai had told her to keep it a secret, to keep her safe, for the Persians hated the Jews.

Esther pleased the king -- aside from being most beautiful, she was very intelligent, wise, kind, well-mannered. She was very likely chosen in the first place, due to all the special attention she received from one of the king's agents who took care of the girls--he saw that she was unique -- that she had qualities the other girls did not have --that she was definitely real queen material.

Esther was brave enough to face captivity with grace and composure, living a secret identity, and in the spotlight of the whole kingdom as the new queen. But, it's too soon for "happily ever after." Esther's greatest challenge of bravery was yet to come!

(continued on next page)

FROM ESTHER'S DRESSING TABLE



Gold earrings from the ancient Persian Empire.



Replica of wooden comb from ancient Persia/Egypt



Persian antiquities bracelet: 22 karat gold solid bracelet with open fretwork of a floral leaf design with turquoise beads.

CONTINUED: A REAL CINDERELLA STORY ...

The plot thickens. One night, while Esther's cousin Mordecai was on duty, watching over the palace gates, he overheard some of the king's own personal guards plotting to kill him! Loyal to King Xerxes, especially as the protector and husband of his cousin Esther, Mordecai rushed to tell Esther, who told the King. The plot was exposed, just in time to prevent the king from being assassinated, and Mordecai was given the credit for it.

Some time later, a man named Haman was promoted to second in command over the empire. He was an ambitious fellow who was, well, pretty full of himself. Everyone was supposed to bow whenever he passed by on his fancy horse, but Mordecai never would. Perhaps he saw the evil in Haman's character that others had not yet seen. Very soon, everyone would know what a villain Haman was.

He sent guards to demand why Mordecai would not bow to him. Everyone was noticing, as it happened day after day --- it really made Haman's blood boil. He had found out that Mordecai was a Jew, and knew this was his angle to get rid of him -- and all of his people.

(Esther 2)
8 Then Haman approached King Xerxes and said, "There is a certain race of people scattered through all the provinces of your empire who keep themselves separate from everyone else. Their laws are different from those of any other people, and

they refuse to obey the laws of the king. So it is not in the king's interest to let them live. 9 If it please the king, issue a decree that they be destroyed, and I will give 10,000 large sacks[c] of silver to the government administrators to be deposited in the royal treasury."

So the King took the money, and issued the order. The Jewish people's days were numbered!

As soon as Mordecai heard the news, he knew it was time for Esther to step out of her secret identity, and use her position as Queen to save her people.

(Esther 3) 13 Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: "Don't think for a moment that because you're in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. 14 If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?"

Then it suddenly hit her: all of it -- everything that had happened to bring her to this place -- was for this! Suddenly, she knew her purpose. Courage welled up in her heart, and her wisdom was put to work, to devise a plan to stop the massacre.

But what could she do? She was the queen, but even the queen wasn't allowed to go to visit the king on his throne, uninvited. The penalty for that was death! Unless....unless, by some miracle, he would raise his royal scepter, a sign of approval, a signal to approach. She knew the king loved her and admired

her, but, still, this was taking a really big chance. Does he love her enough to forgive her for taking such a liberty--to approach him, uninvited, and with a request?

15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 16 "Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die." 17 So Mordecai went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

When the third day came, Esther woke up, bathed and dressed herself in her finest robes and best jewelry. Her maids styled her hair, did her makeup more perfectly than ever, and probably selected the king's favorite perfume for her. As they carefully placed her crown on her head, she must have stared into the mirror, silently praying, resolving to go through with her plan.

Crossing the courtyard to the palace, she must have paused before the massive carved doors into the throne room where King Xerxes presided over the many national affairs of the day. Would he smile at her and signal to come forward, or he could be cruel, and have her carried away to be executed?

Taking a deep breath, she nodded to the guards to open the doors. This was the big moment.

(Esther 5) 2 When he saw Queen Esther standing there in the inner court, he welcomed her and held out the gold scepter to her. So Esther approached and touched the end of the scepter. 3 Then the king asked her, "What do you want, Queen Esther? What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!" 4 And Esther replied, "If it please the king, let the king and Haman come today to a banquet I have prepared for the king."

A dinner invitation? The King was delighted, and ordered Haman to join him right away. Haman really though he was a pretty important guy, then. As they dined on the feast she had ordered, King Xerxes knew there had to be something more. "Now," he asked her, as he finished dessert. "What do you really want? you must want something from me? Name it, and it's yours, even half of my kingdom!" Smiling, Esther shook her head.

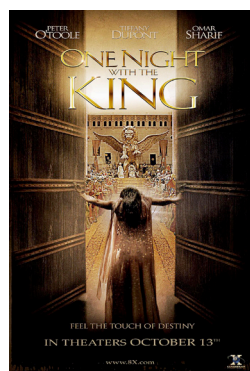
7 Esther replied, "This is my request and deepest wish. 8 If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request and do what I ask, please come with Haman tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for you. Then I will explain what this is all about." King Xerxes agreed, still wondering what all of this mystery was about. But he loved Esther. Instead of being frustrated, he was charmed, and was willing to play along with her little game, if it made her happy. 3 Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request, I ask that my life and the lives of my people will be spared. 4 For my people and I have been sold to those who would kill,

slaughter, and annihilate us. If we had merely been sold as slaves, I could remain quiet, for that would be too trivial a matter to warrant disturbing the king." 5 "Who would do such a thing?" King Xerxes demanded. "Who would be so presumptuous as to touch you?" 6 Esther replied, "This wicked Haman is our adversary and our enemy." Haman grew pale with fright before the king and queen. 7 Then the king jumped to his feet in a rage and went out into the palace garden.

Through the rest of the story, the execution Haman planned for Mordecai turns out to be his own. The Jewish people are saved, and Esther continues to reign as queen, beside King Xerxes, who remained, after that time, as much in awe of her wit and courage, as he had ever been in awe of her beauty.

STUDYING ESTHER

1. List the personal "gifts" young Hadasseh was given, which would help her fulfill her purpose as Queen Esther. Then list yours!



MUST-SEE MOVIE:

"One Night With the King," Put it on your play list!

2. How did Esther build her courage to approach the King?

3. Think about a situation in your life where you need courage to face a challenge. What do you think Esther would do?

RECOMMENDED READING:
THE BOOK OF ESTHER (BIBLE)



3. Bravery is not the absence of fear...

THE HIDING PLACE

In the vast expanse of history, the 1940's were not very long ago. So, not very long ago, a seemingly average young girl named Corrie, who lived with an average family, in an average house in the Netherlands, found herself in a situation a little like Esther's.

The German Nazis invaded Netherlands and began their brutal campaign there to rid the country of Jews, whom they hated. Corrie's family was Christian, and, though they were afraid, could not stand by and let innocent people be carried away and imprisoned or killed. They began hiding families behind a false wall in their house, rescuing and feeding many Jewish refugees, and helping them escape.

"You can't be a Christian without loving the Jewish people," Corrie later said. "They are God's people."

Thus the Ten Booms began "the hiding place", or "de schuilplaats", as it was known in Dutch (also known as "de Bêjé", pronounced in Dutch as 'bayay', an abbreviation of their street address, the Barteljorisstraat). Corrie and Betsie opened their home to refugees — both Jews and others who were

members of the resistance movement — being sought by the Gestapo and its Dutch counterpart. They had plenty of room, although wartime shortages meant that food was scarce. Every non-Jewish Dutch person had received a ration card, the requirement for obtaining weekly food coupons.

Through her charitable work, Ten Boom knew many people in Haarlem and remembered a couple who had a disabled daughter. The father was a civil servant who by then was in charge of the local ration-card office. She went to his house one evening, and when he asked how many ration cards she needed, "I opened my mouth to say, 'Five,'" Ten Boom wrote in *The Hiding Place*. "But the number that unexpectedly and astonishingly came out instead was: 'One hundred.'" [4] He gave them to her and she provided cards to every Jew she met.

On February 28, 1944, a Dutch informant named Jan Vogel told the Nazis about the Ten Booms' work; at around 12:30PM the Nazis arrested the entire Ten Boom family. They were sent to Scheveningen prison; Nollie and Willem were released immediately along with Corrie's nephew Peter; Casper died 10 days later. Corrie

and Betsie were sent from Scheveningen to Herzogenbusch political concentration camp (also known as Kamp Vught), and finally to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, a women's labor camp in Germany. There they held worship services, after the hard days at work, using a Bible that they had managed to sneak in. After her health continued to recede, Betsie died on December 16, 1944 with a smile on her lips. Before she died, she told Corrie, "There is no pit so deep that He [God] is not deeper still."

1. What things filled Corrie's heart, giving her courage to fulfill her purpose?



**BRAVERY
SNAPSHOT:
CORRIE TEN BOOM**

"Many of the brave and honorable things we have to do in life will be done with shaking knees and quivering voice."

YOUR GIFTS: UNIQUENESS

Definition of uniqueness:

"Being the only one of its kind, different from others in a way that makes something worth noticing."

Have you ever wondered, who am I and why was I made like I was? What is the reason for my life? Where do I fit in? Why am I so short, or tall, or hyper, or super-serious?

Did you ever think about the fact that God specifically designed you in the exact detail as you are, for a very specific reason. He has a role for you that no one else can fulfill -- no one! The secret is finding out just what God has in mind for your life.

"We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us."
(Ephesians 2:10)

Psalms 139 describes how intimately God knows us, and how carefully and marvelously he weaved us together. The way we smile, the way we talk, the curl or straightness of our hair, our sense of humor, and whether we prefer to run or read a book -- it was all a design, part of the plan for your purpose.

Instead of questioning, with frustration, why you are different, begin to wonder and dream about your future. What does God have in mind for you? Will you change the world with a song? Will you save a life with your bravery? Will you cheer up the sick and broken hearted with your humor?

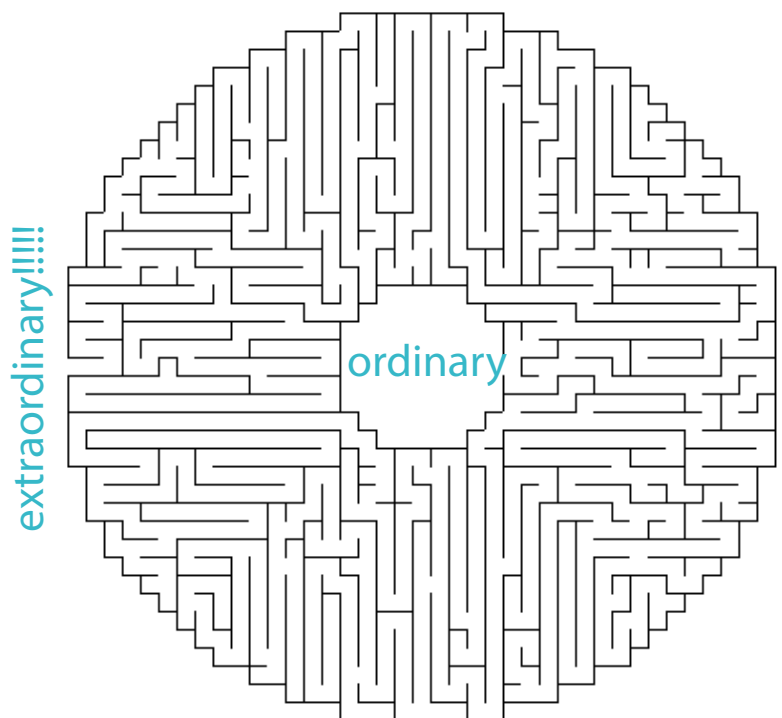
Today, you have a challenge: begin to sharpen and develop your unique gifts. Prepare for your purpose!

"I am confident of this very thing: that He who began a good work in you will perfect it..." (Philippians 1:6)



NOT ORDINARY. EXTRAORDINARY.

Corrie Ten Boom as a young teen (middle), with her mother and sister. She seemed like an average girl, but she was born to be a hero!



4. being a real woman requires bravery

BRAVE

ARE YOU A LEADER? SELF CHECKLIST

Courage is the mark of a leader and the more effective and powerful a leader would seek to be, the more bravery she will need. How can you measure your bravery? Is there a scale? No, but there is a checklist. As a godly woman, it takes bravery to:

[] **FACE REALITY** - Brave women are able to be realistic about their challenges, and accept the facts as they are.

[] **ADMIT NEED** - You need to be brave and humble enough to face the truth -- especially about yourself. It takes courage

to face your weaknesses and ask for help.

[] **FACE CHANGE** - Everything changes, all the time, in some way or another, toward some end or another. It takes bravery to be able to adapt to changes and push forward to your goals, without getting upset or quitting.

[] **MAKE DECISIONS** - Someone once said "not everyone likes strong leadership, but everyone hates weak leadership." It takes courage to lead yourself with quick, right decisions, before you can lead others.

[] **HOLD CONVICTIONS** -- People are fickle, and public opinions are wishy-washy. That's weak.

A brave woman has inner strength to stand your ground, when everyone else is just following the crowd.

You can't avoid making some choices. Often, by NOT making a choice you are still making a choice. Think about it.

You will be placed in situations, like Esther and Corrie Ten Boom, where your fears will try to make decision for you, instead of your faith. Many wise women will tell you that fear never makes the right choices.

Bravery begins in your heart. If your heart is not right, you will not be able to be brave.

FROM AN HONOR GUARD'S JOURNAL...

WHAT IS COURAGE?

A COURAGEOUS PERSON IS SOMEONE WHO CAN CONTROL THEIR FEAR AND THEN DO THE RIGHT THING. IT IS OVERCOMING THE FEAR THAT WE NATURALLY HAVE.

WE ALL HAVE FEARS IN LIFE.

- [] HEIGHTS
- [] THE DARK
- [] BUGS
- [] PUBLIC SPEAKING
- [] DEATH

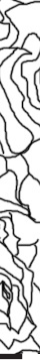
BUT, BE STRONG, AND KNOW THAT GOD IS WITH YOU. YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO FACE YOUR FEARS ALONE.



Twig pencil set in Ice Blue
from AubergineFox
on Etsy.com

**THIS IS MY
COMMAND
BE STRONG AND
COURAGEOUS!
DO NOT BE AFRAID
OR DISCOURAGED.
FOR THE LORD
YOUR GOD
IS WITH YOU
WHEREVER YOU GO.**

JOSHUA 1:9



Bravery is the force that overcomes fear.

1. List three heroes from the past or present, and tell briefly how they showed great bravery.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2. What are the 5 reasons you need bravery, and why?
...in your own words, please ;)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

3. Where have you struggled most, among these five areas?

4. What are some godly ways you can be braver in these areas? Come up with a plan to specifically deal with these weaknesses. Find and write a scripture that will help you. It might feel awkward to write this down, but putting it on paper makes it real to you - and helps you commit to making real, lasting changes with more success!

bravery

COMES FROM INSIDE THE HEART

4 MORE KEY POINTS

- I. BRAVERY BEGINS IN YOUR HEART
- II. YOU MUST GUARD YOUR HEART
- III. YOUR HEART NEEDS TO FORGIVE,
AND TO BE FORGIVEN
- IV. YOU NEED A NEW HEART

"Because God has made us for Himself, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." -- Augustine

HEART MATTERS

Do you ever feel restless, like there's just no sense of order or justice or true beauty in the world around you? You want to help your friends get along; you want to make your parents stop fighting; you want to tell your sister she should be dressing like you like to dress...yet, we feel so powerless in the face of all the world's problems. That feeling of powerlessness turns to restlessness, anxiety, and despair. We give up. We lose hope after very long, if we try to fight all these battles on our own.

The truth is, the frustration you feel doesn't come from the outside--it comes from the inside. We can't blame others for own

state of mind -- our lack of peace, joy, or courage -- it all comes from within our own hearts.

Remember, Jesus said that it's what comes out of the heart that defiles you (makes you sin, makes you feel horrible or your life unbearable).

We are broken. We need Jesus to fix us -- instead of trying to fix it all ourselves. All of our brokenness comes from this basic need for the Lord to step in and steer us. Without Him, we are little boats tossed in the sea, with no captain, no life jacket, no oars, no map --- we are lost.

If we want things to change, we must change our hearts, and only Jesus can do that, if you surrender it to Him.

[] PRAY:

LORD, | SURRENDER MY WHOLE HEART TO YOU.

**FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, | WILL TRUST YOU TO FIX MY PROBLEMS,
INSTEAD OF TRYING TO FIX THEM MYSELF.**

[] DO:

**WRITE ALL THE THINGS THAT ARE
TROUBLING YOU ON A PIECE OF PAPER.**

THEN TEAR IT UP, CRUMBLE IT UP, STOMP ON IT, AND THROW IT AWAY.

SURRENDER ALL THOSE THINGS, AND DO NOT PICK THEM UP AGAIN.



Handmade wooden carved hearts
from Handmaderetail.com

YOUR HEART IS "ONE OF A KIND" TOO ;)

4 MORE KEY VERSES:

- 1 "AND THEN HE (JESUS) ADDED, 'IT IS WHAT COMES FROM INSIDE THAT DEFILES YOU.' (MARK 7:20-23)
- 2 "GUARD YOUR HEART ABOVE ALL ELSE, FOR IT DETERMINES THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE" (PROVERBS 4:23)
- 3 "IF YOU FORGIVE THE SINS OF ANY, THEY ARE FORGIVEN THEM; IF YOU RETAIN THE SINS OF ANY, THEY ARE RETAINED." (JOHN 20:23-25)
- 4 "AND I WILL GIVE YOU A NEW HEART, AND I WILL PUT A NEW SPIRIT IN YOU. I WILL TAKE OUT YOUR STONY, STUBBORN HEART AND GIVE YOU A TENDER, RESPONSIVE HEART. AND I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT IN YOU SO THAT YOU WILL FOLLOW MY DECREES.." (EZEKIEL 36:26-27)

**[] STUDY AND LEARN THESE
VERSES. REALLY THINK
ABOUT WHAT THEY MEAN.**

GUARD YOUR HEART

Like a soldier guarding his post from hostile enemy forces, it is important that we guard our hearts. It is the very core of who we are, all that we love and cling to.

"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life," warned wise King Solomon, in the book of Proverbs.

The most vulnerable -- the weakest -- point of entry is the eye gate, but there is also the ear gate. If you are to be brave and strong, guarding your heart, you must take charge of both of these potential areas of attack.



God is my shield,
saving those whose
hearts are
true and right.
Psalm 7:10



antique bronze key
& antique brass key

**YOUR BODY IS LIKE A STRONG
CASTLE THAT HOLDS YOUR SOUL AND
SPIRIT.**

**THE EYES ARE THE GATE TO YOUR
HEART. YOU CAN CONTROL WHAT
GETS INTO YOUR HEART BY WHAT
YOU ALLOW YOUR EYES TO SEE.**

**THERE ARE FORCES THAT WOULD
LIKE TO CONQUER YOUR CASTLE
AND DESTROY YOU FROM THE INSIDE.
YOUR DUTY, AS A COURAGEOUS
LADY OF HONOR, IS TO GUARD THE
TREASURES, LIKE YOUR HEART, YOUR
SOUL, YOUR SPIRIT, YOUR MIND...**

**THE ONLY PLACE AN ENEMY CAN
COME IN, IS THROUGH THE GATE.**

**GUARD YOUR EYES, GUARD YOUR
EARS, GUARD YOUR HEART**

GUARD YOUR HEART SELF CHECKLIST

THE EYE GATE

Lust is a ruthless enemy to our hearts if we are not careful. Since our eyes are the weakest entry point to our castle, we need to take extra care to guard them. You might think this is only a problem with guys, but that's not true. Girls can fall into the same trap -- looking, longing, imagining...taking our thoughts to places they should not go, and involving our emotions in it all, in the process. How do you keep a close watch on your "eye gate?" You simply have to take command.

WHAT IS LUST, ANYWAY?

It's an obsessive longing for something -- in this case, we are talking about sex. The problem with lust is that it has nothing to do with logic, being right for each other, or having the same values. We will talk more about this in the last section, PURE.

[] REFUSE TO WATCH

TV shows, movies, or any shared/posted videos that you KNOW are inappropriate. Refuse to keep watching, when something comes up

by surprise. Change the channel, leave the theater, or turn it off. What's worth more, the \$15 you just spent for that movie ticket, or your heart?

[] STOP STARING

Your mom probably always told you it was rude to stare. Well, it's rude to gawk at guys, too.

There is something called the second look rule that the Men of Honor use. It's impossible, of course, not to notice beauty. What's wrong, is that second look, when you start looking, and looking, and thinking, and drooling or whatever. Get ahold of yourself and have a little respect - and self-respect. You will learn soon enough, that looks aren't everything. Besides, Jesus said something really serious about that kind of staring. He said that if you look at a person, with lust in your heart, you've pretty much just committed adultery. You didn't have to actually DO anything to commit the sin -- you just did it in your heart. There's more proof that everything begins and ends with the heart. Why is that? Because God judges us according to what's in our hearts, not just what seems to be, from the outside.

THE EAR GATE

Discouragement and depression can come flooding in, if we allow the wrong things through our ear gate. We need to guard what we hear, overhear, and listen to, because these things program our thoughts, whether we want them to, or not.

[] CHOOSE YOUR MUSIC - CHOOSE YOUR MOOD --

Why is it such a mystery that people who listen to angry music are angry all the time? Why do girls replay sad songs over and over after a breakup, and then wonder why they can't get over the heartbreak? How is it so hard to figure out why people who listen to music that fills their heads with stuff about drinking, and cheating, and how wretched and unfair life is, suddenly find their lives are full of nothing but hangovers, broken relationships, and every possible situation where they get to be a victim? Choose something better for yourself. Pick encouraging, positive things to fill your ears with, and you will fill your life with them, too.

TO CHECK WHAT YOU'RE
LETTING IN YOUR EYE AND EAR
GATES. SEE THE PHILIPPIANS
4:8 TEST ON THE NEXT PAGE!



pink aviator sunglasses
from Polyvore.com



pink floral earbuds
from Dollardays.com



pink "eyelashes" sleep
mask from Pier One



think

ON THESE THINGS

THE PHILIPPIANS 4:8 TEST

When people are seriously sick, doctors will run all kinds of tests on them, to try to figure out what the cause might be. They ask a million questions, to be sure what kind of medicine to prescribe.

When we want to now if our heart is right we God, we should test our thoughts.

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul described a list of very specific things we should fill our minds with. This suggests we DO have control over what we think.

Sometimes we have a passing thought that we know is not right. The thing to do is put it out of your head with some other, better thought. There's an old saying about that "You can't stop a bird

from landing on your head, but you can stop it from building a nest in your hair!"

Don't let damaging thoughts build a nest in your mind. You are planning to make a change, remember?

This passage begins by telling us where to focus our minds -- not on our troubles (we threw them out, remember?); we are to tell God what we need, and thank Him for taking care of things. THEN, and ONLY THEN, will we experience the "peace that passes all understanding" that you've heard of. Until we begin to get our thoughts right, we will never have any peace.

So, here it is -- the actual list of things we SHOULD think about, to grow our minds and hearts, instead of stifling them.

(Philippians 4:6-8)

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing.

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable.

Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.



TEST YOUR THOUGHTS

MAKE A TRUE OR FALSE TEST FOR YOURSELF FROM THIS SCRIPTURE WHEN YOU ARE HAVING A BAD DAY, CHECK YOUR THOUGHTS AGAINST IT AND YOU WILL CLEARLY SEE WHERE YOU ARE MISSING THE MARK!

LETTING IT GO

One of the surest ways to poison your heart and stunt your spiritual growth is to refuse to forgive someone.

Like a poison, unforgiveness -- holding a grudge -- is like drinking poison, and expecting the other person to die. Doesn't make sense, does it?

The truth is, refusing to forgive someone does not hurt them -- it hurts you.

Author and Speaker Joyce Meyer shared a story about a Bible college professor who was trying to make a point.

The Professor made all of the students take plastic grocery sacks and come up to a table full of raw potatoes. "Now," directed them, "take a potato for every person you're mad at, and put them in your sack, then tie it shut." Some students took one or two, others took a whole bag full, then they returned to their seats. "Your assignment for the next three weeks is this: you have to carry that sack with you wherever you go, 24 hours a day. To the shower, to class, to the store, to church, on a date, whatever." The class groaned, but it was going to be a test grade, so nobody could afford to slack on this.

Carrying around a bag of potatoes was awkward, at the least. It was heavy, and troublesome, and always in the way. But something worse happened after a few days. You see, when you seal up a bag of potatoes at room temperature, they start to rot. By the end of the three weeks, they were slimy, stinking, dripping yucky stuff everywhere -- in their bookbags, on their dorm room floors, in their cars--it was disgusting!

The professor made her point. Holding a grudge is like carrying around a burden-- one that gets in the way of everything else you want to achieve. It makes things awkward, draws unwanted attention to you, and, finally, begins to rot and ruin everything else in your life.

And here is the most serious problem with unforgiveness: Jesus said that if we don't forgive others, God won't forgive us for our sins, either. Ouch. Maybe this is because of one thing: if we are unable to forgive others, then we really don't understand God's mercy at all. And if we don't understand it, how can we receive it?

Romans 5:8 tells us that God proved his love for us by sending his son to die for us, even while we were still sinners.

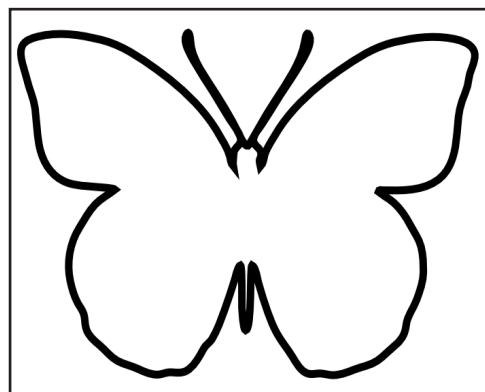
TAKING IT IN

There is only one way that sin can come out of your life. It can only come out of your mouth, as you confess your sin to God and ask for His forgiveness.

Imagine this: God wants to forgive us even more than we want to be forgiven. That's because the extent of His love and mercy is way beyond anything we are capable of, ourselves, or even beyond our ability to understand.

It doesn't matter who you are, or what you've done. God's gift to you, if you want it, is a brand new heart.

"Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; old things are passed away; all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)



Design the butterfly as "the new you" while you think about what it means to have a fresh start.



"Whatever God is urging you to clear away cannot begin to be compared to what He ultimately wants to bring you."

--Beth Moore



GRUDGE PURGE

1 MAKE A PRIVATE LIST OF PEOPLE YOU NEED TO FORGIVE. YOU KNOW WHO THEY ARE -- THEY PROBABLY JUMPED INTO YOUR MIND AS SOON AS YOU READ THIS. THAT'S THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKING TO YOUR HEART ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED TO DO. THE BIBLE CALLS IT A "STILL SMALL VOICE" ALWAYS A WHISPER, OFTEN SHAKING YOU TO THE CORE. LEARN TO LISTEN, AND TO FOLLOW WHERE IT LEADS YOU.

2 SAY A PRAYER, LETTING GO OF THE HURT THEY HAVE CAUSED YOU. PUT THE WHOLE SITUATION IN GOD'S HANDS. ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOU FOR YOUR ANGER. ASK HIM TO SOFTEN YOUR HEART. PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE ON THE LIST.

3 IF YOU NEED TO MAKE AMENDS WITH SOMEONE ON THE LIST, DO IT. GOD'S WORD INSTRUCTS US TO DO THIS BEFORE WE BRING HIM ANY OFFERINGS, EVEN AN OFFERING OF WORSHIP.

4 DESTROY THE LIST -- AND ALL YOUR RIGHTS TO BE ANGRY, ALONG WITH IT

BRAVERY

CONCLUSION (OR IS IT THE BEGINNING?)

As you continue through this journey to become Brave, Pure and Strong, take heart -- take courage. You should never feel weak or insignificant (not important) just because you are young. In fact, God often chose the very young to do amazing, extraordinary, heroic things for two reasons.

First, when you are young, you have the power of faith that only belongs to the innocent. "Allow the little children to come unto me," said Jesus, because "of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

David was about 15 years old when he killed the giant Goliath, which fueled Israel's courage to conquer the Philistines. When no one else dared face the giant, he stepped out, ahead of all the mighty warriors, and RAN to face Goliath on the battlefield.

Mary was only about 14 or 15 when she was told she was going to carry the Saviour of the world. As a pure young woman, with a pure heart totally devoted to God, she was chosen among all the women on the earth to have, and raise, the son of God.

Josiah was only 8 when he became king over Israel.

Samuel was a little boy when he first heard God's voice, and became one of the greatest prophets of all time, serving King Saul and choosing David, the future King.

Joseph was a young teen when God gave him a dream that would become his destiny. He later saved all of Egypt and Israel from starving to death in the great famine.

Daniel was a pre-teen when he first took a stand for God, as were Shadrach, Meshach and Abnego.

Setting the example, Jesus was only 12 when they found him in the temple, discussing scriptures with the teachers, with astounding authority and knowledge.

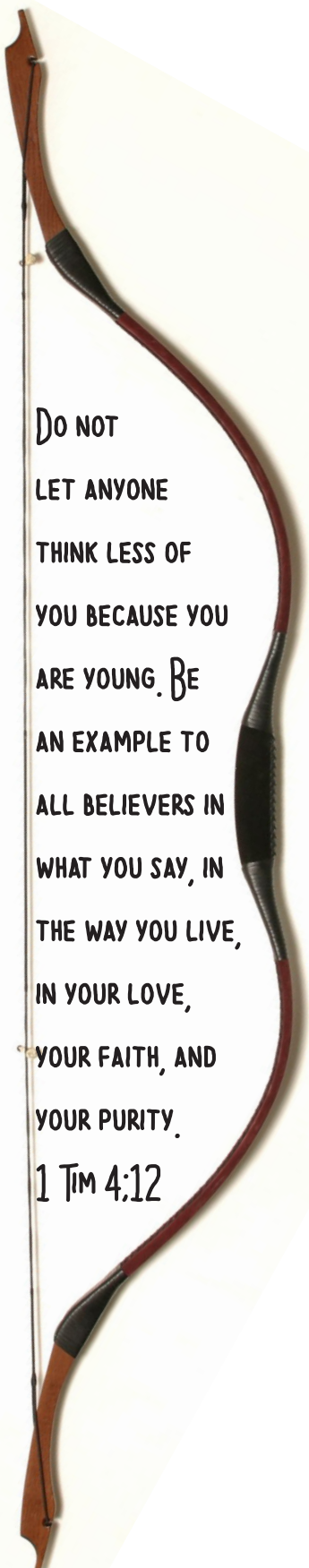
"Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young," says 1 Timothy 4:12. "Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity."

Being very young actually makes you a prime candidate for God to use you in a mighty way. Your faith is fresh, your ideas are huge, and your energy and enthusiasm are limitless.

You should never feel like your purpose-- whatever it may be -- is too big for you.

Colossians 2:10 tells us that "So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority."

You and God make a majority, and, with his help, you can fight any battle that lies ahead.



**DO NOT
LET ANYONE
THINK LESS OF
YOU BECAUSE YOU
ARE YOUNG. BE
AN EXAMPLE TO
ALL BELIEVERS IN
WHAT YOU SAY, IN
THE WAY YOU LIVE,
IN YOUR LOVE,
YOUR FAITH, AND
YOUR PURITY.
1 Tim 4:12**

"It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends."

-- J.K. Rowling

Dear Honor Guard...

*Dear Honor Guard,
I'm about to start High School,
and my dad wants to pick all my
classes for me, but I want some-
thing different. How can I con-
vince him I'm grown up enough
to start making some of my own
choices?*

*Sincerely,
Fearful Freshman*

*Dear Fearful Freshman,
I would kindly suggest that you
want to do something different.
Do the research and make sure
that these classes will really be
beneficial to you, in the end, and
not just fun for the moment. The
object is to graduate, and gradu-
ate college, too, so make sure you
start planning now, even with your
freshman high school classes. After
you've done your research, present
your case to dad and see what he
thinks. He wants the best for you,
and wants to make wise choices,
too. Don't pout--talk it out.*

*Dear Honor Guard,
I have lots of friends who don't go
to church, and I want to reach them
somehow, but I don't know where
to start. How can I start talking to
them about Jesus?*

*Sincerely,
Wanna-be Witness*

*Dear Wanna-be Witness,
I strongly recommend that you
just invite your friends to church,
because, most of the time, peo-*

*ple who don't go to church have
not had someone to make that a
habit in their life, or reach out to
them, to bring them in as a friend
instead of a loner. Think about it
from their perspective--would you
want to go into a building full of
people you've stereotyped alone,
or with a friend. We are called as
Christians to be "salt and light"
(Matthew 5:13-14), so be sure that
you are always being an influence
on them, instead of the other way
around. Be the light of Christ that
you would want them to see, and
don't be afraid to be the leader.*

*Dear Honor Guard,
I want to go to LOH meetings, but
some of my friends think it's stupid.
How do I deal with that?*

*Sincerely,
Proudly Pink*

*Dear Proudly Pink,
I was in this same situation in my
middle school years, and I just
gathered up my determination to
become the leader. Looking back,
I'm really glad I tuned them out
and participated anyway. Now,
anyone can tell the difference in
the girls who decided to pursue
honor, and the girls that didn't.
Jesus took some harsh words, and
much worse, for being who he
was, too.
Matthew 10:22 says "all nations
will hate you, because you are my
followers, but everyone who en-
dures to the end will be saved."
You've heard it said, "haters gonna
hate." People who are angry,
bitter, or who are just hate you for*

*no reason will always find some
reason to criticize you, so you
might as well do what you know to
be right, and take the hating. For a
good reason.*

*Dear Honor Guard,
How have you used what you've
learned in LOH? Has it really made
a big difference?*

*Sincerely,
Hoping to be Honorable*

*Dear Hoping,
LOH has taught me the most im-
portant of lessons. How to conduct
myself like a lady, all the time. Be-
ing a lady is like being a Christian.
You don't just put it on and take it
off like a mask, it's who you are, to
the core, all the time.*

*I have also learned how to be a
leader among my peers, which is
a valuable skill. When I went to
college early, it really helped my
confidence, to be able to handle
myself in all kinds of situations,
and earn the respect of my class-
mates, leaders, and professors.
Even in middle school, everyone
thought I was much more mature
than most girls my age, and it was
all because, throughout LOH, I
quickly learned who I was, what
my purpose was, and where I was
going. I was sure of myself, be-
cause I knew where I stood with
God, and I had grown into my own
solid identity, with a strong spirit.
Stick with it, and go through the
leadership path. Life has lots of
challenges, but LOH will equip you
for every battle, and you will come
out a winner.*

PACKED & READY for CAMP

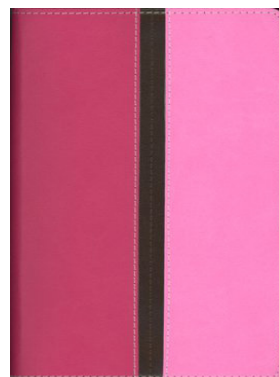


Neon Pink Canvas Backpack
charlotterusse.com

Pilot Juice Gel Pen
- Rose Pink
jetpens.com



NIV Compact
Thinline Bible
Duotone
hot pink/
bubblegum
christianbook.com



Dental Source Travel Toothbrush
and Toothpaste Sets
dollartree.com



Bugable Mosquito
Repellent Bands
dollartree.com



Convenience Kits
International 9-Piece
Women's Travel Kit with
Zippered Bag
amazon.com



Linen Beach Towel -Stripe
polyvore.com

World Traveler
Leopard 16"
Shoulder
Duffle Bag
ebags.com





Hi-Tec Sierra Lite Wooly
Jr. Hiking Boots -
Taupe/Apollo Pink
REI.com



Solar Power bracelet
pureavida.com

Streamlight 73003 Nano
Light Miniature Keychain
LED Flashlight, Pink
walmart.com



Pink Hawaiian
flip-flops
dollartree.com

Ozark Trail 50-degree kids'
sleeping bag - pink
walmart.com



Pink Camo Bandanna
Party Accessory
amazon.com



Slim Plastic
BPA Free
Water bottle
with Chevron
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