

# POWER PARENTING

## *The Impact of a Godly Mother*

*By Shannon Pickard*

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**A Mother's Day Gift To The Women of Faith at Revive Church**

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*Three Movements In One Book*

1. The Power Parenting – The Impact of a Godly Mother
2. The 7-Day Mom Reset
3. The Mother-Daughter Conversation Guide

**Revive Church**

GROW Series — Parenting

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## A Letter to the Mom Holding This

Mom, before you read another word, breathe.

Wherever this little book finds you — in a quiet kitchen at 5 a.m., in a parking lot between practices, in a hospital chair, in a season that doesn't look the way you thought it would — you are seen. Not because of what you produce, fix, or hold together, but because of who you already are: a woman God trusted with these specific children.

This isn't a book about being a better mom. It's a book about being a surrendered one. There is a profound difference.

A better mom keeps trying harder. A surrendered mom keeps trusting deeper. One leaves you exhausted; the other leaves you usable. One chases an image; the other carries a presence.

This Mother's Day, I want to put three things in your hand:

- A message to anchor your heart — the Power Parenting sermon, expanded for slow reading.
- A 7-Day Mom Reset — short, doable, scripture-fed days that pull you back into rhythm with God.
- A Mother-Daughter Conversation Guide — because legacy is built one real conversation at a time.

There is no perfect way to use this book. You can read it cover to cover, or you can flip to whichever page meets you where you are. There are blank lines for you to scribble on, prayers for when you have no words, and questions designed to bring your daughter's heart closer to yours.

**Remember** Susanna Wesley raised nineteen children in a chaotic house and shifted history under an apron. God doesn't need your perfection. He just needs your surrender.

So pull the apron up. Pull this book close. And let's begin.

*With you in the work,*

**Your Pastor**

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## PART ONE

# Power Parenting

## *The Impact of a Godly Mother*

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*“Be it unto me according to your word.” — Luke 1:38*

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*There is something powerful about a praying mom.*

*Not a perfect mom. Not a Pinterest mom. Not a mom who always gets it right. But a mom who can say, deep in her bones, “God ... not my will, but Yours be done.”*

# Chapter 1. Under the Apron

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*“She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future.” —*

**Proverbs 31:25**

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Susanna Wesley had nineteen children. Nineteen. Nine of them died in infancy. Her house was loud, crowded, financially strained, and frequently chaotic. There was no quiet study, no closed door she could disappear behind for an hour of contemplation.

So she made one. When she needed to pray, she would sit down in the middle of all of it and pull her apron up over her head. That was the signal. “Mom is with God right now.” The children learned to keep their distance from a mother covered in cloth, because they understood something most adults still don’t: she was not unavailable. She was unleashed.

Two of those children grew up to be John and Charles Wesley. John ignited a movement that crossed an ocean and shaped a continent. Charles wrote more than six thousand hymns the church still sings. Historians call them Methodists. The name was originally a mockery — they were so methodical about prayer, scripture, and serving the poor that Oxford classmates sneered. The Wesleys turned the insult into a movement.

Don’t miss the architecture of that revival. It didn’t start in a pulpit. It started under an apron.

**Take this in** The most consequential ministry of the eighteenth century traces back to a tired mother who chose surrender over performance, and prayer over panic, in a chaotic kitchen.

## What This Book Is Really About

Power Parenting is not about controlling outcomes. It’s about surrendering them. The mother who tries to micromanage her children’s futures will drown in a thousand small storms. The mother who releases her children to God walks in a peace that doesn’t make sense — and watches God work in places her hands could never reach.

Three women in scripture model this for us. We will sit with each of them in the chapters ahead:

- Mary teaches us that surrender creates purpose.
- Esther teaches us that obedience releases power.

- Hannah teaches us that sacrifice shapes legacy.

None of these women had it figured out. None of them had ideal circumstances. What they had was a yes.

### **Reflect**

Where in your motherhood are you tightening your grip when God is asking you to lift your apron?

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## Chapter 2. Surrender Creates Purpose

*The most powerful thing a mother can do is let go of her plan and trust God's plan.*

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*"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." — Luke 1:38*

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Mary wasn't auditioning for the role of mother of the Messiah. She had her own dreams. Her own timeline. A future shaped by a quiet engagement to a carpenter named Joseph and the very normal hopes any young woman in Nazareth might have entertained.

Then Gabriel showed up and rearranged everything.

If we're honest, an angelic visit sounds glamorous in a Christmas pageant and terrifying in real life. Mary was a teenager. She had no public platform. The pregnancy she was about to carry would invite gossip, jeopardize her engagement, and put a target on her child from the moment he drew breath.

Her response was four words that have echoed through history: "Be it unto me."

Translation: Not my will. Yours.

And because of her surrender, she carried the Savior of the world.

### The Surrender You Don't See Coming

Mom, your version of the angel's visit may already have happened. It might have been a positive pregnancy test, an unexpected diagnosis, a phone call from school, a custody battle, an empty nest you weren't ready for, a special needs evaluation, a teenage door slamming. None of it was on your timeline.

Surrender is what happens when you stop fighting the timeline and ask God what He wants to birth through it.

**Big takeaway** Your greatest impact will not come from controlling every outcome. It will come from trusting God with your children.

### Today, Try This

1. Start your day with one sentence: "God, these kids are Yours before they're mine."
2. When fear hits, don't tighten your grip — release them in prayer, naming each one out loud.

3. Speak purpose over your kids before you see it. Bless what God is doing in them, even when it's hidden from you.

### **Pray With Mary**

*Father, I lay down my plan. I lay down the version of motherhood I tried to script. I trust You with the timeline, the storyline, and the outcome. Be it unto me according to Your word. Use me. Use these children. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### **Reflect**

What plan are you still clutching that God is gently asking you to release?

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## Chapter 3. Obedience Releases Power

*You don't have to understand everything to obey what God is asking you to do.*

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*“And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” —*

**Esther 4:14**

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Esther wasn't a mother in the story we tell, but every mother needs her courage. She was a Jewish girl placed in a palace she didn't choose, in a position she didn't apply for, in a moment that demanded everything from her.

When her people were threatened with annihilation, her cousin Mordecai sent her a message: speak up. Use the influence you didn't even know you had. Don't imagine your silence will keep you safe.

Esther's answer was eight words that should be tattooed on every mother's heart: “If I perish, I perish.”

That isn't comfort. That isn't convenience. That's calling. And because she obeyed, an entire nation was saved.

### The Motherhood You Didn't Choose

Some of you didn't choose the season you're in. You didn't choose to be a single mom, a step-mom, a foster mom, a grieving mom, a recovery mom, a mom raising a kid who fights you on every front. You didn't plan for the diagnosis or the divorce or the distance. But you're not in this season by accident.

Stop asking, “Why is this happening?” and start asking, “God, how do You want to use me here?” That single shift turns a victim's prayer into a warrior's assignment.

**Big takeaway** Obedience doesn't require an explanation. It requires a yes. And every yes you give in secret is rearranging something in the heavenlies you can't see yet.

### Today, Try This

4. Identify one place in your home where God has already been nudging you to act — a hard conversation, a confession, a habit to break, a boundary to set.
5. Take the next obedient step within twenty-four hours. Don't wait for the feeling.

6. Trust that your unseen obedience is doing more than your visible effort.

### **Pray With Esther**

*Lord, I don't fully understand what You're asking me to do. I don't feel qualified. But I will obey. I will speak up. I will show up. I will sit with the hard thing instead of running from it. Make me a woman who says, 'For such a time as this.' In Jesus' name, amen.*

### **Reflect**

What is the one obedient step you have been postponing?

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## Chapter 4. Sacrifice Shapes Legacy

*Real love in parenting isn't just what you give your kids; it's what you're willing to give up for God.*

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*"For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord." — 1 Samuel 1:27-28*

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Hannah wanted a son more than she wanted to breathe. Year after year, she watched another woman in her household have children while her arms stayed empty. She wept in the temple so hard the priest assumed she was drunk. She wasn't. She was praying.

And then Hannah did something most of us would never have the strength to do. Before God ever answered her prayer, she made a vow. "If You give me a son, I'll give him back to You."

God answered. Samuel was born. And as soon as he was weaned, Hannah did the unthinkable — she walked her little boy up to the temple and left him with the priest. She kept her word. She gave him back.

Samuel grew up to be one of the greatest prophets in Israel's history. The kingdom of God was reshaped because a mother refused to confuse stewardship with ownership.

### These Aren't Your Kids

Read that again. These are not, in the deepest sense, your kids. They are God's kids on loan to you. Your job is not to clutch them. Your job is to consecrate them.

That changes how you parent. The mother who owns her child fights for control. The mother who stewards her child fights for character. One of those fights wears you out. The other one builds a legacy.

**Big takeaway** Don't just raise good kids. Raise God's kids. Dedicate them again and again — not just at a baby dedication, but at every stage that tries to shake your grip.

### Today, Try This

7. Speak the words out loud over each of your children: "You are the Lord's."
8. Identify one outcome you've been demanding (a school, a sport, a relationship, a career path). Hand it back to God in prayer, by name.

9. Be willing to release control of who they become — even if it doesn't look like the version you imagined.

### **Pray With Hannah**

*Father, every prayer, every tear, every unseen moment matters to You. I trust that You are building something bigger than this room and bigger than this season. My children belong to You. I lend them back to You today, with my whole heart. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### **Reflect**

Which of your children most needs to be re-dedicated to the Lord today, and what is the prayer you want to pray over them?

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## Chapter 5. Your Eternal Impact

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*“Her children rise up and call her blessed.” — Proverbs 31:28*

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Susanna Wesley never lived to see the full impact of her sons’ ministry. She buried more children than most mothers ever raise. She managed a household on a tight budget with a husband who was sometimes absent and sometimes in debtor’s prison. By the world’s metrics, her life was small.

But heaven keeps a different ledger.

Today, three centuries later, the church still sings hymns her son wrote. Movements still trace their roots to a revival her son sparked. And every time a tired mom anywhere in the world chooses prayer over panic, the Wesley apron is being lifted again.

Mom, here is what I want you to hear in your bones.

*You may feel unseen.*

You may feel like the meals, the carpool, the laundry, the prayers whispered over a sick kid at 2 a.m. don’t add up to much.

*They are adding up to eternity.*

Every time you choose surrender over control, obedience over comfort, sacrifice over self, you step into power parenting. You are not building a brand. You are building a legacy.

And legacy is what shows up in the next generation.

**Final word for Part One** The revival didn’t start in a pulpit. It started under an apron. Lift yours — quietly, daily, with no one watching but God — and trust Him with the rest.

### **A Mom’s Surrender Prayer**

*Father, I surrender the version of motherhood I thought I’d have. I surrender the outcomes I’ve been clutching. I surrender the comparison and the fear. I trust You with my children. I trust You with my marriage or my single season. I trust You with my own heart. Use me, even hidden, even tired, even now. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

## PART TWO

# The 7-Day Mom Reset

*One week to come back to yourself — and to God.*

Most moms don't need another self-help plan. You need a reset. You need seven short, doable days that put your soul back in alignment with God before you try to lead another human being.

Here's how this week works. Each day has the same five rhythms. They take fifteen to twenty minutes — not two hours. You can do them in your car, on a walk, with coffee in hand, or with a baby on your hip.

- Read — a short scripture for the day.
- Reflect — a few paragraphs to anchor your heart.
- Reset — one practical action to take that day.
- Pray — a written prayer if you don't have your own words yet.
- Record — a journaling prompt with lines to write on.

**Permission slip** If you miss a day, you don't start over. You start where you stopped. Grace is the whole point.

### How to Get the Most Out of This Week

- Pick a starting day — today is great.
- Pick a time and a place. Same chair. Same mug. Same window.
- Tell one friend you're doing this. Resets stick when they're shared.
- Don't skip the writing. The pen is what makes it land.

# Day 1. Surrender Your Plan

*Theme: Trust replaces control.*

## Read

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*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.” —*

**Proverbs 3:5**

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## Reflect

Most of the exhaustion in motherhood is not from the work. It’s from the weight of trying to control what was never yours to control.

Today is not about figuring out the rest of your kids’ lives. Today is about loosening one finger at a time. Open your hand and acknowledge that the script you’ve been writing has limits — and the One who wrote you doesn’t.

## Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Write down the one outcome you’ve been demanding (for yourself or your kids), put a date next to it, and pray, “God, this is Yours now.”

## Pray

*Father, I lay down my plan. I trust You with the timing, the timeline, and the children. Quiet the part of me that thinks control equals love. Replace it with peace. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

## Record

**What outcome am I willing to release to God today — and what does ‘releasing it’ actually look like in my home this week?**

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## Day 2. Open Your Hands

*Theme: Stewardship over ownership.*

### Read

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*“Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.” — Psalm 127:3*

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### Reflect

Yesterday you released a plan. Today you release a person. Each child you raise is on loan from God — entrusted to you to steward, not to own.

Open your hands and bless each child by name. Tell God what you love about each one. Tell Him what worries you. Hand them back, again, in your own words.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Write each child’s name on a separate line, then write one specific blessing over each one. Read it out loud over them today — even if they roll their eyes.

### Pray

*Father, these children are Yours before they were mine. Help me to steward them with open hands and a strong faith. Plant in them the seeds You want to grow. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

### Record

**Which of my children am I most tempted to grip too tightly, and what would change if I led them with open hands this week?**

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## Day 3. Quiet the Noise

*Theme: Stillness is a parenting strategy.*

### Read

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*“Be still, and know that I am God.” — Psalm 46:10*

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### Reflect

Moms live in noise. Notifications. Group chats. The car. The kitchen. The constant inner script of ‘you should be doing more.’

Today is for silence. Not because silence is more spiritual, but because you cannot hear the still small voice when you are drowning in the loud big ones.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Take a fifteen-minute silent walk — no phone, no podcast, no music. Let your thoughts settle. Notice what bubbles up. That’s where God will likely speak.

### Pray

*Father, quiet the noise in my mind. Quiet the comparison. Quiet the panic. Let me hear Your voice above the alerts and the worries. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

### Record

**When the noise quieted today, what did I notice that I usually drown out?**

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## Day 4. Speak Life

*Theme: Your words shape their world.*

### Read

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*“Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” — Proverbs 18:21*

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### Reflect

A mother’s voice is the soundtrack a child carries the rest of her life. The way you talk about your daughter when she’s in the room — and the way you talk about her when she isn’t — will become the way she talks to herself.

Today you become deliberate about that voice. You replace correction with calling. You replace sighing with blessing. You catch them being who God says they are.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Speak a sentence of identity over each child: “You are kind. You are brave. You are God’s. I see you.” Say it eye-to-eye, even if it feels awkward.

### Pray

*Father, let my mouth be a mirror of Your voice. Let my words plant identity, not insecurity. Let my children remember a mother who blessed instead of badgered. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

### Record

**What is one identity statement I want my children to remember in my voice for the rest of their lives?**

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## Day 5. Step Into Obedience

*Theme: For such a time as this.*

### Read

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*“If I perish, I perish.” — Esther 4:16*

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### Reflect

There is something God has been asking you to do. You know what it is. It might be a hard conversation. A confession. A boundary. A reconciliation. A repentance. A no.

Esther’s yes saved a nation. Your yes can save your home. Don’t spiritualize delay. Step.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Identify the one thing God has been asking you to do that you keep postponing. Take the next twenty-four hours and take the first concrete step — even if it’s small.

### Pray

*Father, give me Esther courage. Give me hands that act before my heart fully understands. I trust You more than I fear the moment. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

### Record

**What is the obedient step I am taking in the next twenty-four hours — and who do I need to tell so I actually do it?**

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## Day 6. Sacrifice in Secret

*Theme: God sees the unseen.*

### Read

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*“Your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” — Matthew 6:6*

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### Reflect

Most of motherhood is invisible work. The 2 a.m. fevers. The folded laundry no one notices. The prayers no one hears. The forgiveness no one knows you offered.

Today is for honoring the secret place. Not as a complaint, but as worship. The hidden offering is the most powerful one.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Do one act of love today that no one will see and no one will applaud. Don't announce it. Let it be a gift between you and God.

### Pray

*Father, You see what no one else sees. Receive the offering of this hidden day. Let my unseen love be a seed You water for years. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### Record

**What hidden act of love am I offering today — and what would it mean to keep doing it for a year, even unrecognized?**

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## Day 7. Sabbath Stillness

*Theme: Rest is part of the work.*

### Read

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*“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” — Matthew  
11:28*

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### Reflect

You don't earn rest by finishing the list. There is no list short enough to finish.

You take rest because God commanded it and because your soul needs it. Today you stop — not because nothing is left undone, but because everything is held by God.

### Reset — One Action Today

**Do this** Take ninety minutes of true rest today. Phone down. List ignored. Sit, walk, nap, or read scripture. Let your body remember it is not a machine.

### Pray

*Father, thank You for the gift of rest. Thank You that the world keeps spinning when I stop. Restore what striving has stolen. In Jesus' name, amen.*

### Record

**What did I learn this week about being a mom who is led by God instead of led by panic?**

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## Beyond Day 7

Resets aren't meant to be one-time events. They are meant to become rhythms. Don't close this book and go right back to the version of motherhood that exhausted you.

Pick three habits from this week and carry them forward.

- Maybe it's the morning sentence: "God, these kids are Yours before they're mine."
- Maybe it's the silent walk.
- Maybe it's the spoken blessing over each child before bed.

Whatever you carry, carry it on purpose. Build it into your week. Tell another mom. Resets done together become revivals.

## PART THREE

# The Mother-Daughter Conversation Guide

*Because legacy is built one real conversation at a time.*

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*“Listen, my daughter, consider, and incline your ear.” — Psalm 45:10*

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## How to Use This Guide

Most moms don't need a script to talk to their daughters. They need a starting point, a little courage, and the willingness to keep showing up after the first awkward attempt.

This guide is built around four age bands. Read the section that fits your daughter, but don't feel locked into it — you know your daughter better than any guide ever will.

- Ages 5-9 — Little Hearts
- Ages 10-13 — The Identity Years
- Ages 14-17 — Becoming a Woman
- Ages 18+ — Adult Daughters

### A Few Ground Rules Before You Start

10. Pick a setting that lowers her defenses. The car, a walk, a hot drink — places without forced eye contact tend to open the deepest doors.
11. Don't fix. Listen first. Most moms move to fix-mode in three sentences or less. Try forty-five seconds of silence before you respond.
12. Ask one good question and then breathe. Better one real conversation than ten surface ones.
13. Don't panic at her answer. Whatever she shares, the goal is for the next conversation to feel safer than this one. Reactions either open doors or shut them.
14. Pray before. Pray during. Pray after. Some of what God will say to her, He will say through you. Some of what God will say to you, He will say through her.

**A note for hard seasons** If your daughter isn't talking to you right now, you can still start by writing the questions in a letter, leaving them on her bed, or texting one a week. Don't require her to respond to the way you have always done it. Meet her where she is.

## Ages 5-9 — Little Hearts

This is the season where you are mostly planting. You won't see the fruit yet, but every seed you press into her heart is going somewhere. Keep it short. Keep it warm. Keep it consistent.

### What She Needs Most

- To know she is delighted in, not just managed.
- To hear about God in everyday moments — not just at church.
- To be allowed big feelings without shame.
- To watch her mom enjoy being her mom.

### Conversation Starters

15. "What made you laugh today?"
16. "What's one thing you wish I knew about you?"
17. "If God could whisper something to you right now, what do you think He'd say?"
18. "Who was kind to you today? Who could you be kind to tomorrow?"
19. "What's the bravest thing you did this week?"
20. "What's your favorite thing about being you?"
21. "What's a song that makes your heart feel happy?"
22. "If you could pray one prayer for our family, what would it be?"

### A Little Identity Practice

At bedtime, place your hand on her head and say one of these out loud:

- You are God's daughter, deeply loved.
- You are kind. I saw it today when you \_\_\_\_\_.
- You are brave. I am proud of you.
- You make our family better.

### Try Together

- Color a Bible verse together — "I am wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

- Bake something and let her be in charge of one step. Let her see you celebrate her work.
- Pray for one friend by name each night.

## Ages 10–13 — The Identity Years

This is the season where the world starts handing your daughter a script for who she should be. Her body changes. Her friend group shifts. Her phone gets louder. Comparison sneaks in fast.

She is asking three questions, even if she doesn't say them out loud: Am I okay? Am I loved? Am I enough? Your job is not to ace every conversation. Your job is to keep being a safe place for the answer.

### What She Needs Most

- Permission to be a beginner at things.
- A mom who asks questions instead of giving lectures.
- A theology of her body — honored, not feared.
- Space to disagree with you and still belong.

### Conversation Starters

23. “What’s something everyone seems to be talking about that you don’t totally get?”
24. “Who do you sit with at lunch — and who do you wish you could sit with?”
25. “When do you feel most like yourself? When do you feel least like yourself?”
26. “What are you really good at that you don’t want me to brag about?”
27. “What do you think God thinks of you on a normal Tuesday?”
28. “What questions about your body, your friendships, or your faith feel awkward to ask me?”
29. “If you could change one thing about how I parent you, what would it be?”
30. “Is there a friendship right now that’s costing more than it’s giving?”
31. “What’s a lie about yourself you’re tempted to believe?”
32. “What would help you feel safer telling me hard things?”

### Identity Anchors

In this season, your tongue is a tool of formation. Slip these phrases into normal conversation, not just heart-to-hearts:

- “God made you on purpose, with purpose.”

- “Your body is not the most interesting thing about you.”
- “You don’t have to perform to be loved here.”
- “It’s safe to tell me anything. We’ll figure it out together.”

## Try Together

- Start a shared notebook — one of you writes a thought, leaves it on the other’s pillow.
- Take one photo together every week. Let her pick the location.
- Read a chapter of Proverbs a day and text each other your favorite verse.

## Ages 14-17 — Becoming a Woman

She's standing in two worlds — still a daughter, becoming a woman. The relationship has to grow up, too. The mom who stays in surveillance mode loses her. The mom who steps into mentor mode keeps her.

This isn't the season to control her decisions. It's the season to disciple her judgment.

### What She Needs Most

- To be respected as someone forming her own faith.
- Honest conversations about dating, sex, identity, and worth — from you, before the internet has them.
- A mom who admits her own mistakes.
- A version of God that is bigger than rule-keeping.

### Conversation Starters

33. "What's the hardest thing about being a teenager right now that I probably don't understand?"
34. "What's a question about God you can't ask anyone?"
35. "What would your closest friends say is the best part of being your friend?"
36. "What does pressure look like in your world — from boys, from social media, from yourself?"
37. "When do you feel beautiful? When do you feel invisible?"
38. "If you could plan a future without anyone's expectations, what would you actually want?"
39. "What's something I do that helps you talk to me — and something that shuts you down?"
40. "Where do you see God showing up in your life right now? Where does He feel silent?"
41. "Have you ever had a moment where God felt real to you? Tell me about it."
42. "What boundary in your friendships or dating life do you wish you were brave enough to hold?"

### A Conversation You Can't Skip

Somewhere in this age band, sit down and have an unhurried conversation about three things: her body, her worth, and her boundaries. Don't make it a one-time event. Make it a returning conversation. Try saying:

**Try saying** “You are going to hear a thousand voices try to tell you what your body is for and what your worth depends on. I want my voice to be the loudest — because mine is going to tell you the truth.”

### Try Together

- Plan a yearly mother-daughter overnight. No agenda. Just presence.
- Serve together — a shelter, a church team, a neighbor. Shared mission opens shared talk.
- Pick a podcast or a devotional you'll listen to in the car together once a week.

## Ages 18+ — Adult Daughters

If your daughter is grown, the relationship now requires the hardest parenting upgrade of all: from authority to invitation. You are no longer the loudest voice in her life. You are now a chosen voice.

This is sacred ground. The mom who tries to stay in charge will be tolerated. The mom who learns to delight in her grown daughter as a person will be sought out.

### What She Needs Most

- To feel known by you, not just kept track of.
- To be received without commentary when she shares.
- To watch you continue to grow, repent, and pursue God yourself.
- To know she is celebrated, not just expected.

### Conversation Starters

43. “What’s the most surprising part of this season of life?”
44. “What’s something about you I might be slow to recognize because I still see you as my little girl?”
45. “What’s one way I can love you better as an adult — not as a child?”
46. “Where are you most lonely right now?”
47. “What is God teaching you these days?”
48. “If you could, what would you tell yourself at sixteen — and what would you tell me?”
49. “Is there anything I’ve done as your mom that I need to apologize for?”
50. “What dream are you sitting on?”
51. “How can I pray for you, specifically, this month?”
52. “What does ‘honor’ between us look like in this stage of life?”

### Apologize Where Needed

If there is unfinished business between you and your adult daughter, this is the chapter for it. Don’t wait for a perfect moment or a perfect feeling. A short, specific apology — with no “but” — can rewrite a decade of distance.

**Try saying** “I’ve been thinking about \_\_\_\_\_. I was wrong, and I am sorry. I don’t expect you to feel any certain way. I just wanted to name it.”

## Try Together

- A standing weekly call or voice memo. Short is fine; consistent matters more.
- A shared scripture or book read at the same time.
- An annual trip, even just a day trip, that becomes a marker on the calendar.

## The Apron Ritual — A Family Blessing

In honor of Susanna Wesley, we end with a small, repeatable family ritual. You can do this once a week, once a month, or once a year on Mother’s Day. Either way, write it on the calendar.

### What You Need

- Any apron — yours, your grandmother’s, a thrift store one. It just needs to feel like home.
- A moment of quiet — around a meal, before bed, on a Sunday afternoon.
- Each child present, even by phone if necessary.

### How To Do It

53. Put on the apron. Tell your kids, briefly, the Susanna Wesley story — a mom, an apron, nineteen children, a revival.
54. Say out loud: “When I lift this apron, our family is praying.”
55. Pull the apron up over your head. Pray a short prayer for each person present, by name. Two sentences each is enough.
56. Lower the apron. Look each child in the eye and say, “You are God’s, and I am yours.”
57. Hug. End. That’s it.

**Why this matters** Rituals teach what sermons can’t. Your kids will remember the apron longer than they will remember any lecture you give them about faith.

## The Rest of the Story:

John Wesley was born in 1703 in England. He was the fifteenth of nineteen children born to Samuel (an Anglican priest) and Susanna Wesley. When a fire broke out in the home, John was rescued from an upstairs window. His mother described him as a burning stick snatched from the fire a reference to Zechariah 3:2.

John attended Oxford University, where he joined his brother Charles and others in a club whose members vowed to lead holy lives by practicing spiritual disciplines, studying the Bible, and ministering to people in the Oxford prisons. Noticing the group's methodical study and discipline, outsiders called them "the Methodists." In 1735, John sailed to Georgia to serve as a pastor to British colonists.

On the way, he was introduced to a group of Christians who had a spiritual peace that he was missing. His ministry in Georgia went poorly, and he returned to England. John attended a Christian meeting where he described his heart as feeling strangely warmed, and he trusted in Christ alone for salvation. From this point on, John felt his life's mission was to share the Good News of salvation by faith.

John became an itinerant preacher and, following the advice of an evangelist friend, began to preach in the open air. In his lifetime, John traveled 4,000 miles annually by foot, horseback, or carriage, pushing on through rainstorms and blizzards. When established church officials objected to him crossing into other ministers' parishes, John responded that the world was his parish.

To help new converts grow in their Christian faith, John organized them into small groups that met weekly to pray, read the Bible, discuss their spiritual lives, and collect money for charity. These societies were the beginnings of the Methodist movement, which today represents tens of millions of people worldwide.

John was a prolific author, publishing sermons, biographies, theological treatises, and works for spiritual formation. In his lifetime, he preached 40,000 sermons. By the time of his death at the age of eighty-seven, John was an honored figure in England.

John taught Christians to practice spiritual disciplines in pursuit of a holy life. Do you practice spiritual disciplines, which include prayer, Bible study, and giving to charity? What step can you take today to practice these disciplines more consistently in your life?



## A Mom's Closing Prayer

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*“Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.” —*

**Proverbs 31:28**

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*Father, You see me. You see the meals and the laundry and the prayers prayed in the dark. You see the moments I held my tongue and the moments I wished I had. You see the version of motherhood I dreamed of and the one I'm actually living.*

*Make me a praying mom. Not perfect. Not Pinterest. Just praying. Make my surrender greater than my striving. Make my obedience louder than my fear. Make my sacrifice a seed You water for generations.*

*Take my children. They are Yours before they are mine. Whatever You want to do in them, in me, in this home — do it. Don't pass us by.*

*And on the days I forget all of this, remind me of the apron. Remind me that hidden surrender shapes history.*

***In Jesus' name, amen.***

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## Happy Mother's Day, Mom.

*You are seen by heaven. You are loved by God. You are doing more than you know.*