

Honestly

*Foreword by
Priscilla Shirer*

 Little sister in Christ, the book you are holding is very important. But before I tell you about it, I need to admit something to you. I've procrastinated quite a bit in writing this introductory note. More than a month and a half has passed since I was asked to do it. Indeed, this has been one of the hardest tasks I've been asked to take on all year—not because I didn't know what to say, but because I couldn't quite figure out how to start.

So instead of trying to sound polished and professional, I'm just going to start like this:

Honestly.

The book you are about to read is filled with the final, heartfelt words of an astounding author. Her name was Wynter—a common word with a little twist in the middle that made it shimmer with uniqueness. It fit her perfectly. She was one of the most likeable, most easygoing, and friendliest women I've ever known. There was not one hint of pretense or flamboyance in her. Instead, her

I Am Yours

personality was relaxed, her laugh warm, her disposition welcoming. She was an every-woman kind of girl, and others gravitated to her.

She was common in that way—certainly not mundane or without flare, but approachable, minimalistic, and simple in her style, her ideas, and her problem-solving. She was the kind of girl you wanted to share coffee with while talking through your troubles, knowing you'd gain her valued insight on your life as you sat in fuzzy socks, warm and cozy underneath thick blankets.

But like the spelling of her name, she had a unique twist at her core that set her apart in more ways than one. There was a fire in her heart, the kind that glowed low and hot beneath the surface of her busy schedule. It energized the life she was living and the future she was building. This fervor burned for all the things that mattered most in her life. It endured over time and through difficulty, and it fueled her choices and ambitions regarding her faith, her family, and her friends.

That's where I come in.

See, Wynter's dad and my dad are brothers. This makes us biological cousins. But that just happened to be how we met—Wynter was one of my closest friends on earth, and that's how we lived. Which is why July 24, 2018, will always be etched in the dark side of my memory. I was out with my husband, celebrating our nineteenth wedding anniversary, when I got a call that my sweet friend—only

Honestly

38 years old—was suddenly, without any warning, slipping from time into eternity.

This is why this book is so important. It is a last will and testament of sorts—a spiritual legacy left to you, sweet young lady.

In the four years before Wynter's passing, she wrote ten books. Can you imagine that? Ten books in four years! (I can take nearly two years just to complete one rough draft.) Her accomplishments were miracles. Every single one. And she did all this with near-perfect alignment of priorities. She wrote mostly for her own four beautiful daughters, into whom she poured her entire heart and soul with encouragement and love. But she also wrote for you, one of her spiritual daughters whom she longed to propel toward maturity and divine purpose.

Those of us who knew her watched in amazement as we observed the fruit of her surrendered life. Somehow, without striving and without selfish ambition, she simply wrote down what the Lord impressed upon her, and ten books tumbled out of her heart and life for you. It was almost as if God fast-tracked His work in her so the message He wanted to communicate through her life would be on paper before He snatched her into eternity.

And now, here it is, the message that burned in that fiery heart of hers during those last months when her life was on the edge of eternity—when she was nearest to the thin veil between earth and heaven. It was the song God's Spirit

I Am Yours

hummed into her soul until the melody became so loud and so clear that it formed words and became chapters—"I Am Yours," "I Am with God," "I Am Seen," "I Am Beloved," "I Am Held"...and on and on the song goes for 60 melodic devotions, each a beautiful refrain that echoes God's heart for you. Do you hear it? Oh, you will, little sister, you will.

This book is Wynter's song. Or rather, it's the Father's song to you, sung through her voice, reminding you that you are His—always have been and always will be. It's a song calling to you from heaven, inviting you to the most intimate and passionate relationship with Jesus you can have while you walk this planet. You'll hear the holy hum and feel the call in every single page of this beautifully written book. You'll hear it as you read, and you'll hear it as you pray. That's what Wynter will be beckoning you to do through each page so you can hear your Father sing a special song over you.

Because that's what He does when we pray.

You can do this. I realize the topic of prayer can sometimes seem overwhelming. Perhaps, like me when I didn't feel up to writing these opening pages, you may feel a bit intimidated by the whole task, and you might be tempted to procrastinate, passing the time with promises to start someday when you are older or more settled or better at it than you think you are right now.

But hear me clearly, and let Wynter's life and untimely

Honestly

death be a jarring reminder of this undisputable fact: *Time is short.*

And that's the honest-to-goodness truth.

So don't delay. If you aren't sure how to begin, let me encourage you to start praying the same way I started this note:

Honestly.

Tell God your simple truth, just as I told you mine. Talk to Him like you would your dearest friends. He knows you, and He's waiting patiently for you to come... Just. As. You. Are.

Prayer Is for You!



If you've read my book *God's Girl Says Yes*, you may remember me talking about my grandmother and the way she prayed. When I was a little girl, I would watch her pray for what seemed like *forever*! Breakfast would have to wait, and my stomach would growl and growl, which was a little upsetting because we all know how hungry we can get when we first wake up! But mostly, watching my grandmother—we called her Mama—talk to God every single day just made me really curious.

Mama would sit on her bed when she prayed, her Bible in her hands, wearing her favorite pair of tiny, purple-framed glasses. She would talk to God out loud. And I mean sometimes really loud! It was like He was sitting on the bed next to her. Sometimes she laughed. Sometimes she cried. Sometimes she was so loud that my brother and I thought she had a friend over visiting! But when we peeked into her room, the only person sitting there was her.

Prayer. I had so many questions about it. I wanted to talk to God about things too, but I could never make my prayers last more than a few seconds...well, maybe almost a minute if it was close to Christmas or my birthday! I just figured that the older I got, the more I would have to say

Prayer Is for You!

to God, right? And honestly, sometimes I even wondered why I bothered praying at all. God never seemed to do or give me what I was asking Him to anyway! But I was curious, so I kept on praying. As I prayed, I learned more and more about God and grew closer and closer to Him. And prayer became a very important part of my life!

If you are like me, you probably pray over your pancakes before you take your first bite. You may even pray, “God, can You help me, please?” when you’re in the middle of your history test and trying to remember the name of the thirteenth president of the United States. And you probably pray at night, thanking God for keeping you safe, right before you close your eyes. *Zzzzz!*

Maybe you haven’t thought much about praying. You might even think the whole idea of talking to yourself seems a bit weird. I can relate to that too! Praying can seem very mysterious and confusing if you haven’t done it very much.

Whatever you think about prayer, I want you to know that God loves hearing you talk to Him. And do you know what else? He loves to talk to His children. Not just His adult children, but *all* His children—including you!

You’re going to learn a lot about prayer in this book. But you’re not just going to read about it—you’re going to *do* it! Don’t worry. It’s not as complicated as it might seem. Prayer is something God designed for everyone—including girls like you!