

FOR **GIRLS** **YOU**

JULY/AUGUST 2023

CELEBRATE
WORLD
friendship
DAY!
(IT'S JULY 30!)



NEW!
CREATIVE
HEARTS

*Make Your Own
Friendship Hula Hoop*

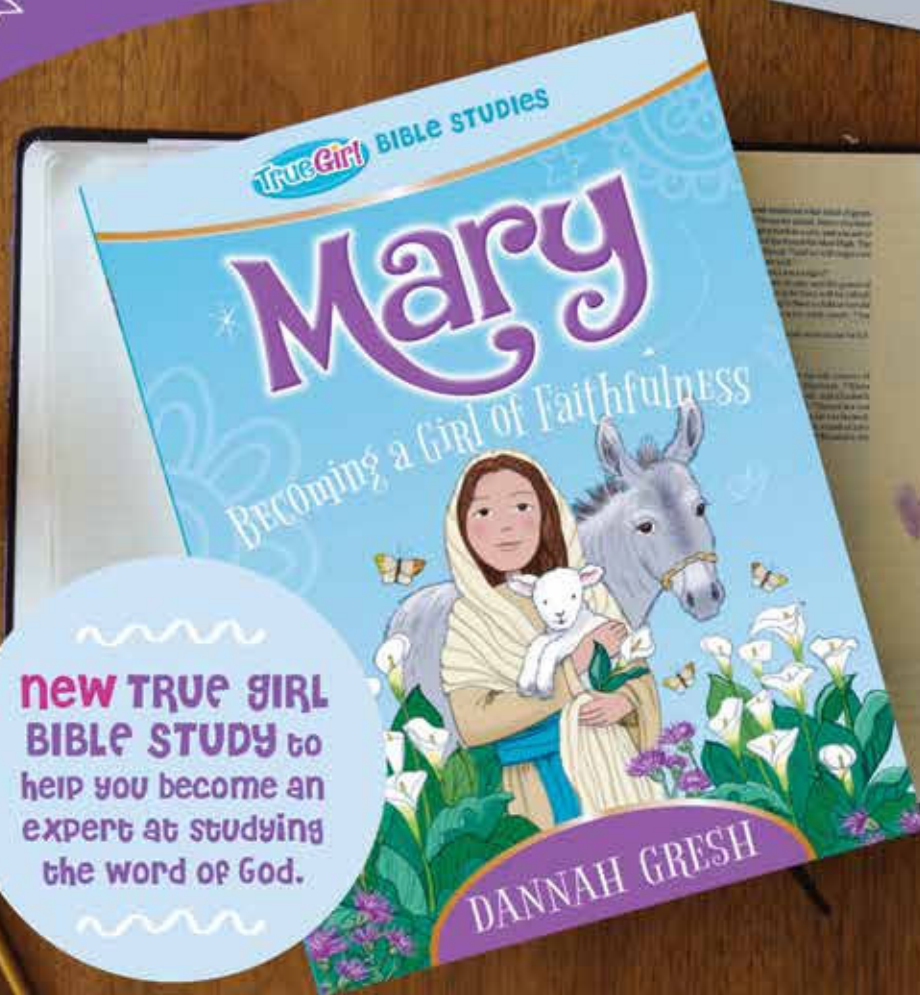
American Heritage Girls



TA'GASH AND MARIE

TWO PEN PALS WHO ARE NEVER FAR APART IN HEART

Study the life of an ordinary girl—Mary—and learn what it means to be a girl of faithfulness.



more Bible studies by
Dannah Gresh to help develop
a love for God and His Word



FOR **GIRLS LIKE YOU**

Volume 13 Issue 4

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A FRIENDLY NOTE

"A friend loves at all times..."
PROVERBS 17:17

I'm so excited to have the opportunity to catch up with you here in this special issue all about FRIENDSHIP. Since we're honoring **World Friendship Day**, I'd love to introduce you to my BFF Sydney. Sydney and her sisters were on one of our first covers—the Christmas 2018 issue—and I've been on a couple with the rest of my sisters, plus my very own cover for our Baking Issue in May, 2020. It's been so fun to read about you and your friends in this issue and to find out what you love to do together, the memories you've made, what you believe makes a true friend, and how you are celebrating yours. So now, let me tell you more about mine!

I met Sydney the summer we moved to Tennessee. We clicked right when we met—we were in the same grade and going to the same school. Our parents worked in the same church. It seemed we were always together. I remember automatically thinking she was my best friend—like **BOOM**, right when we met. I really felt like it was all God—nothing was ever awkward. And I didn't have to deal with worrying about finding friends—she was right there! We are still best friends to this day, and she's been with me through all the ups and downs.

I love going on trips with her. I love going to school with her. I love going on long drives or short drives. We love listening to music together. I love that we help each other grow. Sydney and I are very honest with each other, and we only say or do things for each other to help us grow in the end. We're going to do what's best for one another even if it's not the easiest thing. I love how thoughtful and kind Sydney is to me about literally everything. We've stuck together through every season.

If you haven't found your Sydney yet, don't worry. It may take time finding just the right person, but it is worth it! **A true friend will help you grow as Christ would.**

Proverbs 27:9 says: **"Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart. And the sweetness of a friend comes from their honest advice."**

I definitely had a phase where I wanted to compare myself to Sydney all the time. She helped me know that I was made the way I am for a reason! It never went to her head that "Yeah, you should want to be like me!" She encouraged me to be me, and said, "You're the way you are for a reason! And I'm the way I am for a reason!"

I thank God every day because Sydney's one of the best things in my life.

Kaitlyn Pitts
AND YOUR FRIENDS at
FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU

THE Friendship ISSUE

FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU

July/August 2023

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Far Apart & Close in Heart

Meet American Heritage Girl pen pals Ta'Gash and Marie, (and Ta'Gash's sister Lydia and her pen pal Kateri) —and hear the story of the amazing 8000-mile journey that brought them all together!



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YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME

What a wonderful way to honor World Friendship Day—hearing all about Girls Like You and your friends. And the super fun and sweet things you do together.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF MARY AND ELIZABETH

Linsey Driskill looks at what we can learn about God through the friendship of two beautiful-hearted women of the Bible.

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SPrinkles

SPRINKLE JOY. SPRINKLE FUN. SPRINKLE BEAUTY.



New Friends

The last time I was in FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU magazine, I was 10! Now I am almost 13 and a LOT has changed! I moved, got new friends, and had to start over. And starting over in a new place can be

tough, and difficult to readjust to—especially when you have to find new friends. I found my friend group very quickly, and it was nice! But when you're Christian, sometimes it's hard to find good friends who won't peer pressure you. My friends are Christian, but when we stray from that path, we help wrangle each other back in! So, just don't forget to be a good friend. And help those who need it. This picture is me with my new friends!

—Addison, 12



Best Friends

I just want every girl to know that even when they feel lonely, God will still be there. My favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 40:8: "The flower will fade, the grass will die, but the word of the Lord stands forever." I have five best friends. They all go to school with me at Rainbow Middle school in Alabama. We are constantly together. I love them so much—I don't know what I would do without them. Here is what I like most about them.

Kizley: I love her kind and caring personality, and her incredible creativity.

Mallory: I love how she is always so organized and always has fun ideas.

Daylin: She is so sweet, she laughs more than she talks, and she has an extreme puppy obsession!

Adrianna: She has an amazing sense of humor! And I love her for that.

Lizzie: She always likes things to go her way, and she has a fabulous sense of fashion!

Shoutout to all these lovely girls!

Love you!

—Reese, 13



Friendship Is

—Ellis Kate, 10

Good Friends

—Ansley, 10



Celebrate Friends

Why We Celebrate Friends

What makes friends real
Is that they share the joy and pain we feel
They are there to wipe our tears
And there to comfort us from our fears
They shoulder the burdens we carry
Burdens that trouble our souls and make us weary
They share in laughter and glee
While creating memories that last an eternity
Because they have great value
It is important that we celebrate them too.

Celebrate the ones who shower us with love
And when we need it, give us a little shove
Celebrate the ones with whom we feel safe and sound
And can be ourselves when they are around
Celebrate the ones in whom we can confide
And who stand firmly by our side
Celebrate the ones who will never give up on us
And know that in them we can put our trust
Celebrate the ones who stick with us until the end
Celebrate the ones we call our friends.

—Sage, 13



Drawn to Art

I love **FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU** magazine! I call this "My Hard Work!" It is my drawing of a cigar-box guitar, a flowerpot, and a piece of wood. I made it as a school project, but I loved doing it. It took me a long time to draw this. I love art! I made it to give girls hope. I also want them to know that if they think they can't do it, then to think of Jesus and believe in Him!

—Naomi, 9

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! We'd love to showcase your paintings, poems, songs, stories, drawings, photographs, anything! And we'd like to see you! Email your entries and photo to sprinkles@forgirlslikeyou.com!

I AM

ANNIE W.
11 years old
Joyful. Funny. Adventurous



I love my family!



My birthday is July 17th!
I LOVE summer!



Costa Rica memories
in the sun!

A GIRL LIKE YOU
ANNIE W.

A GIRL LIKE YOU

Do you know how your name was chosen? My first name, Annie, means grace and favor. My middle name, Colleen, is Irish—I am actually part Irish!—and it means "country girl!"

Tell us about your family. I have two sisters, Whitney and Savannah, and a little brother named Ford. (He is SO ADORABLE!) My parents have been married for 14 years. I LOVE my family!

What are your favorite hobbies? I like a ton of things: gymnastics, singing, baking, getting pedicures and manicures, running, writing, hanging out with my sisters, acting, and playing Doc MacStuffin's UNO with my big sis. It's a really weird obsession, but we just love that game.

What do you want to do or be when you grow up? I definitely want to be a mom! But before that, I want to be a nurse, like my mom was, an author, or a marine biologist. I'm passionate about so many different things!

What is something you want all girls to know about God? I want them to know that they are ROYALTY! They are daughters of THE King—and that makes them a princess. And to find our satisfaction in Christ Alone. He is enough.

What is something that nobody would ever guess about you? I had relatives on the Titanic! And I helped start a bakery with my sisters called the "Sugarplum Sisters!"

What is one of your favorite memories? When I went to Costa Rica with my mom and big sister! It was AMAZING! I got to see monkeys, swim and snorkel in the Pacific, and eat LOADS of mangos! It was unreal!

Do you have an unusual talent or ability? I started a routine for our family that we do most nights! I call it "Parlor Time" and we do Bible study and I serve tea! It's so fun and such good family time!

What are some things on your bucket list?

1. Travel to Paris, Hawaii, Brazil, and Africa.
2. Snorkel in the Great Barrier Reef.
3. Move to Hawaii and become a professional surfer!
4. Learn to speak French, Spanish, Italian, and more.
5. Write a book!

What has God been showing or teaching you lately?

I'm reading through Esther with my friend, Claire, and I've been learning to have more faith in my daily life, and to be a prayer warrior.

I am a down to earth, lovin' life, laughin' through it, total God-crazy, blue-eyed Missourian. I love popcorn and St. Louis and JESUS! And my best friends are my lifelong BFFs—my sisters, Whitney and Savannah.

Some people think I'm crazy. Culture tells us that it's OK to dislike your siblings. But, siblings are God-given BLESSINGS and MIRACLES. They are to laugh with, cry with, joke with, shop with, and stay up late eating popcorn with—my favorite!

I think a friend is someone who sticks by you no matter the circumstance. Someone who deeply cares about your feelings and favorites. Someone who will go out of their way to comfort you, cheer you up, and make you laugh. Someone who loves you ALL DAY, EVERYDAY.

If you struggle to find a best friend, and you feel like you don't have one, let me tell you ... you DO! Someone who already knows EVERYTHING about YOU. Someone who loves you so much that he DIED for YOU. Someone who will NEVER fail you. And that is JESUS.

MY FAVORITES

Color: Sky blue or baby pink
Song: "My Jesus"
Singer/Band: Anne Wilson
Book: Alone Yet Not Alone by Tracy Leninger Craven
Thing to Wear: Fancy dresses or jeans
Class in School: Science or writing
Bible Verse: Isaiah 40:31

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."



WYNTER'S
WORDS



DEVOTIONALS & MORE TO GROW YOUR FAITH

GOOD FRIENDS

Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

I have a really good friend named Nicole. We have spent a lot of time together over the years, and there is nothing better than spending time with her. We laugh together, we eat together (our favorite thing to do), we shop together, and we even take naps together! We've done a lot of things together, but what makes me happier than anything else is that we have encouraged each other. We've given of ourselves to help each other grow in God and in the things He has called us to do.

Good friends are among the best gifts you will ever get. Having someone to laugh with, talk to, and spend time with is very special. So if you have a good friend who means a lot to you, make sure she knows. Be an encouragement to her! (Side note: This is great advice for siblings too!)

Sometimes it's easy to take good friends for granted, especially if you have known them for

a long time—like if you've known each other since you were babies or preschoolers. But good friends still need love and encouragement. They need to know you're there for them. So treat your friends well and value them, just like you would a special gift. Always take the time to show kindness to your friends—just like the Bible tells us to.



You can encourage your friends in so many ways. When a friend is having a bad day or week, make her a special card telling her how important she is and what an awesome job she is doing. Plan fun activities to do together—even if it's just hanging out at your house watching

your favorite show and eating ice cream. Pray together or read some Bible verses out loud and talk about what they mean. Taking time to make something for your friends or doing something for them is a great way to encourage them and let them know how important they are to you!

From *I Am Yours* by Wynter Pitts.
Courtesy of Harvest House
Publishers.

DEAR God,

Thank You for the amazing friends You have put in my life. Help me to love them all the time and not to take them for granted. Please show me how to be the best friend possible, and please help me know the best way to encourage them and support them. Remind me of how good a friend You are to me so I can remember to be the same to others.

In Jesus' name—AMEN.

GO Girl!
WITH JACKIE MARUSHKA



GO Girl!

FOREVER FRIENDS

"And friends are friends forever if the Lord's the Lord of them ...
In the Father's hands we know
That a lifetime's not too long to live as friends"

When Michael W. Smith sings about friendship in his timeless song, "Friends," his words convey that **a life-long friendship is ideally, God-led and God-centered.**

But what does it mean to have a friend and to be a friend?

If you look up "friend" in the dictionary, it uses words like "mutual affection," but **the Bible offers several examples of what friendship is**, including John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends," 1 John 4:21: "And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother," and Proverbs 17:17: "A friend loves at all times..."

All of these reflect a spirit of loyalty, trust and kindness.

For example, if you share a secret with a friend, you might expect they would not share that with someone else because of a trust you have in that friend. But if they shared your secret, it may not feel like that person is a friend. Trust and loyalty are qualities that bind friends.

Also, someone who will celebrate with you for the wonderful things that may happen in your life is being a friend—as opposed to someone who may be jealous of a good thing happening for you.

Or someone seeing the best in you and helping you be the best version of yourself. If someone comes to you after a school play rehearsal and says, "May I offer some thoughts on your performance?"—if you trust this person has the best in mind for you, you would probably welcome their comments as constructive instead of criticism. If someone cares for you and wants the best for you, they'll offer comments with love that will help you to grow.

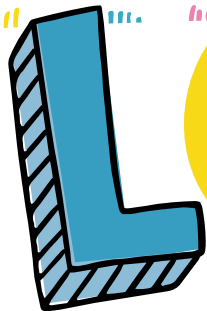
Two verses that talk about this are Proverbs 27:9: "Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel," and Proverbs 27:1: "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."

God's Word says we should love, encourage and care for one another—and shows us how to recognize a friend and how to BE one. Friendships take time to grow and while none of us is perfect, if we are thoughtful and keep our focus on Jesus, He will guide our paths—including our friendships, actions and decisions.

One of my favorite verses about being and making good friends is: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you," (JOHN 15:12). **With Jesus at the center of our lives, we can't go wrong. He is after all, the very best Friend we could ever have.**



How awesome
is that!



JOKES, FUNNIES & MORE!

What do you
CALL A TREE
with lots of
FRIENDS?

Poplar!

How do CLAMS call
their friends?

On their
shell
phones!

What do FRENCH FRIES DO
when they meet after
A LONG TIME?

They ketchup!

What do you CALL
the FRIENDS you like
to eat with?

Taste buds!

TWO POTATOES WERE ALWAYS
ARGUING WITH EACH OTHER.

They just couldn't see eye to eye.

TREES HAVE plenty of FRIENDS
BECAUSE they KEEP BRANCHING OUT!

I'M CLOSE FRIENDS with 25 LETTERS of
the ALPHABET.

I don't know Y.

Why did the EMU LOSE ALL her FRIENDS
when she GREW A FEW FEET TALLER?

Because she was ostrich sized!

KNOCK, KNOCK.
Who's there?
ORANGE.
ORANGE who?

Orange you glad
we're friends?

What do you CALL
A BOAT full of
BUDDIES?

A friend ship!

SEND US YOUR FAVORITE LOLS! What jokes make you laugh? Have a great riddle to stump us? Have you drawn a cartoon you'd like to share? Anything funny at all—we want to hear from you! Email LOL@forgirlslikeyou.com!



TRUE girl

WITH DANAH GRESH

TRUE FRIENDS

Have you ever read about Jonathan and David in the Bible? They were a great example of true friendship. As a matter of fact, in 1 Samuel 18:3, it says: "Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself." That means Jonathan made a formal promise or covenant with David. He was *serious* about their friendship. **That's the kind of relationship God wants us to have with each other—friends who are committed to each other as they walk with Him.**

A young lady I know recently asked me who my "person" was. You see, she is a freshman at a Christian high school and has a lot of friends, but she hasn't really found that person to walk with her as they both grow in Christ.

"Who is the friend that helps you walk closer to God?" she asked. I told her. She then asked, "What makes her your person?" I then rattled off all the wonderful things about this person—her love for God and His Word, her kindness, passion and compassion for people, sense of humor ... and the list went on and on. "And you know what else makes her my person?" I asked. "She challenges me to go deeper with God."

Now, of course, everything I need isn't in her or any other human being. However, God wants us to have meaningful and lasting friendships that are built on biblical principles. As followers of Christ, we are called to love and support one another, and help each other grow in the faith.

If you are looking for someone to grow with in God, here are a few practical ways that might help:

1. Choose Christ-Centered Friendships:

Look for friends who share your faith and values, as they will encourage and inspire you to grow in your relationship with God.

2. Be Truthful and Honest: Be open with your feelings and trust your friends with your joys, struggles and doubts. Create a safe space where you can support and pray for each other.

3. Practice Forgiveness and Grace: Friends are going to have misunderstandings and conflicts. However, as followers of Christ, we are called to forgive and show grace just as He's done for us.

4. Encourage Spiritual Growth: Have meaningful conversations about God's Word, attend church events, and participate in prayer groups. By encouraging one another's faith journeys, you inspire growth and deepen your connection with God.

5. Serve Others Together: Look for opportunities to serve with your friends, like volunteering at a local shelter or participating in a mission trip. Through acts of kindness and selflessness, you not only impact lives but also create lasting memories and strengthen your friendships.

6. Pray For Each Other: Pray about your struggles and celebrate your victories together. Prayer is powerful and it brings us closer to God and each other.

In today's world, we don't tend to put enough value on friendship. But very few things shape and mature us like our friends, and they're worth investing in. You may not have found your "person" yet, but I know that you will. And when you do, give that relationship to God and watch what He does in you both!

Shani McKenzie is a lead teacher for True Girl! She loves to share Jesus and make people laugh.



Ta'Gash & Marie BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

"TRUE FRIENDS ARE
NEVER APART,
MAYBE IN DISTANCE
BUT NEVER IN HEART."

The story of two sisters—and their pen pals—and the amazing journey that brought them ALL together!

They say that the road to a friend's house is never long—and that's something Ta'Gash and Marie—true "friends across the miles"—discovered as American Heritage Girls Pen Pals! Ta'Gash and Lydia are sisters in California. Marie, in Iowa became Ta'Gash's pen pal and Kateri in Texas became Lydia's. The sisters' dad had a vision to plan an adventure for the sisters to meet their AHG Pen Pals. What began as a pen pal friendship grew into a once-in-a-lifetime family adventure with sweet moments planning trip details, the anticipation of what it would be like to see their friends face-to-face for the first time, hugs and giggles, and now friendships that share those common bonds.

American Heritage Pals!

In the American Heritage Girls' Creed, we promise to be **Compassionate, Helpful, Honest, Loyal, Perseverant, Pure, Resourceful, Respectful, Responsible** and **Reverent**.

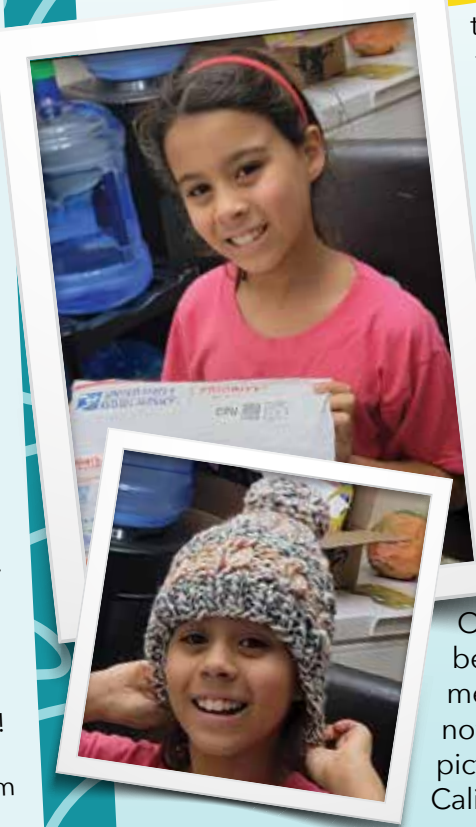
One of the key qualities of a good friendship is **loyalty**. Through thick and thin, committed friends do not abandon one another. Proverbs 17:17 says: "A friend loves at all times." This doesn't give examples of times when a friend has an excuse NOT to love. Do you have a friend like that? Some friendships may face challenges, like miles and miles between them. They might be tempted to say, "It's too hard. This friendship is just not going to work." But they would miss out on all the beautiful opportunities that come through putting in the extra effort to love that friend—even across the miles!

Pen pals are a great way to either form new friendships or to keep established friendships strong if one must move far away. In American Heritage Girls (AHG), every member has a chance to register as an AHG Pen Pal. AHG Pen Pals are paired up with another girl of a similar age in another state. Each month, the pen pals write letters or emails to one another—giving them a chance to introduce and tell about themselves, learn about the other girl, and to share a bit of her everyday life. They even share hand-drawn pictures and photos in their back-and-forth writing! And sometimes a wonderful adventure can come from it!

—Natalie Ambrose

TA'GASH

I became pen pals with Marie in January of 2022. We write letters every month or so. Sometimes it gets busy and we go a little longer, but it's been back and forth and really nice. I like it when I sit down to write to her and start thinking about all the stuff I am going to say. It causes me to enjoy the moments more and to think about things to ask her. It's very exciting. I run to my room to be alone and read all about what's going on with her, and see her questions. I also get to write back and tell her my stories and ask her some questions too. Sometimes we share pictures and small gifts. **We send each other birthday cards, because we have the same birthday!** Marie sent me a great handmade hat for Christmas. She also made me a great colored picture of birds. On my triathlon day, we Facetimed before the race, which really pumped me up. If I could see her again right now, I'd give her a BIG HUG and a picture of me in San Diego with some California birds.



We MEET!

Our first visit was really nice. The anticipation was very high as we left Massachusetts on our trip and began westward towards Marie's home in Iowa. It took us two days to get there! We met at a really great park and played together. It felt like I already knew her and finally got to see her. We went back to her house and played and ate yummy food. The entire visit was great! I wish we lived closer so we could see each other a lot more.

Meeting Marie was AWESOME! She is really nice, smart and fun. Getting to know her is so interesting. She's a really great girl. I like her a lot. As we continue to get to know each other more, I pray for Marie and her family and that they are healthy and safe. I also pray to see her again!

TA'GASH DESTINY, 10

I AM Beautiful (in the heart). Intelligent. Mature.

MY NAME My dad chose my name. It is the word *Patience* in Amharic, from Ethiopia, where my mom is from, and it means to have patience with steadfast endurance. Destiny comes from my dad's life. He finally had the children that he felt God promised him. I was destined to be born. So putting Ta'Gash Destiny together, you get quite an extraordinary, unique and powerful name.

MY FAMILY We are a family of four. Dad (Donald), Mom (Isreal), me and my beautiful, intelligent little sister Lydia.

WHEN I GROW UP I'd like to be a librarian.

I WANT ALL GIRLS TO KNOW THAT God loves you and paid the price for your sin with the blood of Jesus.

I LAUGH AT the emotion that comes out of people from the pressure of doing a DARE!

I'M SAD WHEN I see people upset or crying.

AN UNUSUAL TALENT? Yes! I have been competing in Triathlons since I was 8. Triathlons are a type of race which combines swimming, biking and running.

MY HAPPY PLACE is at church on Thursday nights and Sunday mornings.

ON MY BUCKET LIST Riding a really huge roller coaster, going sky diving, and seeing a live performance of a play.

LATELY, GOD HAS BEEN SHOWING ME... That I need to better restrain my enthusiasm. At times, I get really excited and then lose self-control, which usually leads to me doing something wrong. Deep breathing, thinking about actions and consequences and redirecting my energy are all things I do to achieve this goal.

COOLEST THING I'VE EVER DONE My family went to Big Bear Lake for my 8th birthday. After a great weekend of camping, we were driving home, and I noticed a place on the way that had really fun looking rides. It was like a tram, but it lifted you high in the air and then skidded your feet on the water. Because that day was my birthday, my dad allowed us to go in and have fun. It was the coolest thing I've done in my life!

My Favorite Memory

When my family took an 8,235 mile road trip around America in June, 2022. We saw many terrains, sights and different things. We visited lots of nice people, ate delicious new foods and did many fun things. It was during this trip that I was able to meet my pen pal Marie in person, which was really awesome.

TA'GASH'S FAVORITES

Color: Blue

Song: "Moonlight Sonata"

Singer/Band: My friends Charis and Sofia when they duet.

Book: *Whatever After* series

Food: Linguica pizza

Animal: A horse because they are graceful, beautiful and fierce.

Thing To Wear: Ripped Jeans and a T-shirt

Hobbies: I enjoy reading and drawing.

Vacation: France

Class in School: History

Bible Verse: Philippians 1:21

"FOR TO ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN."

Five Fun Facts About Me!

1. My family grows and sells microgreens at the Coronado Farmer's Market and throughout San Diego through our business named "T n L Microgreens" after me and my sister Lydia.
2. I am home-schooled by my dad.
3. I have a great sense of humor.
4. I have never ice skated.
5. I have lots of friends from church, AHG, parks, libraries and more.

MARIE

Ta'Gash has been my pen pal for almost

two years. We like to write back and forth every couple months. But the first year we wrote to each other every month! My most fun memory is sending and getting pictures. We would draw something for each other along with sending letters. We also would have our parents send pictures of us sometimes. One picture Ta'Gash sent was a drawing from her window! I like to send my favorite poems and lots of drawings.

When I found out Ta'Gash was coming to meet me I was excited and a little nervous. I was nervous because I never had a pen pal before and now I was getting to meet her! We met at my favorite park. I was so excited to talk with her in person and show her my favorite place to play. We had a great time together. We played in the sprinklers, shared my favorite meal, and had s'mores by the fire! Her family brought me a T-shirt from the city they live in! It's a fun reminder of our visit. We like to keep in touch and share what we are doing with our AHG Troop and life in general. Last summer Ta'Gash ran in a triathlon, and I got to video chat with her before the race, watch her throughout the whole race, and congratulate her after! My whole family watched, prayed and cheered her on!

ONE OF MY FAVORITE MEMORIES WAS when my parents surprised me with a kitten. My dad was hinting at taking it home while we were visiting our friends, but I didn't catch on to what he was saying. He surprised me right before we went home. I was so happy; I couldn't stop crying.

AN UNUSUAL TALENT? I have a knack for memorizing poetry.

MY HAPPY PLACE I feel happiest when I'm reading a book in the bay window on a sunny day or hiding in a fort that I built in the screened-in porch.

MY BUCKET LIST I want to eat spaghetti in Italy. I want to float in the Dead Sea in Israel.

LATELY, GOD HAS BEEN SHOWING ME... Every Sabbath my family reads a portion of the Torah. Through these studies God has been teaching me the history of His people and how He wants His people to show that they love Him. It's also fun to learn where the Old Testament points to Yeshua (Jesus).

THE COOLEST THING I'VE EVER DONE WAS build an igloo in my backyard!

MARIE BLOHN, 10

I AM Punny. Artistic. Reader.

MY NAME My mom gave me her middle name!

MY FAMILY I have a mom and a dad, an older brother (12 years old), and two younger sisters (7 and 3 years old).

MY PETS I have a 3-year-old dog, Arrow, and two cats. Liopold is 15 and Regiinold is 4 months old. Liopold likes to sit in my chair while I'm at the table for school. But I love them all!

MY HOBBIES I spend a good portion of my day reading children's novels and drawing cats and owls.

WHEN I GROW UP I would love to be a librarian because I like to be surrounded by books.

I WANT ALL GIRLS TO KNOW what it means to love God with all your heart, soul and strength.

I LAUGH AT my dad—he makes the best jokes.

I'M SAD WHEN I finish a good book, and when I'm struggling to create something.

YOU'D NEVER GUESS THAT I am very good at belching. Who would have thought a small girl like me could make so much noise?



Five Fun Facts About Me!

1. I am very loud when I sneeze.
2. I enjoy going to AHG!
3. I like baking cakes and cookies.
4. I like to knit scarves.
5. I'm growing watermelons in my garden.

MARIE'S FAVORITES

Color: Purple
Song: "King" by Beckah Shae
Singer/Band: Nefesh Mountain
Book: The Borrowers by Mary Norton
Food: Spaghetti
Thing To Wear: My purple pajamas that my mom made
Vacation: Omaha, Nebraska and the Henry Doorly Zoo and Children's Museum
Class in School: Math
Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

"HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD with ALL YOUR HEART AND with ALL YOUR SOUL AND with ALL YOUR STRENGTH."

Next Stop—TEXAS

Where little sister Lydia meets her pen pal Kateri!

LYDIA



I was introduced to Kateri through the **AHG Pen Pal program** in January of 2022. We write to each other every few months. It's a little harder for us because we are still learning how to write. But we're getting better. I send her drawings and she sends pictures. Her first letter had a picture of her in her soccer uniform, and her hair was in these really cute braids. We keep it on our mantle. I like sending letters to her but getting them is the BEST! On our trip, when we got to Kateri's, we met at Cracker Barrel for breakfast, and she gave me a rainbow popit, and I gave her Odie the Coyote. We took a picture together with our families. My older sister liked meeting her older sisters too. Recently, we made a cake at our house and put three homemade chocolates on it to represent Kateri's little brother turning 3. We sent them a picture of the cake and a video of me, my sister and my dad singing "Happy Birthday!" I am so happy to get letters from Kateri. I pray that her family is well and close to Jesus! I pray to see her again or maybe live near each other one day!



LYDIA JOY, 7

I AM Loving. Happy. Fun.

My mom chose my name, Lydia, because in the Bible, Lydia heard and instantly believed without doubt, fear or hesitation and began serving Jesus and His church immediately.

WHEN I GROW UP I want to be an engineer, a geologist or an art teacher.

MY HAPPY PLACE is in my soft, warm bed!

I WANT ALL GIRLS TO KNOW that God is always beside you.

FUN FAVORITES & FACTS!

Color: Green
Song: "I Love Rock and Roll"
Singer/Band: Joan Jett
Book: Dick and Jane
Food: My dad's chocolate cake
Thing To Wear: Shirt and pants
Vacation: Hawaii
Class in School: Math
Animal: Koala
Hobbies: Drawing, dancing and playing basketball
Bible Verse: 1 Corinthians 16:14
"LET ALL that YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE."

I want to one day go skydiving with my dad, mom and sister! ✨ I am a great hugger! ✨ My dad calls me a pandaualakey, which is a combination of a panda, koala and monkey, because that's how he says it feels when I hug him. ✨ Going to the circus was one of the coolest things I've ever done! ✨ I can bake! ✨ And I baked a cake by myself even though I am only 7.



KATERI



I started writing Lydia as a pen pal a year and a half ago. I liked taking the time just for Lydia. I sent her my soccer picture, and I drew her a unicorn. It was fun and exciting to get mail back from her. And it was really exciting to MEET Lydia when she came to Texas with her family. Now that we've met, it helped me to learn more about her—and I pray for her.

KATERI MARIE, 6

I AM Funny. Caring. Joyful.

I am named after Saint Kateri Tekakwitha—the first Native American saint canonized by the Catholic Church.

MY HAPPY PLACE is when I am at church with Jesus!

LATELY, GOD HAS BEEN TEACHING ME to be kind and loving and always have a smile on.

I THINK EVERYONE should love and respect God.

FUN FAVORITES & FACTS!

Color: Turquoise
Song: "The Four Seasons" by Vivaldi
Book: Robi Dobi: The Marvelous Adventures of an Indian Elephant by Madhur Jaffrey
Food: Chocolate
Thing To Wear: Shorts and a T-shirt
Hobby: Playing with my little brother
Animal: Elephant
Memory: Going to the beach with my family
Class in School: Mathematics
Bible Verse: The story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:7-25)
I have the same name as our Troop patron: Kateri. ✨ I am a good swimmer, and I can do a one-handed cartwheel! ✨ I have 40 first cousins. ✨ My dad gave me the nickname Neebies. ✨ I am receiving my First Holy Communion next year.

If you are interested in making new friends, ask your parents about finding an AHG Troop in your area. There are over 1,200 Troops across the nation. Once involved, you have the opportunity to meet girls from around the United States as an AHG Pen Pal—what a great adventure! Visit americanheritagegirls.org to find a Troop in your area.

YOU'VE Got a Friend IN ME!

**"A TRUE FRIEND IS THE GREATEST
OF ALL BLESSINGS."**

FRANCOIS DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

International Friendship Day is July 30th and to honor this special occasion, we're celebrating with stories of your friends and what friendship means to you. In the next pages you'll meet even more Girls Like You who have discovered that friends are truly a gift of God.



SUMMER, 10 AND
KENDALL, 10

Proverbs 17:17 tells us **"A friend loves at all times."** My friend Kendall is a Proverbs 17 friend! We met at our dance studio and dance on the same competition team. From the moment I saw her, I knew we would be friends. She is kind to everyone and goes out of her way to make my friends and me laugh. When I was feeling down after one of our competitions, she did everything she could to make me smile. Every time I arrive at the studio, she tackles me with hugs! Kendall makes me feel seen, heard, valued, and important. I'm so glad God brought her into my life. She might as well be the queen of kindness!

Vivica



ISIS, 11 AND
VIVICA, 11

I remember when Vivica and I first met. It was my second year at Adventure Christian School, and it was her first. I was on the playground and all of a sudden, I saw this girl. Before I could go up to her, she came up to me! We started talking, and our parents met, and now we have been best friends for about seven years. It's amazing what God can do for us.



EVE, 7 AND
ALEXA, 7



Alexa and I met at school when we were 3. When I was lonely, she stood up to be my friend. I love her because she is kind and funny. She's been my best friend at church and school and dance class. Last year we both moved and now we live 15 hours away. We love to chat on the iPad together. My favorite memory is we both went to Chicago and there was a place called Fair Oaks Farm. We had lunch and after that we drove to her new home together for a sleepover. **We should celebrate World Friendship Day because God made all friends in His image!**

CAMILLE, 10 AND
CAROLINE, 11

My best friend is Caroline. We first met playing basketball together in second grade. Something unique we do together is play foursquare with friends at school. I also love going to church camp with Caroline at Camp Bethany. We went to elementary school together for six years until we graduated. We met in second grade at our third year of elementary school. **I think we should celebrate World Friendship Day because everyone needs a friend to talk to when feeling sad or going through a hard time or even just to get a hug from. You need to feel comfortable and safe when you are with a friend.** Believe it or not, Caroline and I both want to go on Broadway together!





Ryleigh, 11 AND MAYA, 11

My best friend's name is Maya and I think it's cool that we have the same last name. We met on the first day of fourth grade. She dropped her pencil case, I picked it up, and we have been friends since that day. We like to play

basketball and do gymnastics together. We always find things to joke about to make each other laugh. My favorite thing about our friendship is that we can look at each other and know what the other is thinking. **Friendship means having someone you can connect with. It is also being kind and loyal to each other.** God has shown His love to me through friends who are there for me when I am happy and when I am sad. When my grandpa passed away, my friends were there to support me and pray for me.

A Friend Is...

- Funny
- Reliable
- Intelligent
- Enthusiastic
- Nice
- Devoted



Sophie, 9 AND ISABELLA, 9

SOPHIE: I met Isabella when we were babies. Our parents met before we were even a thought! Isabella and I call each other "sisters from the heart" because we totally are! We are BFFs forever. My favorite memory with Isabella is going to Big Bear with our families on vacation. We have so much fun! Another favorite memory is when I shared Jesus with her. Isabella then shared Jesus with her mom, and now her mom and family believes and loves God! Isabella and I have an unstoppable friendship.

We love each other very much and we are family.

Friendship is a beautiful thing. A true friend is someone you can trust, is loyal, and a lot of fun. And even though you may get into fights or argue, you always make up. A true friend doesn't do things you don't like, but is kind, thoughtful, generous and loving. God has shown His love to me through my friends by giving me super kind, loving and joyful friends! The most important thing though is that my true friends love God!

ISABELLA: Sophie and I have been best friends since we were babies. We have shared so many amazing moments and adventures together. She's special to me because she's pretty, kind and loving but the most important part is that she is a true friend and helps me when I'm down. When we go through problems, we fix them together. She taught me about God, and I did the same with my mom. My mom accepted Jesus and got baptized in December, 2021. Our moms are also very good friends, and they are sisters in Christ. We are now a big family who follows Jesus, and we go through good and bad together.



Shannon, 13 AND AVERY, 9

ME pushing AVERY IN HER WHEELCHAIR.

My best friends are Avery and Violet and I met them both at church! Avery (who is now basically my lil' sis) is super optimistic. She is always smiling and loves cracking jokes. Whenever I'm around her, I can't help but have a huge smile on my face!

Sadly, she broke her leg last winter—but that didn't stop us from having fun together! I gave her a ton of piggyback rides, and in her downtime, I taught her how to sew! My other friend, Violet, is very kind and adventurous. She lives on a big farm, and we have so much fun together when I visit her. One time, I stepped on a tack at her house and my foot started to bleed. We went to find a Band-Aid but couldn't find one anywhere! So we improvised and made what we now call a "traditional farm bandage" ... which consists of scotch tape and a paper towel! But, hey, it worked, and now we joke about it all the time. I am also grateful for my best friend—Jesus. I am His child, and I am so glad He loves me!



TENLEY, 11

I have lots of friends, but if I had to pick one who I think shows the true meaning of friendship, Ciara would be an obvious choice. Ciara and I weren't good friends until the summer before fourth grade. That summer, every Monday Ciara would come over to my house and we'd spend the day together. She was fun to hang out with and we became pretty close, so we were pumped when we found out that for the first time ever, we would be in the same class—Mrs. Boynton's—and she was a Christian just like us! We were beyond excited. That year was a bit crazy because it was the year gossiping started. Everyone was talking about who liked who and which people weren't cool. And as hard as Ciara and I tried, we got swept up in the gossip. And one of the worst parts was, at some point, we were the gossip! But through all the drama, we were there for each other. Ciara never once gave up on me, no matter what happened. That is an amazing trait in a friend. Ciara and I stayed in contact over the summer. We found out that we weren't in the same class the next year and were pretty disappointed, but still managed to hang out because we sat together on the bus and got off at the same stop. We also got to hang out at recess and Drama Club. One day after school, we had a surprise playdate at her house. We decided to sit on the trampoline and talk. We talked about confusing things that we didn't understand, things that we did understand but didn't want to, boys, and our faith in Jesus. I talked to her about my baptism, she told me about her baptism soon to come, and we talked about how amazing the Holy Spirit and God is. That moment is when I realized what a special friend God had given me. Sweet, loving, faithful Ciara. Thank you, Lord, for such an amazing friend.

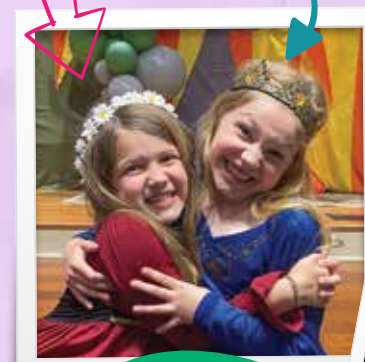


GEORGIA, 12 AND ADELINE, 10

were going to fall off! Adeline is one of the greatest gifts God has ever given me and I am so thankful I get to have a sister who is also my best friend!

My sister Adeline is a hilarious, kindhearted person—and my best friend. My sister and I love to hang out together, whether it's talking about our day, or playing LEGOs with her new set! We took it to the next degree when our family went to Pine Cove Woods, a family summer camp, for a week! It was one of the greatest vacations ever! Me, Adeline, my dad, and my mom (she sat on the boat and watched) went banana boating. It was one of the wildest experiences ever! Having never gone banana boating before, my sister and I didn't know what to expect so we put my dad on the front end of the banana boat and that caused the tip to sink down so low that it flipped us over and we all fell off! It was so much fun, and I have to admit, it was kind of scary. Having Adeline there gave me comfort and we laughed so hard it felt like our heads

ELLIE ADELAIDE



ADELAIDE, 9 AND ELLIE, 9



When I was 4 months old, my mom took me to her friend's house because she just had a baby girl named Ellie. We wanted to play all day, but we couldn't talk or walk yet. We were just babies! But now Ellie and I are 9 years old, and we love to tell one another jokes and talk about life while we play. I love being friends with her! **Friendship is important because you can play, tell jokes, have fun, and help each other in life.**

Thank you, God, for friends!



CAROLINE, 8
AND ELLIE, 8

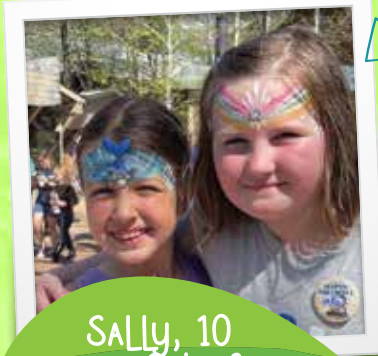
I have known my friend Ellie for my whole entire life. Something that makes our friendship special is that our moms were good friends when they were kids. We live in different cities but we are still good friends. We get together on school holidays and in the summer, we go to Sky Ranch summer camp together and we are bunk mates. A hilarious story is once we were together before Christmas, and we figured out we had the same wiggly tooth. Ellie's mom said, "Let me pull those teeth" and we both said yes! Once Ellie's tooth popped out it fell to the ground and we didn't know where it was. We had a tooth search party and finally found it on the rug. It was a fun and funny memory to lose the same tooth together! I am thankful for such a good friend!

My cousin Carissa and I are close in age, but we live three hours away from each other, so we don't get to see each other often. One of the ways we communicate is by having a video call every weekend and doing a Bible study. Together, we decide on topics or stories we'd like to read about in the Bible. Then, we read about it together, discuss it, and pray about it. We also memorize a Bible verse that connects to what we read about each week. We text it to each other every day of the week, and we try to remember it for the next Bible study. If we both get it right, we can play a game together! Doing this helps us to grow closer to God while spending virtual time together.

I think a true friend is someone who cares about you and is willing to do anything for you. Friends pray for, encourage, and help each other in times of trouble. They build each other up by being empathetic, kind, and understanding. A true friend is someone who really listens, and who you can rely on no matter what.



Lily, 13 AND
CARISSA, 12



SALLY, 10
AND SAL, 8

SALLY

One of my best friends is the daughter of my fourth-grade teacher. We met at our school's "Meet the Teacher" Day. At first, we were friends because we have very similar names—Sally and Sal! Our parents became good friends this

year and so did we! She is fun to play with, easy to talk to, and we like lots of the same things. In April, our families went to Silver Dollar City in Branson, Missouri. We rode lots of rides, had our faces painted, and we both won a stuffed animal from a game.

For my birthday, Sal gave me a subscription to **For Girls Like You** magazine. It was my favorite gift of all! I am so thankful for my friend.



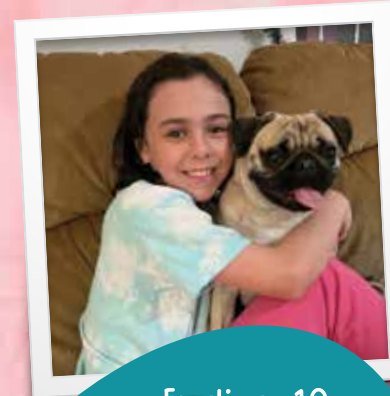
Betty, 9

I first met my friend Mckenna in Kansas when I was 8. We made a fort, and we would play with pots and pans to make pretend food. We are homeschooled so when the other kids came, we would defend the fort. It was so fun!



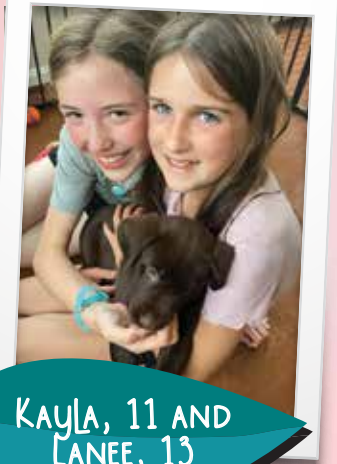
GRACE, 10 AND
FAITH, 12

My friend Faith and I LOVE to talk about the Gospel and about our favorite verses. Lately, both of us got interested in crocheting, and now we teach each other how to do different stitches. It has been AWESOME to share how to crochet with some of my other friends and teach it to other people I don't know as much. When I am teaching other people how to crochet, I can connect to them and learn about what church they go to and ask if they would want to come to my church on Wednesday nights and learn more about God!



EMELINE, 10

I think a true friend is someone you can trust and depend on. A true friend is someone you like, but is not the same as you, because God made us all different. **True friends are people who like you for being you, not for being someone else.**



KAYLA, 11 AND
LANEE, 13

We love to craft together and hang out. We enjoy each other's company. To us, **a friend is someone who is a good listener and treats you with respect.** God has shown us that we are better together than alone, and life is better with friends.



SUSANNAH, 13, ANNA,
10 AND REBEKAH 10

ANNA

REBEKAH

SUSANNAH

Two of my very best friends are my sister Rebekah and our friend Anna. We all love hanging out together as a trio, and let's just say that things are never boring. Whether it's playing on Anna's farm in Nebraska, making a movie, or watching *Anne of Green Gables*, we have a blast together. Our personalities are all so different, but that's what makes our friendship so special. Our most recent fun adventure was having a chicken wedding for Anna's two Silkie chickens named Skye and Gilbert. It is so fun to hold them and play with them! We made a veil and cape for Skye and a tie for Gilbert. First down the aisle was Gilbert, held by Rebekah. I followed next, throwing chicken feed, of course, rather than flower petals. Last came Anna pushing the wheelbarrow that carried the bride while we played my flute recording of "Here Comes the Bride." Anna's dad was the pastor, and he was the best pastor for chickens ever! It was all so funny that we could hardly keep from laughing during the ceremony. Rebekah, Anna, and I had a memorable time together and now Skye and Gilbert are happily married. I am so blessed by all the true friends and wonderful family I have.

Happy Friendship Day!



Lily, 11 AND
EMMA, 12

My best friend Emma and I have been friends for a long time. We met right before my second birthday! Our friendship is extra special because even though her family has moved many times, we still kept a special bond. They recently moved closer to us all these years later, and this past January, she drove seven hours to celebrate her 12th birthday with me! God provided us with this friendship and I'm sure it will last our whole lives!



MELANIE, 10 AND
LAYLA, 10

How my friend Layla and I met is a great story. I had been living in my neighborhood for a few years SURROUNDED by boys. (Seven just in our cul-de-sac!) I felt really lonely without a girl to play with, since I would sometimes be left out when all the boys were playing together. But God was by my side to help me. He blessed me with Layla moving into the neighborhood! I saw that a new family was moving in, but I had to wait a little to meet the family as they were slowly unpacking. Eventually I found out that LAYLA was moving in! Now, we have been best friends for three years, she goes to my school, and we got to be in the same class together this year. We've had our ups and downs, but it always works out. She comes to my house every day! We have each other's backs forever. **What makes a true friend to me is always helping one another, and always being positive and making memories together. God has shown me that friends will always be there for you, even when times are dark.**

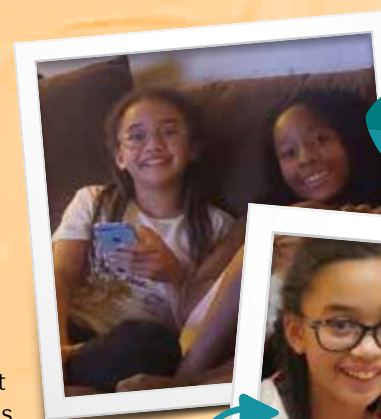


CHARLOTTE, 12 AND
JOSEPHINE, 12

My friend Arabella and I first met at the school playground I asked her if she wanted to be my friend and she said yes. So we hung out every school day. We even came up with a song "chicken plus a wing equals chicken wings." It's basically chicken plus anything equals that thing with the word chicken in front. We told it to our parents, and they laughed. Arabella is my best friend and I have known her since second grade. We are now in seventh grade! She is a very loyal and funny person. She can keep secrets and is just overall an awesome bestie. Those are great qualities to find in a true friend. God has shown me His love because of all the fun things and sad things that we went through. **A friend is someone who helps you when you're struggling, cares for you when you're sick, cheers you up when you're down and is happy to be there with you.**



My name is Charlotte, but everyone calls me Charlie. A long time ago at church, I met a girl named Josephine, who we call J, and she is the same age as me. J and I grew really close since we are both homeschooled and live 15 minutes away from each other. We have done lots of things together: been in plays, swam in the river and the lake, been hiking and biking, gone to plays and the zoo, served at church, and lots of other fun stuff. Last year, J and I painted pictures and sold them at our church to raise money for Catholic Relief Services for Ukraine. We made over \$500—it was great! About six months ago, J and her family moved to Africa on a mission trip for the next three-and-a-half years. They will only get to come back a few times and I haven't seen her since last fall. We still email each other to stay in contact, which is good because J is one of my best friends, even if she lives on the other side of the world!



ALORA, 12 AND
ARABELLA, 13



ALORA

ARABELLA



LEIA, 9 AND
SCARLETT, 10

Scarlett is my best friend. On our first sleepover at her house, we stayed up until 11pm having a "girl talk!" Fun fact: the girl talk was about our crushes! In the morning we ate chocolate-chip pancakes, then fed her bunny Reggie. This sleepover was special because it was Scarlett's birthday. Scarlett's friendship is special to me because she is so sweet and generous. Scarlett wrote this poem for me, and it is very special.

Little Drops of Love
Little drops of love
And stars as bright as you
Makes me shine like a dove.
Spring helps make us glad
When we are feeling sad
Little drops of love.



EDEN, 10 AND
ELLAH, 10

I'd like to tell you about my amazing friendship with Ellah! Our moms are best friends too so we've known each other since birth. We are exactly six months apart—she was born on October 5 and I was born on April 5—crazy right? We love to do everything together even though we only see each other a couple times a year because we don't live too close. One time in the spring, we even went sledding on a tiny patch of ice that hadn't melted yet and we kept falling into each other and laughing the whole time. We are always supporting each other and especially bond on our love of Jesus. Ellah got baptized last year and I was so happy for her. I pray we stay friends forever!

My friend Libby and I met when we were just 3 years old. We grew up together since preschool and one cool fact about us is our sisters were born 10 days apart! One hilarious story about our friendship is that time Libby got a drink and said, "I have air bubbles in my water!" I thought she said ear bubbles!

We laughed for 10 minutes straight! Now her nickname is Ear Bubble. Last year we moved four houses down the street from her and she was so surprised! Now that we're neighbors, we started to send each other encouraging cards when we have a test at school or when something hard is going on.

We love doing True Girl Bible Studies together and went with her sister to the True Girl Pajama Party. I'm so grateful to have a friend like Libby!



REESE, 9
AND LIBBY, 9



My friend, Lakyn, and I are ballet dancers for Jesus! We have danced and performed on stage together for seven years. When we were little, we performed at nursing homes at

Christmas time to cheer up the elderly, and to remind them of God's love during the (sometimes lonely) holiday season. Every spring we have a big dance recital, and we always get a picture together. It's so fun to look back and see how much we've grown! **A true friend is someone who sticks beside you through happy times and hard times—just like Jesus**

does. He will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8).

I'm thankful to have a true friend like Lakyn!



SAVANNAH, 10
AND LAYKN, 11

Something I like to do with my best friend Bella and my sister Gracie is to talk about life and share funny stories. All of us love to laugh and making each other laugh is something we love. We are in some classes together so it's also fun to work on assignments together. I love that Bella cares about everyone and is so joyful all the time!

Also, what I love about my sister Gracie is that I can talk to her about anything and that she's always got my back.



BROOKLYN, 12, BELLA, 12
AND GRACIE, 12



REU, 11

When I met my friend Halsi, we were at our house for basketball tryouts. We were outside shooting hoops, and we saw hornets flying in and out of the basketball hoop. We kept shooting the basketball, but the hornets kept flying in and out and over our heads. Screaming, we ran away. We knew something was wrong, so my dad came to check it out. He found a hornets' nest inside the hoop! He grabbed a ladder, knocked the nest down, and killed the hornets. Then we continued with tryouts. Halsi and I both made the team and learned that we like to craft and swim. We also both love Jesus! I think Halsi and I met each other in a crazy way, and I am thankful we are friends!



CAROLINE, 11, AUDREY, 11
AND DARBY, 11

One of my favorite memories with my friends was when we were in Broken Bow, Oklahoma during fall break. My best friends, Darby and Audrey, and their families were with me. We had a great time! We had a candy taste test, went into the forest area, and rode beanbags down the stairs—until we got caught by the parents! But my favorite memory from the trip was actually a scary one. Sometime during the night, Audrey's parents were waking us up. There was a bad storm, and it wasn't safe to be upstairs where we were sleeping. We grabbed pillows and beanbags and headed downstairs. I was pretty scared. My mom and brother were asleep downstairs, and my dad was back home in Texas. We could see the lightning and hail. The parents were checking the news and tornadoes were popping up all around us, but God kept us safe. I truly believe it was God's hand at work. It was a great bonding time, too. We were there for each other, like all friends should be. We all still share this memory and look back at it with a laugh. (We probably overreacted a little!) But it was a good time.

I love **FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU** magazine and I also love all my best friends! Especially my friend Caroline (see above!) We have been friends since pre-k. We go to the same school and hang out almost all the time! We are practically sisters. When I got baptized, she was there watching me and cheering me on like any BFF would do! I also have another BFF named Frankie who lives next door to me. She got baptized the same day I did! We also play with each other and love to jump on the trampoline too. Frankie and Caroline are my two amazing BFFs and they always will be! Their friendship is one of God's gifts to me!

It was the first day of school in second grade. I was scared to make new friends since this was also my first day at a new school. Then, my classmate Molly came up to me and introduced herself and everyone else. This taught me that God gave us friends to make the challenges of life easier. Friends truly make life complete.

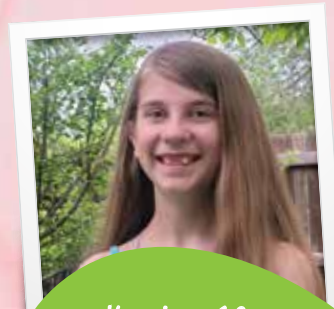


DARBY, 11 AND
FRANKIE, 9



ISABELLA, 11
AND MOLLY, 11

My drawing of a friendship necklace!

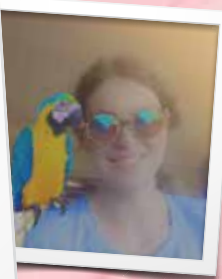


KARIS, 13

To me, a friend is someone who you can trust to share things with, laugh with, cry with, and talk with. A true friend will be there for you when you need it. Friendship is super important, but you can't just wait for someone to be a friend to you ... you have to be a friend! It's often hard to step out of your comfort zone, especially when you're new, but in the end, you'll be glad you did. You might even make a new friend in the process! And of course, Jesus is the very best friend of all. While a friend might let you down or hurt your feelings, Jesus will always be there for you and love you no matter what! One Bible verse about friendship that I like is Ecclesiastes 4:9-10: **Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.**

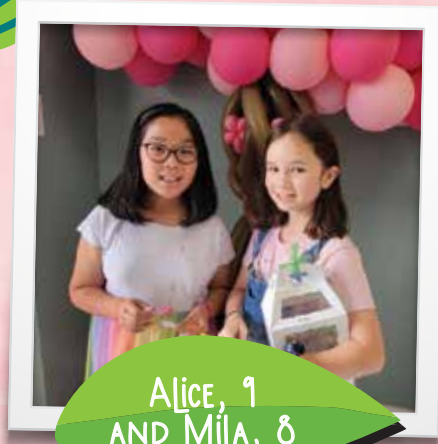


Abigail, 13



I have lived on four continents around the world. My family and I move every two to three years because of my dad's job. It's amazing to see different parts of the world for myself, and I love to meet new people and experience life among other cultures, but it is also hard to make and keep really good friends. That all changed five years ago, when I moved to Zimbabwe. My family went to a homeschool co-op on Fridays. I made many new friends there, but there were three people who have and are still changing my life—Ruva, Bianca and Christiana. The four of us were the best of friends. We had sleepovers as often as we could, and we did karaoke and danced together, as well as many other activities. We were practically inseparable. And then, two years ago, we were separated. I moved from Zimbabwe to South Africa, which is where I am now. We can

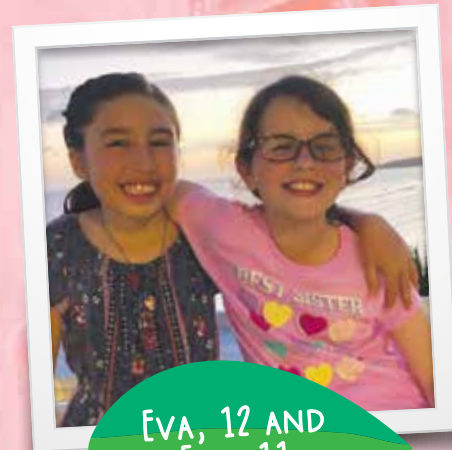
WhatsApp each other, but we don't know when—or if—we will ever see each other again. However, we still talk to each other about anything and everything. But more than that, we're friends because we understand each other. What is truly amazing about our friendship is that we are still best friends, even though it's been two years and everyone's lives have changed. We still talk to each other on a regular basis, and I still feel connected to them, even though I haven't seen them in ages.



Alice, 9
AND Mila, 8

My friend Mila is my number one BFF and she's very kind and loving, so that's why I'm writing a poem for her:

My Best Friend Mila
Mila's very smart.
We'll never be apart.
Mila's very kind.
She's the best friend I'll ever find.
She'll always be my friend
Until the very end.



Eva, 12
AND Mila, 11

I'm Eva (pronounced Ava) and my friend Eva (pronounced Eva) is one of my best friends. I've known her for almost four years. Eva and I both live in Southeast Asia. During COVID all of my other friends left for America so we were the only ones there for each other; we became best friends. God showed me that even when it feels like you're alone, He'll give you somebody to help you make it through. Eva and I like to play Barbies, LEGOs, Calico Critters, and make plans for our future horse ranch. Eva also had the idea that we have a Bible study every weekend. I love that she is always open to my ideas and never gets tired of me. I hope that Eva and I stay best friends forever. I love Eva.

Eva: My friend Eva has been there for me in a lot of hardships. She is so funny, and her laugh is so bright. I thank God for such a good friend and that He provides everything we need. We are both from the US, but we live in a different country. We met because of our bravery. We entered a class for a traditional dance. As we danced, we became greater friends and at the day of the dance recital, our moms met. Now, we are all great friends. I praise God for Eva and her family.



Trinity, 12
AND Aliyah, 13



TRINITY: I met Aliyah about three years ago at a church we were visiting. The moment we met we became friends! We made sure that our parents got each other's phone numbers so we could hang out more! Aliyah is from Oregon, but they were in Texas (where I live) for her dad who was doing a doctoral internship. So, they weren't going to stay permanently. On one of our last playdates we exchanged emails.

Ever since, we email ALL THE TIME! It's funny that sometimes we end up fighting about small things like which "Grinch" movie is the best! We are always up front with each other. We ask each other random questions to get to know each other better and just so we always have something to talk about! Aliyah is kind, thoughtful, loving, sweet, generous, and I could go on forever on all the positive attributes she has! She is always there to talk to, and when needed, she'll pray for me and my family! I am so blessed to have a friend like her!

ALIYAH: Trinity is a very sweet friend and I love FaceTiming and emailing her a LOT! We talk about random things and pretty much everything that happens to us! My family moved back to Oregon, so I don't see Trinity or her family in person anymore, but what I love is that when we do FaceTime, it's hard to tell Trinity something about my week that she doesn't already know! We also edit each other's books that we write, which is fun. I am so blessed to have a friend like her!



Corrine, 9
AND Hadley, 9

When Hadley and I met, we were in the church Sunday school preschool class. Hadley walked in the room. Then she sat next to me for class time. When it was free play time Hadley and I played together. Now we go to the same school and are best friends.



Kerryn, 16
AND Willow, 15

The story of how Willow and I became friends is quite exceptional. I first met Willow when I joined a choir that needed more singers for a music video being filmed in central Australia. She was a member of that choir, who had traveled from another state to be there. There was something about her that drew me in and from the moment we first laid eyes on each other, we became friends. Over the seven days we spent together, we grew quite close and by the end of the week, I felt like I'd known her my whole life! My drawing is titled "Our Greatest Friends Aren't Always Human."

Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but to pour them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with a breath of kindness, blow the rest away."
-DINAH CRAIK



The Story of a Beautiful Friendship

By Linsey Driskill

Have you ever felt a little jealous when your friend got an award or something great happened to them? These can be normal feelings to have, but as we spend time with God and learn more about His love, it will help us genuinely celebrate our friends and rejoice with them, just like these two friends in the Bible did.

These two good friends were also cousins. Do you know who I'm talking about?

Mary and Elizabeth!

The story starts in the first chapter of Luke where we're told that Elizabeth was struggling because she couldn't have children since she was older. **Have you ever wanted something really badly, but couldn't have it?** That's probably how Elizabeth felt.

Well, Elizabeth was about to get some good news! An angel named Gabriel appeared to Elizabeth's husband telling her that she would have a son! And six months later, that same angel appeared to Mary! Could you imagine an angel appearing to your friend and then also to you, months later! That would be something to talk about! If the angel appeared to you and your

friend, what do you imagine the angel would say to both of you?

The angel told Mary, "Don't be afraid. God is pleased with you. You will soon give birth to a son who is to be named Jesus. Even though she is older, your relative Elizabeth will have a baby too. Nothing is impossible with God."

Did you catch those five words Gabriel said? Nothing. Is. Impossible. With. God. Hang those words up on your wall, write them with a dry erase marker on your mirror, or put them on a notecard to carry with you so you remember these words are true for you too.

Well, Elizabeth ended up becoming pregnant just like the angel said! Elizabeth gave God the credit and said, "The Lord has done this for me." **Who is the first person you would want to tell if something you had been praying for finally happened?**

When Mary found out that she was also pregnant, she wanted to share the good news with her close friend, Elizabeth, so she hurried to her house. And, Mary ended up staying with Elizabeth for about three months. Both of them would be mothers around the same time and they shared in each other's joy.

Elizabeth ended up having a son who was later known as John the Baptist. And, Mary gave birth to our Savior, Jesus. Just as Mary and Elizabeth loved each other well and shared in each other's joy, **what is a way you can love a friend well?** Maybe you could bake your friend cookies, write her a card, or make an acrostic poem on a canvas where you write the friend's name vertically and write a word that describes her for each letter in her name.

As we spend time with Jesus, He will help us to have genuine hearts that celebrate our friends and share in their joy, just like Mary and Elizabeth did. And, the next time you have something good happen to you, it will be awesome when your friends celebrate with you.



Adapted from **Beautiful Heated Women of the Bible: A Creative Mother-Daughter Devotional** by Linsey Driskill, Focus on the Family/Tyndale House Publishers.



Courageous girls

COURAGEOUS GIRLS

WITH TERRA MATTSON

The founder/creator of Courageous Girls, Terra Mattson is also an author, therapist, counselor and coach. This issue debuts a new feature: *Dear Terra* with answers to the questions that matter most to you.

DEAR TERRA,

What if you were close to some friends, but the next school year they don't talk to you as much and whisper in front of you? I told them I miss their friendship and that it hurts, but nothing has changed. What do I do?

LOVE, A.R.

someone responds when we share our hurts. I am so sorry this is happening to you.

Friendships can change over time and it's hard to let go as things change. Friends are meant to be a treasure from God to help us learn more about ourselves and Him. However, God wants us to choose our friends wisely because we influence one another. Proverbs 12:26 says: *"The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray."*

Sometimes we think Jesus was friends with everyone. Though He showed value to everyone He met, He was careful to choose 12 friends (called disciples) and only three were closest—John, Peter and James. The Bible describes three kinds of people: **Green-light**, **Yellow-light** and **Red-light**. Like a traffic light, these colors help us know whether we can "go" forward with a friend, move "slower" with them, or "stop" and end the friendship.

Green-light people are trustworthy friends. They might have different personalities than you with good days and bad days. *(We all get in a mood sometimes, right?)* However, this friend is safe because she's willing to work through hard times with you. When she messes up, she owns it and makes it right. This friend encourages and lifts you up. Try to be this friend to others.

TRUE COLORS

Yellow-light people are those who one day love you and then next day treat you poorly. Their actions are confusing. They are often swayed easily by the voices around them, and they may apologize, but their actions do not match their words. Though you can be respectful and kind, you want to go slower with these girls because they cannot be fully trusted with your heart.

Red-light people are those who intentionally cause harm to you and others, like a bully. We are to "stop" with these people and draw a large boundary. A boundary is a distance or a way to protect you and others from their words and actions. Talk with a trusted adult if you have a red-light person in your friend group or community.

When you consider this, where would you put these friends who are whispering around you? Journal about this. Ask God and a trusted adult to help you see clearly. **Know that you are worthy of good friends, but it takes time, practice, and prayer to grow healthy friendships.** Be patient with yourself and others.

Terra

Courageous Girl NICKI, 12, shares what she's learned to do with her bossy friend.

Bossy friends might be more action-focused because God made them that way. They also might have a home life as an older or younger sibling where they learned to use their voice. I said: "I love that you like to make decisions. God made you this way and it's good! Sometimes it would help me if you asked me what I'd like to do or if we took turns choosing." My friend has worked hard to ask me what I want and her "bossy" personality has helped me when I really don't care what we do. We have become a good team.



With an older woman in your life, you can read more about healthy friendships in Terra's book **Courageous: Being Daughters Rooted in Grace**. Visit mycourageousgirls.com to start a Courageous Girls group. Send your questions to dearterra@forgirlslikeyou.com.

FRIENDSHIP HULA HOOP

A Circle of Love

Friendships are one of God's greatest blessings! Summer is a perfect time to create this friendship hula hoop with your besties. Add pictures, Scriptures, and any favorite memory moment that reminds you of your friends. Pray everyday for those you love and thank God for special friendships!

SUPPLIES

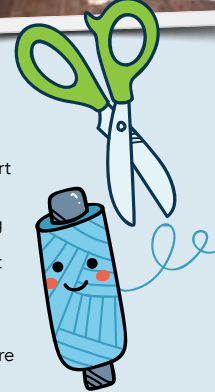
Hula Hoop, Elmer's Glue, Hot-Glue Gun (optional), Fun Fabric Strips, Old T-Shirts (Fun colors are better!), Scissors, Wooden Clothespins, Scrapbook Paper, Photos and Scriptures, Optional: Wire and Yarn (for embellishment)



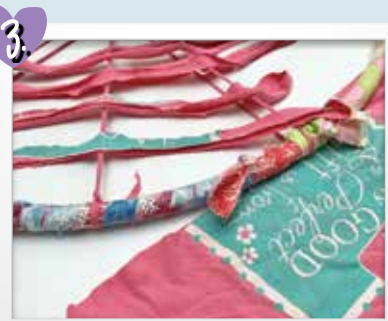
Take your fabric and cut 8 strips measuring 2 inches wide by 3 feet long. TIP: You can tear fabric after making a small cut.



hot glue) to keep the fabric in place. Keep wrapping until the entire hoop is covered in fabric. It's best to keep the fabric more tight than loose.



Take your first strip and tie it onto your hula hoop leaving a tail of fabric. Start wrapping your fabric around the hoop leaving about 5 inches to tie to the next strip of fabric. TIP: Add a little Elmer's glue (or



Next, take an old T-shirt and lay it on a flat surface. Starting at the bottom of the shirt, cut a strip through both the front and back layer. This is very important because your strip will be a circle of fabric. Each strip should be about 1.5 inches wide.



Stretch the T-shirt strips around your hula hoop and pull as tight as you can. Make a knot at the end to secure it to the hoop. Repeat for all 8 strips making a "spoke."



For your final touch, cover some clothes pins with scrapbook paper or paint them. When dry, clip pictures, notes, Scriptures, and more onto your Friendship Hula Hoop! Hang it in your room to remind you of God's gift of friendship.



This art project was created by Annie Pajcic, founder of **ThouArtExalted Ministries**. For a video and devotion on this project go to ThouArtExalted.com/friendship-hoop.



STEMgirls

SCIENCE FUN WITH THE DENTON DUO

Lydia and Bethany

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

TENSILE STRENGTH IN THINGS ... AND PEOPLE!

"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

ECCLESIASTES 4:12

This passage illustrates the importance of Christian companionship. **Christians who are bound together in Christ are stronger than the individuals themselves.** Have you ever wondered how hard you must push to snap a piece of wood? Obviously, a pencil is much easier to snap than an oak tree. What about a piece of spaghetti? How much force do you need to break that?

Materials have a strength inside of them called **tensile strength**. That is the amount of force they can take before they break or snap. Tensile strength is really important in engineering because you want the beams holding the bridge up to support the weight of the cars, and you want the beams in the walls to support the building! You also want your hair elastic to be stretchy enough to hold a ponytail, but not snap when you try to use it!

Put it to the Test

EXPERIMENTING WITH TENSILE STRENGTH

Is the verse in Ecclesiastes true? Is it scientifically true? Are cords of three strands really that much stronger? Try this STEM experiment to see for yourself.



We used embroidery floss from our friendship bracelet kit and some weights. You could use yarn, dental floss or sewing thread ... each one of these materials has a different tensile strength. For the weight, you could tie your thread to a bucket handle and add stones or sand to make it heavier. We used dumbbells.

In our experiment, two pounds was enough to snap the string. It held for a few seconds and then ... SNAP! When we used two strings, they were able to hold a lot more weight. More than one string, more than triple the weight that one string could hold! We ran out of dumbbells before we could even get it to break!

So that got us thinking. God was teaching us an important lesson in Ecclesiastes. Cords of three strands are not quickly broken. They can hold a lot more than one string by itself. Take a moment and look at a thread or a rope—you'll notice that it is made of many tiny thin pieces of thread. Often these are so small that you can tear them with your fingers—one strand isn't strong at all! But when the threads work together, they are able to withstand much more force. **We need the support of others to help us remain strong.** When we encounter forces that might threaten to break us, it is our Christian family and friends that can come alongside us and help us carry that burden.





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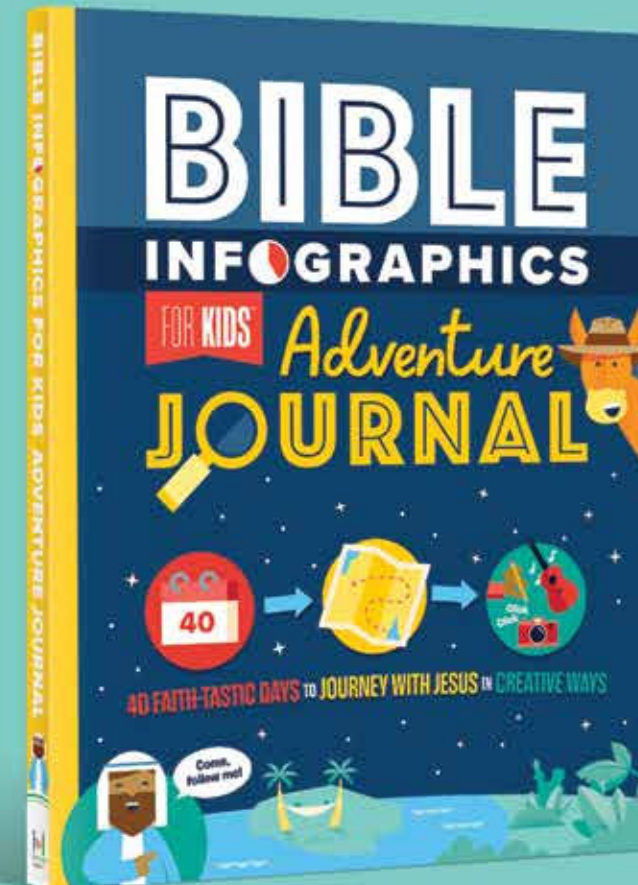
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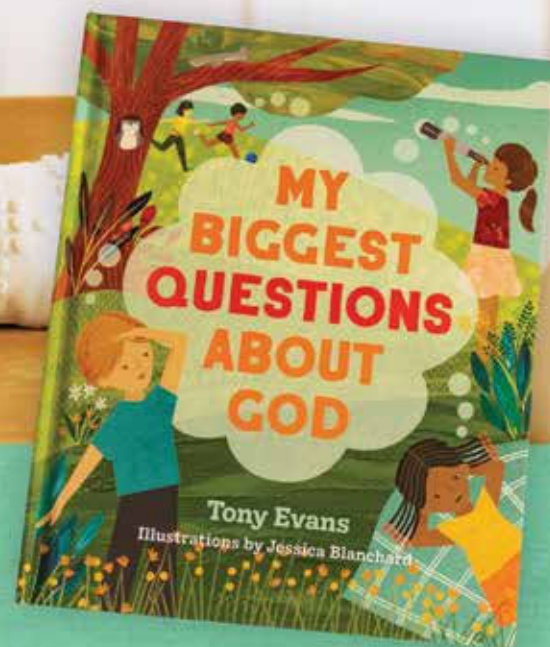
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He like?**

**How can you
follow Him?**



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other important questions
about God in this fun and
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