



WHO AM I?

PRACTICAL TRUTHS IN A DECEIVING WORLD

HANNAH
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WHO AM I?

*You did not choose me, but I chose you
and appointed you so that you might go and
bear fruit~fruit that will last~and so that
whatever you ask in my name the Father
will give you.*

~ John 15:16

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Introduction

As you enter your teen years and youth, do you ever feel the pressure of the outside world trying to shape you into someone you have never been before?

Have you ever been burdened to fit in with groups or situations you never would have imagined belonging to?

Can you see our culture spoon feeding you stories about your size, your weight, boys, smoking, drinking, sex, drugs, promiscuity, self-mutilation, and more? These kinds of lies begin to devour your self-image which has only just begun to blossom following your childhood. These lies create confusion and self-doubt at a time when many of us are unsure of what we are feelings or even how we are supposed to feel. Our self-confidence is slowly eroded away.

Our personal values that we grew up with begin to change as our egos begin justifying our worldly choices which no longer match what we were taught. We even begin ignoring that voice within which is telling us 'not to go there, don't do that, don't hang with your former friends, don't be a nerd, act tough and disrespectful'. We become confused about everything, and we can't talk to anyone like we did before. So, we hang with other kids trying to fill a void with worldly options—a void full of craziness which eventually leads us to heartache and pain which happens when we believe the lies from the world.

I found myself on a on a quest to find out who I really was apart from my parents, removed from the expectations and social titles, just me – who was I. My search led me to places I never imagined, to places I knew I shouldn't be, but yet there I was. This was a most unsettling time; like nothing I had ever experienced before—nor had my friends. There was a deep longing in my heart to know that I was valued and loved. Answers weren't always very clear, and at times, I found myself looking to the things of this world for explanation.

Can you guess what happened? Nothing meaningful. Of course, there were temporary highs from what I believed to be 'true highs', but in the end that just meant there were even bigger falls.

I remember all too well what happens when you believe the lies from the world. I was left with the same heartache and pain that I see girls facing today. When my parents divorced, I found my world crashing around me. In a desperate attempt to feel connected and wanted, I turned to everything but God; friends, school, sports ... all the things the world said would satisfy this longing. My life at home was a mess, while my life away from home was magical, or so I thought.

Worldly desires began to penetrate into my life. I began to be obsessed with appearing to have it all together both intellectually and appearance wise. I *believed* that by being the prettiest and the smartest, all would be ok. I began to listen to music that was totally inappropriate and to go to the parties I knew I shouldn't. I *believed* that I knew what was best for me and the adults in my life were simply out of date. I began to spend time alone with my boyfriend which led me thorough a

range of emotions that I was unable to handle. I *believed* that if I truly loved my boyfriend then it was ok to have sex with him.

My judgment was clouded.

The world failed to fill the emptiness in my life. I still felt abandoned; not only had my father left, but the security and love I looked to my boyfriend to provide soon died out. I still felt scared; not only was I watching my mother struggle financially, but I had to figure out how to raise a child, go to school and provide for my future. I still doubted my significance; true friends became few and far between and the choices I made weighed on my conscience. I still felt lonely; God had given me a precious miracle to care for, but would I ever find a husband? I still felt invisible. The questions remained. Who was I? What was I here for? Can I truly be loved and accepted? The answers were buried deep in my soul, just waiting to be dug out of the debris.

Have you ever allowed yourself to ‘float’ through crazy or bizarre worldly situations unable to stop or get yourself out?

My journey consisted of u-turns and dead ends, but the paths that I did travel only led me to one conclusion. The world will never fill the void that lingers through all the experiences prompted by worldly lies. The truth is what set me free! The greatest protection against the lies of the enemy is finding security in Christ. There are no substitutions for lasting confidence and security. Jesus is the only authentic provider. This transformation begins from the inside out and promises to fill your emptiness.

I did not want to write this book, in fact, I tried not to. I am stubborn by nature and, therefore, I thought my opinion would outweigh God’s. Well, obviously I lost the battle, and I am so thankful I did. In this book, God’s word comes alive. The truths I have discovered personally and as a mother, in addition to the lessons I have gleaned from mentoring teen girls are here for you to digest. I desire nothing more than for you to grasp that lasting confidence that can only be found in Jesus Christ. He is the void filler. He is the lasting joy that you are desperately searching for in boyfriends, sports, drugs, a size 0 and whatever else you are using to try and fill the void.

Your sense of confidence is going to affect every aspect of your life. Physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially, all aspects of your life are wrapped up in the confidence ingrained deep in your heart. We all long to know who we are. We all long to know we have purpose. We all long to know we are loved and accepted. Whether you voice these questions or silently murmur them to yourself; they are there. Are you willing to admit you have a desire for more? If so, then the answers lie on the pages of this book.

This book will take you on an expedition, exploring some of the hardest issues—acceptance, beauty, freedom, purpose, and purity. These issues are real. These struggles are real. Luckily, the hope we have is also very real. You may have scars from the battles you have endured while facing life, I know I do. So let’s

stop pretending to “be ok”, and get down to business. The journey begins when you understand the truth about who Jesus Christ is. Without this foundation, the walls cannot withstand the weight of the world. Everything else must come from this one and only truth.

When you begin to understand who Jesus Christ is, then you will be able to see clearly that Jesus is crazy about you. The truth here is nothing you have or have not done nor anything you have or have not said will change that. Wherever you are coming from, wherever you are, God wants to be right there with you. Take this truth as a seed and plant it deep in your heart. From that, roots of confidence will begin to wrap around the insecurities in your life. My life changed when I finally began to look at my life the way God did. He began to answer the questions that I desperately, subconsciously and deliberately searched for. He began to heal my heart. He began to direct my desires. He began to mold my mess.

Do you want him to do the same for you?



The purpose of this devotional study is for you to see God’s perfection in yourself. We often hear about how we are not enough, so take a few moments to read how you are just right the way you are. Take a peek at the table of contents. Each chapter is structured to look at one specific issue. Within each chapter we will evaluate the world’s message with the message of the Most High. God’s word will come to life. I will share stories from girls like you and even a few of my own personal stories. There are also poems, music lyrics, and other references sprinkled throughout the book to help you see why we should not believe the lies of the world. I promise to be real and transparent, and I hope you will do the same.

In each chapter you will also find nuggets of truth that I have discovered from God’s treasure chest– the Bible. His words are timeless and provide the ultimate remedy. Be sure to grab your Bible each time you sit down to read, you might want to highlight the verses that speak directly to you. I also want you to take an active participant role. How? There will be a *Digest* section at the end of each chapter. Here you will have the chance to journal your thoughts and reflect on the topic.

If all of this sounds intimidating, grab a friend. For some reason, things always seem a little easier when you do not have to face them alone, wouldn’t you agree? Call your bff right now and ask her to read along with you.

By the end of this book, I know God will speak to you in a powerful way. No, you may not have your life mapped out in every detail, but I know that God will reveal his love to you. Once that becomes your groundwork, your blueprint can be crafted into a life full of purpose.

I no longer have to search in pursuit of discovering who I am. I found the answer!

I am HIS!