

August 2019

# the Steadfast Moms' Journal

*The kindness of our Holy Holy Holy God*



Ecclesiastes 3:11

Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.



by Angela O'Dell

### John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He existed in the beginning with God.

3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

### Verses 10-12

10 He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him.

11 He came to his own people, and even they rejected him.

12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

In the beginning, God. In the end, God. Every breath and thought in between, God. He is holy, and He requires those who bear His name to be holy also. Not in our own strength, but in His. "By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence." 2 Peter 1:3.

Although He does not hold our humanness against us, His love is pure and makes us pure also through His forgiveness of our sins.

Recently, I've been thinking about conscientiously training my heart, mind, and soul to contemplate and meditate on both the transcendent and the immanent

Focusing on the transcendence of God - the apartness, above-ness, and separateness aspect of who He is - reminds us that He is not a God that we can control, completely understand, or one with whom we can co-rule our life. If we catch just a glimpse of His holiness, it is enough to put us on the ground before Him, like the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 6. He is a God that we should be constantly in awe of, worshipping at His feet in complete humility.

Focusing on the immanence of God - the intimate way He is involved with our lives and the world around us - is even more powerful and meaningful when it is weighed in balance with His transcendence. The fact that our huge, HOLY God, who created the entire universe and everything in it, is so loving and kind, so relational and interactive, that He made a way through His Son for us to come to Him...well, it blows my mind - but it has to start with His Holiness.

We live in a culture that doesn't want to hear about God's holiness and His requirements for those who are going to have a relationship with Him.

You see, when we ignore or downplay the huge and glorious part of who our God truly is, we lose sight of - or perhaps never even gain sight of - His greatness and HOLY, HOLY, HOLINESS. Instead, He becomes small in our belief system, unable to do what His Word says He can do. We don't give Him a place of honor and leadership in our lives; instead, He is resigned to a little cardboard box down in the left-hand corner of our closet - a cool Christian t-shirt to wear, but certainly not a whole new identity or a suit of armor. It takes us trusting and believing that He is who He says He is, and we are who He says we are. It takes us kneeling before Him so that He can stand powerfully in our lives.

When He is on the throne of our lives - in the driver's seat instead of in the trunk - our lives can take the inevitable twists and turns, but we can have peace knowing that He is a good Father and a good driver of our lives. Nothing in this startling-to-us culture is a surprise for Him; He is completely and utterly prepared to give us what we need.



## God's plans for me by Kristin Stewart

Once upon a time, I was a young woman who had it all figured out. I went to university to receive my Education degree and went right into my career as a teacher. I loved every minute as a teacher and truly felt it was the role God had placed me on this earth to do. I felt confident and fulfilled in this role.

I married my wonderful husband and became pregnant with the child I had always wanted to have, yet I still assumed I would continue teaching. I always thought I would somehow perfect the balance between motherhood and teaching and thrive in both roles.

God had other plans for me.

When my daughter was born, the Lord laid it on my heart more and more that I was meant to stay home and raise her full time. My husband and I came to an agreement prayerfully that this is what I would do for her younger years (and the younger years of

passed, I loved being home but I had not put any thought into homeschooling. That came only when we started to approach the fall that our oldest daughter was set to head to school. I remember driving in the car with my family and my husband and I had been chatting about how it just felt crazy that she was heading off to school. I looked at him and said, "well we actually don't have to send her". It had just dawned on me that minute that we could homeschool her. From that very second onward, I had the most indescribable peace that this was right for our family.

The biggest worry was how she would react as she is very social and had been excited about school. I truly feel the Lord prepared her heart as she was so excited to homeschool when we told her about it. Every minute spent homeschooling has felt like we are just where the Lord wants us to be.

It is so interesting to me how He orchestrated all of this to take me from a woman sure her life's mission was to teach in a classroom to a mama knowing that the most important job she will ever do is train up her children. Proverbs 19:21 tells us "*many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails*" and that scripture has proven so true in my life. I am so thankful that the Lord's perfect plan is better than mine. I can't imagine doing anything else but homeschooling my children.



*About the author...*

Kristin Stewart

*From Kristin*

Kristin Stewart is a former teacher turned homeschooling mama of her two daughters, age 7 and 5. She is married to an RCMP officer and lives in a remote northern town in Canada. She is passionate about faith,

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journey as well as encourage women in their faith.

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## *a different destination*

### *by Summer King*

I was talking with my sister-in-law a while ago about how life hasn't turned out how either of us imagined. We knew each other before entering the seasons of husbands, careers, and children and have only grown closer as we navigate them. She now has a daughter with special medical needs and I have a child who struggles with an issue that has affected some everyday activities of childhood. While we were talking about the difficulty of understanding our kids' specific needs and making adjustments and accommodations, she made the comment, "The best way to describe this reality is that it's like planning a trip for Spain and ending up in Iceland. It's not that one is better than the other, it's just that I expected one type of destination and found myself in a completely different place. I'm surrounded by an unfamiliar culture for which I feel ill-prepared. This new reality has required me to alter so much of what I thought my life would be like."

After we got off the phone, I continued thinking about the truth of that statement. As mothers, when we find out we are expecting a baby we begin to plan. What will we need to outfit their nursery? What items we will need for their care? What will the new routine be like, etc.? We begin making decisions about so many things based on the assumption that we will experience a routine pregnancy, easy delivery, and perfectly healthy child. We envision milestones such as their first steps, beginning school, graduation, and extracurricular activities we'd like them to participate in. What we see as the destination of a normal child-raising experience is as natural an expectation as arriving in the correct country of a meticulously planned trip.

However, sometimes after arriving in this land we call motherhood, we realize that we've landed in an unexpected place. Many times we don't know anyone else who's arrived in this same place and in these same circumstances. With

goes out the window and we feel like babies learning to walk. Everything feels foreign and we don't know where to begin. We try our very best only to fall, get up, try, and then fall again. We spend countless hours and lots of energy pursuing therapies, consultations, and diagnoses. We want answers to the myriad of questions and doubts we now experience and become frustrated at our inability to figure out how to best handle it all. We're exhausted and out of answers. Many times we're tempted to just give up and sit still.

The beauty of our new reality, though, is knowing that while this might have surprised us, none of this surprised God. Not one single thing. In fact, I can look back and see how small moments or events were shaping both my sister-in-law and me for a future only He knew about. He allowed our lives to take the detour He knew was coming all along. He never left us to navigating this seemingly derailed itinerary alone. When we were uncertain, He was working.

Maybe, like us, you are realizing that you've ended up in a different destination than you originally anticipated or maybe you've been in this foreign land for a while. Either way, know that you can find solace and answers from Him. When you have those moments of doubt, frustration, or exhaustion, lean in close and listen to His direction. Our burdens are made lighter knowing we can always trust in His sovereignty and goodness even when life suddenly looks foreign and confusing.



*About the author...*

Summer King

*Homefront Homeschooling*

Summer is the wife of one handsome Soldier and has the privilege of being called Momma by two precious kiddos. Any free time she finds between serving her Savior, homeschooling, and managing all things family is spent reading, traveling, or napping. You can find her trying to figure out social media at Homefront Homeschooling on [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#) or by e-mailing her at [homefronthomeschooling@gmail.com](mailto:homefronthomeschooling@gmail.com).

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### Brain-dumping Step #1

Organizing your thoughts is the first step in taking control of them and gaining freedom from many dark mental “trails.” I call this step 1 of brain-dumping. Throughout the years, I have helped young people (mostly girls) to start taking their thoughts captive. One of the biggest steps in the right direction is gaining some organization up there in the thought and emotion realm.

I like to compare it with cleaning out your room. If you have everything you own in a huge pile right in the middle of your bedroom, it’s basically impossible to know where to start. It’s just too overwhelming. The best thing you can do in this situation is to start the organization process by separating dirty laundry from clean, and garbage from stuff you want to keep, right?

This same thing goes for your brain, thoughts, and emotions.

#### Here’s what you do:

- Grab a large sheet of paper. Drawing paper works great, but so does two pieces of notebook paper laid side-by-side.
- Think carefully and write your life categories on the paper. This could start with your relationship with your parents, school work, friends, hobbies, etc. The point is, if you think about it at all, it needs to have a category on your paper. Leave space between your categories so you can write phrases, words, or even doodles depicting your thoughts about each one.

away! BUT FOR NOW, be super honest and blunt. If you are having a hard time with a certain relationship, write a few words or draw a picture/doodle to get it out of your brain and on paper.

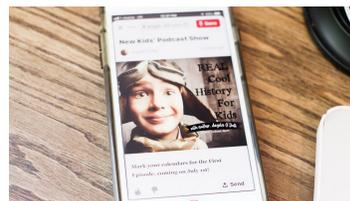
- Take as much time as you need to. The point is to empty out your brain onto the paper in an organized way so you can clean it up, up there!
- After you have all of your thoughts, feelings, and emotions on the paper, go through each one and pray for them. It really doesn't matter if you know what to say or not. If you are at a loss for words, just write, "God, I know You've got this. It's too big for me. You're bigger."
- This process helps you weed the junk and dirty-clothes-thoughts out of the rest of what's going on in your head. If you can get it out on paper, and see the words, GOD IS BIGGER next to them, you have taken the first step in the right direction.

Hey, if you want to chat, I'm always available to pray and encourage you! Email me anytime at [angela@jellybeanjar.org](mailto:angela@jellybeanjar.org).

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Angela is the author of the [Master Books](#) curriculum, *Math Lessons for a Living Education*, *America's Story*, and *The World's Story*, as well as a number of self-published titles. Her passion for helping others lead lives centered on the Truth of God's Word has led her into the life coaching ministry and industry.

She is currently working towards her Masters' level Life Coaching Certification through the AACC and IBCC, specializing in Leadership Coaching, Child Development, Parenting, and Family ministry. You can keep up on her latest events and releases at [angelaodell.com](http://angelaodell.com).



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