

Sparkle!

CHRISTIAN GIRL DIGITAL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2020

**HOW DO I
STUDY
THE
BIBLE?**

*Strengthening
yourself in the
Lord*

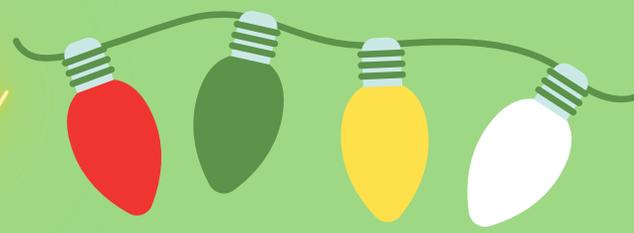
**From unbelief to
complete surrender
to Jesus**

A TESTIMONY ABOUT AGNOSTICISM TO CHRISTIANITY

**IN THE SAME WAY, LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS, THAT THEY
MAY SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.**

MATTHEW 5:16

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Contributors

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Contact us:

Let us know what your favourite feature is and what you would like to read about in the next magazine!

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hey sister!



Is it just me or did this year go by in a flash of Happy New Year, March 27th, lockdown, to Merry Christmas?

The great news is that we are the daughters of the Creator of time who not only knows but IS the Beginning and the End. And despite the challenges of 2020, He still has kept us and this my dear sisters is evidence that He still has a plan and purpose for your life!

In the last edition of Sparkle! for 2020, we want you to understand that the strength that you have shown was placed inside of you long before you were even conceived. God tells us in Jeremiah 1: 5 that "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

This same strength that got you through this year, is the same strength that is preparing you for your next season- strength from Christ Jesus alone.

We're praying that you have a blessed festive season and that the Lord would continue to keep you and your loved ones.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

Love



THE SPARKLE TEAM



Written by
Amanda Shold

His *love* is better than life

A testimony of coming out fear of the unknown

Growing up, I was always a deep thinker. I loved to read and often found myself thinking about my future, the purpose of life, and death, even at a young age. I am from the USA and was raised in what is called an “agnostic” home. My parents had no religious belief or faith, and I did not know much about God. By the time I was 11, I found myself terrified by the thought of death and the fact that once my life was over, I was gone forever. Even the greatest joys and accomplishments seemed so pointless without a greater purpose, and I knew deep down there had to be something more. I remember being so hungry for truth and deeply wanting to know the meaning of my life.

"I found myself terrified by the thought of death and the fact that once my life was over, I was gone forever."



One day, my friend invited me to youth group at her church. I had never been to a youth group before, and it was my first time hearing the gospel – or good news – about Jesus Christ. I learned about how God came to earth in the form of Jesus Christ, how Jesus died for my sins and was raised to life again, defeating death and sin forever. I learned that Jesus made a way for me to have relationship with God and that I could actually be with Him forever, in this life and for all of eternity. I learned about the incredible, selfless, beautiful love of God and I was overwhelmed with joy. Everything inside me knew without a doubt that this was true, and that this was the answer that I had been longing for.

"EVERYTHING INSIDE ME KNEW WITHOUT A DOUBT THAT THIS WAS TRUE, AND THAT THIS WAS THE ANSWER THAT I HAD BEEN LONGING FOR."



I decided to give my life to Jesus and I felt such peace in knowing that I was His beloved and precious daughter. Ever since that night, following Jesus has been the greatest joy of my life. In the words of Psalm 63:3, "His love is better than life."

If you've been wrestling with some of the same thoughts I had - wondering about your purpose, the meaning of life, or struggling with the fear of death - I would encourage you to reach out to God today in prayer. Ask Him to reveal His truth to you, and ask Him to speak to you. Jesus said in the Bible, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." - Matthew 7:7. If you want to give your life to Jesus today and begin the journey of following Him and living as His precious daughter, I invite you to pray this prayer with me:

"Father God, thank you for your love for me. Thank you for sending Jesus to this earth to die on the cross for my sins and for raising Him to life again. Thank you that you have set me free from the bonds of sin and death, and for calling me into relationship with you. I declare that Jesus is my Savior and Lord. I ask for your forgiveness of my sins and I want to follow you, God. Help to me to walk daily in your love and to grow in relationship with you. Thank you for calling me your beloved, precious daughter. In Jesus' name, Amen."

If you've sincerely said this prayer, please let us know so that we can pray for you and support you. Email us: sparkleteenmag@gmail.com

A person in silhouette stands on a dark rectangular pedestal in the center of a long, perspective-lined hallway. The walls and floor are lined with glowing neon light strips in shades of purple and blue, creating a series of rectangular frames that recede into the distance. The overall atmosphere is futuristic and ethereal.

HIS MASTERPIECE, YOUR LIGHT



Written by
Tinita Van Aardt

Something marvellous happens within you, when you let go and let God. I sit in awe when I realise how amazing our Father in heaven is. How He can find and take all the broken and scattered pieces and put them together creating a master piece. I had started in one direction and before I knew it, I was blown into all kinds of different directions. And just like that, He had me using gifts, I never even knew I had. Used me in places I never thought I could be used. And as startled as I was, when I sat with Him in His presence I could see how wonderfully the puzzle pieces were starting to fit together into that masterpiece He was busy creating for me.



People often think that they need to know it all and have it all together in order to go out and make a difference or to do God's work. And then because of this illusion we tend to sit back and not avail ourselves, because we buy into this notion that we are somehow unworthy. It is in that unworthiness that we can find our worth and purpose in God, because our worth is not defined by anything other than Him. You need to let your gifts shine. If you're doubting that you are gifted, let me reassure that we all have gifts. Some we know about, and others we are not too sure of. But by using your gifts, for the glory of God, you can shed light on another's gift. Or simply being a light for them.

"I could see how wonderfully the puzzle pieces were starting to fit together into that masterpiece He was busy creating for me"

It is in using my gifts to build his kingdom, that I have received my biggest blessings. Sometimes, the fruit isn't only in what you do, but what's inside of you. So, let that come out. Be the light. Own your masterpiece that He has so carefully and thoughtfully sculpted together.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven. - Matthew 5:14-16

BUILDING A LIFE



Written by
Sheri-Ann Pietersen
& Maryke Ackerman

OF RESILIENCE



How do you define a resilient person? How do they talk, walk or act? The dictionary defines resilience as the ability to recover quickly from difficulties or adjust easily to misfortune or change; toughness.

For most of us, life has its ups and downs. But society places unrealistic expectations on girls to be strong successful individuals, which often makes us believe that we are not allowed to act weak when we face hard times. We often act tough by putting up a brave face, trying to stay strong, but the question is: "Are you allowing Christ to be strong in you, through your weaknesses?"

We all have weaknesses, but resilient people develop a mental capacity that allows them to adapt easily when facing these weaknesses. Just like a palm tree, being able to bend in strong winds, staying strongly rooted in your faith.

Becoming a strong resilient person is not something that happens overnight, it is a change of mindset. So the question is, how can you become a resilient person yourself?

"Are you allowing Christ to be in you, through your weaknesses?"

Tips for building resilience:

- Take care of yourself, and this means to exercise, eat healthy and get enough sleep. Do what you love, like swimming for instance and don't forget to have fun and laugh. Find ways to de-stress and help maintain a healthy mind and body.
- Have a good support network. Surround yourself with family and friends who will be there for you. Talking is a great way to alleviate some stress.

- Balance is key. Too much schoolwork or play will have negative effects. Good time management will help you to prioritise important responsibilities and will also help you to manage any obstacles that may come your way.
- Accept things for what they are in the moment. Don't focus on things that are out of your control.
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes - learn from them and move on.
- When circumstances are hard, and it seems like all you can see around you are problems and hardship, stay positive – stay optimistic, try to focus on solutions and remind yourself of your blessings.
- When making decisions trust yourself and your intuition and don't be afraid to ask for advice from others.
- Have a 'growth-mindset' – don't be afraid to learn and try new things. A fresh new perspective from someone else might just be what you need.
- Don't be afraid of your own emotions. Learn to identify what you are feeling so that you can deal with that emotion properly.
- Most importantly stay disciplined in your faith; find your refuge and strength in Him (Psalm 46:1).
- Some problems will not disappear overnight – be patient. The Bible reminds us to stay patient while obeying His commands and to maintain our belief in Him (Revelation 14:12).

When you are going through a tough time remember we are not alone! We don't have to rely on our own strength to deal with things, in fact if we do, we are vulnerable to disappointment and doubt. To be strong means to be continuously strengthened in the Lord and his mighty power. You can do all things through Him that gives you strength (Phil 4:13).



My God

IS MY SAFE PLACE

Interview with
Sisipho Mangqishi



Tell us a bit about yourself?

I'm Sisipho Mangqishi. I'm 19 years old. I was born in a small village in the Transkei and moved to Port Elizabeth at the age of two so I have lived here for most of my life. I matriculated at in 2019 and took a gap year.

How did you become so grounded in your walk with the Lord at such a young age?

I was raised by my grandmother because my mother had to work and every Sunday morning she used to wake us up for church. I remember the ten year old me feeling as though I was being 'forced' to go to church. However, it was because of this that I eventually found the Lord for myself. I went from thinking that church was a burden whenever my grandmother would wake me up to actually being the one waking her up on a Sunday morning.

"I went into a slight depression. I silently struggled with this for the first few months of lockdown"

What are some of the difficulties that you've had to overcome this year?

I think one of the biggest challenges I had to face this year, like most people, was having to deal with the effects of the virus. I think for me personally what was most difficult was having to get used to being on my own. I had become so accustomed to having people around me 24/7 that the moment that changed and I was forced to be alone, I went into a slight depression. I silently struggled with this for the first few months of lockdown.



Do you have a mentor or a role model that actively supports you?

One of my biggest role models is my grandmother. She has always been my greatest support system and from a very young age she has constantly encouraged me to trust in the Lord. I also have a few ladies in the church that I look up to and can run to whenever I am dealing with something or I just need encouragement.

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.
1 Timothy 4:12

If you could give advice to young people advice on how to stand firm in their faith, what would it be?

Never think that you are too young to love and serve the Lord. Also, no matter what your circumstances are, trust in God because He will always come through for you.



How did you overcome these challenges?

It was when I realised that I had been trying to get myself out of that depressed state by trying to find comfort in everything around me instead of God. Coming to that realization was a huge wake-up call. I started spending more time with Lord and started to enjoy my time alone because I no longer saw it as me being on my own but more as time to spend with the Lord.

Is there a scripture that you hold onto and apply in everything that you do in your life?

Psalms 27: 14 says "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord." This scripture has always been my go-to scripture whether I was at a low or high point in my life. It constantly reminds me to trust in Him and to be patient.

Relationship

OVER

RELIGION

Written By
Rone` Horne



Do you have a desire to have a relationship with God? Or maybe you do have a relationship with Him, but you know that it's not what it should be? Maybe you feel guilty for not spending enough time with Him? Either life gets in the way or you just don't have the energy to read a whole book in the Bible. Well, if you answered yes to any of these questions or to all of them.

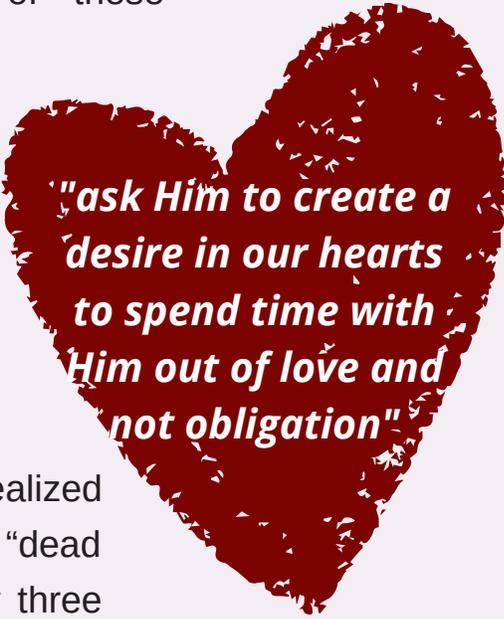
Please hear me when I say:

Do not fret! "For there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus" {Romans 8:1}

I was in the same boat, until I realized that I do not have to do all these "dead works". I used to forcefully pray three times a day or read my Bible with no sense of joy. I did this just so that I can tick my "holy box" each day. Proverbs 16: 25 tells us that "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death."

Rather than involuntarily spending time with God, we should ask Him to create a desire in our hearts to spend time with Him out of love and not obligation. We should get to know our Father for who He truly is.

I'm sure the next question that comes to mind would be; so how do I get to know God? Some say "by simply reading your Bible". But if you're anything like me, at the very first glance of the Bible I already felt overwhelmed. Questions were racing through my mind:



"ask Him to create a desire in our hearts to spend time with Him out of love and not obligation"

"Was there a specific book that I had to start with? Where do I even begin? I just did not know! And it was quite discouraging, as I tried to start this journey while I did not even understand half of the Bible.



Fasting

and physical well being

Written By
Melanie Zeeman



***“Is not this the kind
of fasting I have
chosen...?”
- Isaiah 58:6-9***

Usually when there is talks of fasting (especially amongst Christians) the immediate responses are “I’m going to be hungry” or “I won’t make it without food”, well that is not the type of fasting God intends you to have. What God has in mind is for your fast to set the oppressed free, share your food with the hungry and break every yoke (Isaiah 58:6-9).

The topic of fasting is an important one, whether you choose to practice it or just want to learn about it. And mainstream media/influencers have taken the very sacredness of fasting and turned it into a way to make money and lose weight, but fasting is in fact a very crucial part of kingdom lifestyle. But let’s start at the beginning:

What is fasting?



Fasting is willingly choosing to avoid and abstain from food or certain food for a specified period of time. Fasting is a way the sons of God can align their focus and discipline to the things that matter in His kingdom - and it is also a way of declaring that you choose to abstain from anything that might get in the way of your relationship with God. Fasting pushes you out of your comfort zone and into God's purpose for your life.

" Deciding to fast is a personal choice one has to make and despite it being labelled as a diet trend, it is a practice that aligns your whole being - body, mind and spirit. "

Fasting and praying

With fasting goes a very important part the world leaves out which is praying. Praying is to fasting what a salt is to pepper and a cup to a saucer, without the other it is incomplete.

What stands out for me throughout my time of fasting, is the rest and recovery I give my body. Rest from the constant exposure and work we give it to digest and remove what we put into it, foreign things we expose it to daily and most importantly in this time of Covid19, fasting becomes a way for our body to actually strengthen our immune systems. Fasting allows the good bacteria in our gut to work without any interference and that means building our immune system. Abstaining from food gives our gut bacteria a chance to grow and work at its full capacity which in turn provides good immune support.

Most fasts allows fresh fruits and vegetables and we all know the goodness of fruits and vegetables - they are full of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals that contributes to overall health and wellbeing.



To start off:

Don't overdo it

especially if it is your first time fasting or if you don't practice fasting regularly. Take it one day at a time or even a few hours at a time just to start off.

Your eating has to change

when going on a fast, how you eat has to change; whether you choose to abstain from sugar, meat or caffeine there has to be a visible shift in your normal eating routine.

Find a fasting buddy

having someone to do it with holds you accountable and as a bonus you score a prayer buddy.



Bible Reading Tips

Written By
Lucinda October



Choose a version that is easy and understandable. If you understand it, it will be better for you to read it. For beginners the NIV/NLT is suitable.

Read a little each day. Start with 10-15 minutes each day and as you develop you can increase the time.

Take it slow so that you can understand what you are reading. Go back if you need to and read it again

Pray before you start. Ask God to speak to you through His word. God's word is Gods love letter written to His people including you. When you pray ask Him to teach, guide and help you understand.

Make notes, write down what you understand, what you have learnt or what God taught you in what you read. Reflect on what you are reading and how it applies to you. Ask yourself: What does this teach me about God? What does this teach me about how I should live? What lesson can I learn from this? When a word speaks to your heart, write it down, take it in. Write it somewhere where you can see it regularly.



The SOAP bible study method

SCRIPTURE: Write out a verse that was meaningful to you



OBSERVATION: What did you learn? What do you think God is telling you?

APPLICATION: How can you apply this Word in your life?

PRAYER: Pray about what you have just read and ask God to help you meditate on this Word and apply it in your life.

Fun ZONE

Psalm 69:1

Sing to the Lord a new song, all the earth.

Written By
Elsabe Carolus



This is what the Bible says about what we should do. Today, I want to introduce you to a few groups and singers who has written songs that will remind you and help you meditate on the Word Of God through music.



01 SARAH REEVES

Verse: Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and never lean on your own understanding but in all your ways acknowledge Him.

The first artist, I want to introduce you to is Sarah Reeves. Sarah Reeves is a Christian pop artist. She writes music that is relevant to what modern society issues. It is music you can relate to in which ever season you find yourself in.

Lessons learnt from Sarah Reeves : Even though each season of life is different, God is still the one who we can lean on and depend on Him, when we don't have all the answers we need.



02 JAMIE GRACE



Verse: Psalm 71:22

So I will praise you with the harp of Your faithfulness; my God.

The second artist is Jamie Grace. Jamie Grace is a Contemporary Christian artist. She has Tourette Syndrome and this syndrome has only given her more reason to serve the Lord with her, 'voice and guitar'.

Lesson learnt from Jamie Grace : The Lord has placed something in each of our hands and no matter how insignificant it might look it will still bring Him praise, honour and glory.



03

ELEVATION WORSHIP



Verse: Exodus 14:14

The Lord will fight for you. You need only be still.

The third group I want to introduce you to is Elevation Worship. Elevation Worship is a contemporary music band, who leads worship as well as tours. Each member has such an incredible story to share of how they came to know Christ and how they are living it out.

Lesson learnt from Elevation Worship : Though you face trials or face giants, God will never fail. The battle has already been won.



04

HILLSONG YOUNG & FREE

Verse: Colossians 1:11 God will continually revitalize, implanting within you the passion to do what pleases Him.

The fourth and final group I want to introduce you to is Hillsong Young & Free. If you are looking for music that is unique, vibrant and energetic, you will definitely get it here. Though the music genre can differ it still delivers the message of the gospel.

Lesson learnt from Hillsong Young & Free: We have been made fearfully and wonderfully. We can celebrate this by being who Father has made us to be, fully alive and energized by the strength He gives us.



I want to encourage you to do research on each of these artists and groups. Each of their stories has something you can learn from or even grow with. It has made a difference in my life and many others lives. May you, Beautiful Young Lady, see that the Lord has made you wonderfully and fearfully. May you see that you are precious to Him. May you draw from His Strength which is your joy and portion. Keep singing Praises to your Father, Daughter. It's where He lives and where He wants to meet you.



NAILED IT-



Our top 5 nail art ideas to get you in the festive spirit!



1

Burgundy dreams



2

Into the woods



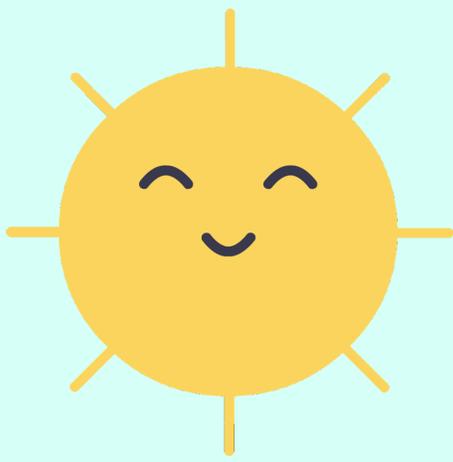
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Starring daylight

4 Golden nights



5 Festive fantasy

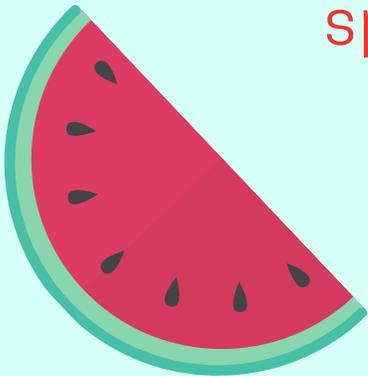


SPARKLE!

Christian Girl

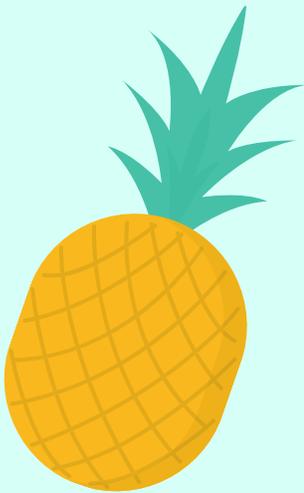
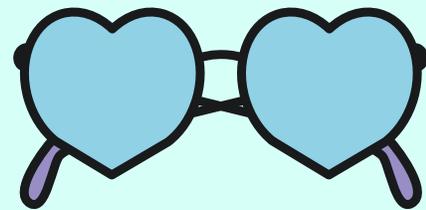
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YAY

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favourite feature is and
what you would like to
read about in the next
magazine!

