Our Faithful God Devotional

52 Weeks of Leaning on His Unchanging Character

SNEAK PEEK
SAMPLE ONLY

Katie Davis Majors

New York Times bestselling author of *Daring to Hope*

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Multnomah

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Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

—Romans 16:25–27, ESV

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Introduction

Dearest friend,

Several years ago, I experienced a season of feeling unusually dry in my spiritual life. I restlessly flipped through my Bible, hoping it might just fall open to something that would jump off the page. I picked multiple devotionals off our bookshelves, only to tire of them after a few short days. *I need You to speak to me,* I would whisper to God.

At my husband's encouragement, our family started a new-to-us approach to Bible reading, called the M'Cheyne Reading Plan, designed by nineteenth-century Scottish minister Robert Murray M'Cheyne. We started with Genesis, Ezra, Matthew, and Acts, reading a chapter of each every day. Some of the reading we did together around the table, and some we did in our own quiet time.

It took me only about a week to realize that *this* was what my heart had been craving. I had been longing for God's Word in large pieces. And, while I know it might sound cliché, the more I read, the more I wanted. After a season of asking God to please make the Bible new and exciting to me again, I suddenly hungered for large chunks of time in His Word. *Because He hears the prayers of our weary hearts. Because He* longs *to be near His people, to remind us of His love for us.*

As I read, I couldn't get over the very obvious truth that the character and magnificence and love of God remained the same through Genesis, Ezra, Matthew, and Acts. And then later through Exodus, Nehemiah, Mark, and Romans, and so on. Although

these passages weren't intentionally selected to "go together," so often a theme or aspect of God's character jumped out of each passage as if they had been handpicked in some kind of topical index. There it was, the Word of God and my loving Father, the same, yesterday, today, and forever. God's faithful character shone through on each page, as if to say, "See! He loves you. He has always loved you. He will always love you!" or "Look! He is merciful. He has always been merciful. He will always be merciful."

In the midst of a long and weary year, when I'd been looking for spiritual encouragement from reading about other people's encounters with God and about other people's opinions or interpretations of His Word, my old, worn, falling-apart Bible that I already knew all the stories in was waiting for me to come back to the basics, waiting to reveal new facets of God's character. Morning after morning, I pored over the Word, filling pages of my garage sale–purchased, college-ruled spiral notebook with all the evidences of God's mercy and grace and gentleness and love that were the same to Abraham and to the Israelites rebuilding the wall and to the Samaritan woman at the well and to Saul the Pharisee who became an apostle. And as if it were all new to me, I stood in awe.

And, friend, He is just *too good* not to share.

I began to type my thoughts as I read, and I have come back to them year after year. And I would love for you to join me as I read and reflect on His Word.

Unlike many fifty-two-week Bible-reading plans, we aren't going to cover the whole Bible in a year. But we are going to read different parts of the Old and New Testaments, soaking our hearts and minds in God's Word as we look for evidence of His unchanging character throughout the ages.

Each week, you're invited to read four chapters of Scripture—one each day, Monday through Thursday. Then we will reread them all on Friday and take a look at a specific aspect of God's

character. Saturday and Sunday don't have prompts so that, if you are like me and tend to fall behind, you can use them as catch-up days or simply for reviewing the readings of that week and reflect on all He has revealed to you.

I encourage you to grab a journal (or a spiral notebook if that's your style) and a pen and to set your Bible in an easily accessible place where you plan to meet with God each day. I hope that you are just as expectant as I am of all that He will show and teach us as we walk through His Word together. I also hope that you will incorporate into your prayer life the characteristics of God that serve as the heading for each week, calling out, for example, to the God Who Meets with Us, God Who Provides, God of Certain Hope. I pray that as you do, you'll gain a more intimate, personal experience of leaning into His unchanging character and finding Him ever faithful.

If you don't know Jesus yet or aren't so sure about Him, this book is for you too. I pray that you will meet Him on these pages and fall just as madly in love with Him as He is with you.* In a world full of disappointment, He is the only one who will never disappoint. If this feels new and foreign, welcome. *I am so glad you are here.*

My prayer is that you would be filled with joy in His Word like never before and stand with me in awe of His unchanging, unending love.

—*Katie*

* On page XX, under the heading "Knowing Our Faithful God," you'll find a simple explanation of how you can put your faith in Jesus today.

Week 1

God of New Beginnings

Monday

Read Genesis 1.

Here, we begin. Darkness, chaos, formlessness, emptiness. And here, God hovers. Here, He speaks. Here, He reveals His wondrous plans, His desire for beauty and light and life. *All that He does is good.*

Where do you see His goodness right now? Make a habit of noticing God's goodness, even on the not-good days.

What areas of life feel dark, void, chaotic? Can you trust that God is right there, hovering near, making something beautiful in His perfect timing?

Tuesday

Read Matthew 1.

Often I am tempted to skip right over genealogies, wondering what fresh insight could possibly come from a long list of names. But I'm drawn in by how Matthew starts. "This is the genealogy of *Jesus the Messiah* the son of David, the son of Abraham." This is God fulfilling all the prophecies of the Old Testament, all the promises His people had been waiting on for thousands of

years.

"You are to give him the name Jesus," the angel says, "because he will save his people from their sins" (verse 21). If God in His mercy can fulfill this promise of a new beginning, then we have *certain* hope that He will fulfill *all* His promises to us through His Son, Jesus, including these:

- God is working all things for His good purposes (see Romans 8:28).
- God who began a good work in _____ (myself, my child, my family member/friend/neighbor who is struggling) will bring it to completion (see Philippians 1:6).
- I will live with God forever in eternity (see John 10:27–28).
- My light and momentary troubles are achieving eternal glory (see 2 Corinthians 4:17).
- God is with me (even through the hard, even if I do not feel Him) (see Matthew 1:23; 28:20).
- God will never leave me (see Hebrews 13:5).

Choose a promise from Scripture that feels hard to hold on to right now. Write it down. Repeat it to yourself. Cling to His truth today.

Wednesday

Read Ezra 1.

What may seem like a strange inventory of bowls and basins is, in fact, another example of God achieving His purposes and keeping His promises.

This story really begins at the end of 2 Chronicles, where we

read that God's people mock Him and turn their backs on His commands (see 36:16). *Yet* He loves them. *Yet* He carries His remnant into exile, where one day He plans to move the heart of a pagan king to accomplish His good purposes for His people, demonstrating that no human is beyond the ability of God to move in their heart.

Throughout all of Scripture, God declares His plan to bring His people back to Himself. *His mercy is astounding.* Isaiah 45:5–6 tells us that God intends for His people to know Him, no matter what it takes.

> *Where in your life have you seen God's provision, even in the unlikely? Meditate on that today and allow your past experiences of God keeping His promises to inform your trust that He will continue to do so!*

Thursday

Read Acts 1.

Acts feels like a new beginning almost as much as Genesis or Matthew. In some ways, it must have seemed like a sorrowful start, with the disciples entering a new season of ministry without the physical presence of their Lord and Teacher. But Jesus had promised them a gift, one that He had said was better than Himself, and that was the Holy Spirit. While the disciples waited, rather than let their grief overtake them, they "joined together constantly in prayer" (verse 14).

Are there areas of your life right now where you feel as if Jesus is hidden from your sight? Or areas where you are waiting for Him to do something new and maybe feel as if you have been waiting for a very long time?

Consider taking these circumstances to the Lord in prayer. Reach out to a friend or fellow believer who can join you in those prayers. Ask God to give you joy even as you wait.

Friday

Reflections on Genesis 1, Matthew 1, Ezra 1, and Acts 1

I always hated that unsightly dead tree next to our front porch in Uganda. It was there in its ugly blue plastic container when we moved in, and its roots had grown so far down into the cement foundation of our house that I couldn't dig it up. I made plans in my head to cut it down limb by limb, but with so many more practical demands on my time, that task just never rose high enough on the priority list. Even worse was the fact that every one of my children and nearly every guest who wandered in and out of our home seemed to think that the plastic container holding the tree was actually a trash can. For the first full year we lived in that house, that ugly dead tree sat in its ugly garbage-can container full of banana peels and candy wrappers and half-eaten peanut butter sandwiches and drove me crazy.

I didn't initially notice when fresh leaves started sprouting. I didn't notice as the branches started to come back to life, reaching for the sun. And then one morning, I walked out and there was our dead tree—completely alive and completely covered with little pink mulberries. I ran to get the kids, excited to show them. "This tree was *totally dead*!" I kept saying, shaking my head.

We waited patiently as the sour little berries turned into plump, juicy treats that stained our chins purple as we scarfed them by the handful. Eventually, the tree filled completely with berries several

times a year. Our little ones would search for a berry that was just right and squeal with delight when they found one. The mulberry tree remained stuck in its ugly blue plastic container, its roots still growing straight through the bottom and into the cement, but sometimes I would pause to look at that tree for an extra minute and contemplate the *mercy of God*.

This is who our God is: He turns our trash into treasure. He creates everything out of nothing. Order out of chaos. Light out of darkness. And from the very beginning, God has had in mind this glorious plan—*mercy*. He will take my nothing, my chaos, my utter darkness, and He will breathe new life into things long dead. He resurrected my mulberry tree, and He is resurrecting me, both daily in my dark and sinful heart and one day in the life to come.

We see examples of this aspect of God's character all throughout Scripture, even in places where it might seem unlikely. In Ezra, God's people have been in exile in Babylon for seventy long years, the result of their choice to mock God and turn from Him. Yet the Lord loves them! It is the desire of His heart to bring His people back to Himself. Years before the book of Ezra was written, both Isaiah and Jeremiah (see Isaiah 44–45; Jeremiah 29) prophesied that God would indeed rescue His people—and He did, by softening the heart of an unlikely, unbelieving King Cyrus. God will have mercy on His people. God will accomplish His purposes.

From the moment God breathes the world into being in Genesis through the repeated rescuing of His people in the Old Testament, from the birth of His only Son sent as a human baby to the promise of the Holy Spirit as Jesus is taken up to heaven, God remains faithful to fulfill His promises and God is merciful to use all things for His pleasure, for His people, for the glory of His name.

Genesis 1:2 says that God hovered over a formless and void earth, the surface of the deep waters. He came near to the darkness and the void and the chaos and spoke light. Throughout all of

time, this is our God. Always coming near, bringing light, growing shoots out of the black of the earth, breathing life into dry bones, making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert, and ultimately raising life out of the death of the tomb. He takes our little and He makes it much. He takes our ashes and He makes them beautiful. He takes our not-good and makes it His very-good. This is who God is.

As we look through His Word, as we look back over our own lives, and as we look to the promises He has made us for a future with Him, both here and in eternity, we can trust that He will resurrect all our dark, dead, and dry places so they bear fruit that draws us to Himself and brings Him glory and praise.

That vast and formless earth shone with light and teemed with life. That humble, dirty feeding trough held the Savior of the world. I read these words and I picture the beauty and life that sprouted from our once dead tree. I think, *Look what He has made us, what He is making us.*

In His mercy, He is using all things to grow us to new life.

What places in your life and heart feel dead and dry, in need of His resurrection? What would it look like to surrender those things to Him today, trusting that He will make something out of nothing, as He did in Genesis, or provide what you need, as He did with Ezra?

Read Jeremiah 29:10–14. Are you ready to trust God to bring you out of your dark and hard places and use all of it to give you hope for a future with Him?

Week 2

God Who Looks on Us with Love

Monday

Read Genesis 2.

The picture of the idyllic garden in Eden where God places the man and the woman is strikingly similar to a passage in Revelation 22, where this phrase is added: "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations" (verse 2). Naked and unashamed before God, Adam and Eve needed no healing. But this side of Eden, we cry out for it and we trust that God will provide it. In the restored Eden, there will be no curse and there will be no night. God who formed us of dust and breathed life into us so desires us to be with Him that we will one day look upon His face forever. *And His finished work will be* good *far beyond what we can imagine.*

God's finished work in the garden is good. His finished work on the cross is good, and His finished work in eternity is good. If things aren't good now, we can rest assured that He is not yet finished.

> *What areas of your life need God's healing and restoration? He is not finished with His healing work in your life. Can you trust Him today that He is working for your good and restoration, even in the areas where you cannot see it?*

Tuesday

Read Matthew 2.

In reading today's passage, I am struck that it is God's delight to reveal Himself to His people. He gives His star as a sign to the magi, then appears to them in a dream. He speaks to Joseph, first through an angel and later in his dreams, to protect His Son and thus His people and His plan to redeem them.

Whether through dreams or angels or, more often, quiet whispers of the Spirit within us, it is His desire to reveal Himself to us too. How beautiful to love a God who desires us to know Him!

In what areas of your life is God clearly revealing Himself to you?

In what areas of your life do you long for God to reveal Himself?

Trust these areas to God, and ask Him to reveal His presence and His hand at work, believing that it is His delight to speak to His people—to you!

Wednesday

Read Ezra 2.

Where again we may be tempted to skip over what could appear to be a tedious list of names, let's pause to consider that this is a group of people who have just come out of seventy years of captivity. That's a long time to wonder if you have been forgotten by God. But our loving, intentional Father knows and numbers His people. Not one is forgotten by Him! They are seen,

prepared for, and provided for—and so are you and I! *He looks on each of His people, on us, with love.*

Is there someone in your life who may need to be reminded that God sees and knows them, that He has not forgotten them? Reach out and remind them of this truth today.

Thursday

Read Acts 2.

God, who delights to show us mercy and give us good gifts, who looks at us with love in His eyes, sends His Holy Spirit on His people. We see God as provider so often in this chapter. First, we witness the lavish provision of God as He sends His Holy Spirit, then the astounding provision that all those gathered could hear of His mighty works in their very own languages. He provides Peter, who just days earlier adamantly denied that he even knew Jesus, with the courage and strength to share the Gospel with the crowds surrounding him. And out of this abundant provision, God gives the fellowship of believers the grace to provide for one another so that no one lacks anything and so the body of believers can thrive and grow.

I encourage you to pause in awe of His provision in your life today. Can you count the gifts He has given you?

Who can you bless today by meeting a physical or emotional need? How can you respond to someone in need of fellowship, in need of a financial provision, a meal, or even just an encouraging phone call?

Friday

Reflections on Genesis 2, Matthew 2, Ezra 2, and Acts 2

I am continually blown away by the reality that the God of the universe looks on us with love and desires to reveal Himself to *us*. In Genesis, we see that God's trustworthiness began even before the garden existed. As He tenderly planted it, as He breathed His life into Adam and Eve, He affectionately thought of us, of you and me and His faithful plan to bring us into glory with Him. He planned to be faithful and kind and merciful even then, to provide for every necessity with inconceivable generosity even before we existed.

I read the first chapters of Genesis and I imagine God preparing all creation for the beloved children He is about to speak into life. I remember preparing for the birth of our first son, setting up the crib and arranging things just right. Washing and folding tiny onesies and arranging minuscule diapers with such great anticipation of who this little life kicking inside me would be. And here in the beginning, our loving Father is creating every tree and plant, every bird and beast, the perfect home to bring His children into, the perfect way to point them back to His glory time and time again.

When God created man and woman in His own image and blessed them and instructed them, He had already given them everything they would need for life with Him in the garden: earth and sky and waters teeming with fish, fruits and plants in abundance, light to make the seasons and the days, to warm their skin and light their paths. Abundant provision is clear in just these few verses, and as He abundantly provides the tangible things that His creation needs, *God already plans to provide the mercy they will soon need even more.*

Think of the great satisfaction of God when He saw all the beauty He'd created and declared it good. I imagine Him gazing on His very favorite part: His children.

My husband, Benji, and I often put our kids to bed, only to sit in our own bed and tell stories of all the darling things they've done throughout the day, frequently pulling up photos and videos we have taken on our phones to show one another. "She is just so precious," we will say, and, "I can't believe how fast he is learning!" After spending the whole day with them, we have just tucked them into their own rooms only so we can be alone together, yet we sit and dote, amazed by these humans we get to shepherd and shape. Like their parents, they are far from perfect, but I doubt you'd know it if you heard our late-night conversations or saw the delight in our eyes as we watched for the hundredth time the video of the baby saying bye-bye.

In a similar way, I imagine God sits back and declares His creation good, His children beloved. His delight is fully in them and theirs in Him. There they stand, naked and unashamed in front of their loving Father, just as He created them to be. Fully designed for relationship with Him and fully designed for His glory. And God looks on them with love.

This is the same tenderness with which God looks on His people as they come out of captivity from Babylon. He knows each one of them. Each one of them was hand selected by Him to be part of the remnant of His people brought back to Jerusalem to worship Him, to know Him and be known by Him. The same is true of the magi in Matthew and the crowds in Acts as they receive Peter's testimony. We are seen and known by the almighty God! We are precious, prepared for, and provided for.

Back in the garden, Adam and Eve stood naked and they were not ashamed. Do we believe that we can go to our heavenly Father like this? Do we believe that He looks on us tenderly, as individuals

precious to Him, with a love for us and a desire to provide for us and protect us? We are His precious children, and it is His delight to reveal Himself to us!

I often find it difficult to believe that God adores me unconditionally, regardless of my performance, my struggles, and my sin. If you, too, have trouble believing that God adores you, why do you think that is?

What do you need to bring to God, naked and unashamed? Whether it is a dream, a plan, a sin, a struggle, a past mistake, imagine laying it at His feet. Picture His eyes on you, still loving you, His precious son or daughter.

Week 3

God Who Restores

Monday

Read Genesis 3.

Upon reading of the Fall in Genesis 3, it feels easy to despair. I see so much of myself in Eve, tempted to mistrust God, tempted to ignore His goodness and take things into my own hands. *Why can't you just trust Him? Why can't you just do better?* I berate myself. I hate my sin nature. But I also realize that if we do not know we are naked, we do not know we need to be clothed. And when I do not realize the depth of my own sin and separation from God, I cannot recognize my need of a savior who will bring me into restored relationship. Even in the garden, God in His mercy has a perfect plan to bring His people back to Himself, to restore them to their pre-Fall sinlessness. Even now, His plan is to bring us into glory, into His presence.

Are you beating yourself up over a past sin or mistake, one that you continue to feel deep guilt for? You can rest in knowing that once you repent from your sin, you are forgiven by our loving Father through the death and resurrection of His Son!

Spend some time reflecting on how your sins and imperfections bring you to the feet of Jesus, recognizing your need for Him.

Tuesday

Read Matthew 3.

In Genesis 3, sin enters. In Matthew 3, John prepares the way for the Savior, calling people to repent of their sin, and God proclaims His pleasure in His Son, who will take away the sin of the world! What glorious hope, what a joyful response to the fall of Adam and Eve. "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (verse 17, ESV), God declares about Jesus. And when we repent and put our full hope and trust in Him? *These words become true of us too.* We are His beloved children, with whom He is well pleased. Because I am someone who is self-critical by nature, this truth can be hard for me to truly grab hold of and believe. *How could He be well pleased with me after I have failed again?* Because of Jesus, who fulfilled all righteousness. Because of Jesus, who took my place.

John the Baptist urged his listeners to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. How could you make true repentance (which is not the same as wallowing in guilt over your shortcomings!) and the true acceptance of His forgiveness part of your daily rhythm or routine?

Spend a moment in silence listening for His voice assuring you, You are My beloved child, and I am well pleased with you. Can you receive it? Can you believe it?

Wednesday

Read Ezra 3.

I am amazed at the bravery of God's people, continuing to build, continuing to sacrifice and praise, even in the midst of their fear of the very real enemies all around them. In some translations the chapter even seems to say that they offered sacrifices of praise *because* they were afraid.

Sometimes we offer praise in spite of our fear, but sometimes it *is* our fear that pushes us closer to Him, causing us to cry out, to lift hands in praise. Even while they were afraid, the Israelites keep offering. They keep building. They lay the foundation of the temple, and they praise the Lord.

> *What are you afraid of right now? Can you praise Him in spite of it? Can you praise Him because of it, believing that this circumstance may draw you closer to Him and transform you into His image?*

Thursday

Read Acts 3.

What a picture of the Gospel! We, like the lame man, are completely unable to do anything by ourselves, but we are restored and healed by Beauty Himself. And we can give this Gospel hope to one another. Like Peter and John, we can offer the truth of Jesus, take each other by the hand, and encourage each other in the strength that we have first received from Christ.

Here at the Gate Called Beautiful, God restores. He makes all things beautiful in their time, and He makes our feet strong in His grace and mercy. I pray that as we live and walk in God's restoration, those looking on will be filled with wonder and amazement at God who restores all things!

Reflect on some times that God has restored something in your life: your weary heart, a difficult relationship, a renewed hope. Is your praise on display in a way that leaves people in awe? Are you quick to testify about how God has strengthened you and healed you and restored you?

Friday

Reflections on Genesis 3, Matthew 3, Ezra 3, and Acts 3

There it is. The crafty hiss of the serpent, the same today as it was then. "Did God really say . . . ?" (Genesis 3:1). We know that thought—or at least I do—so well. *God must not care since . . .* or *If God truly loved me, He would let me have . . .*

Eve believed the lie, the same one that too often trips me up: *God withholds good from me. God does not give me what I need.* I've thought it, even when I didn't dare say it. Have you? I've been convinced I must take matters into my own hands when God's plans aren't quite what I had hoped. I have been Eve, not trusting that He could truly love me if He won't give me exactly what I want. "God withholds good from you," the serpent whispers, and we reach out to take a big, juicy bite of the lie.

The people God fashioned for Himself out of the very dust of the earth rebel against Him and run to hide. And yet He comes looking. "Why are you hiding?" But He already knows. "You ate from the tree, didn't you?"

We do the same. We claim for ourselves things that we believe God has denied us, and then, realizing our wrong, we hide or cower in shame.

Can you hear Him, speaking it straight to your heart? "Don't hide, love. I already know." In His great loving-kindness, He al-

ready has a plan to save and redeem even those who rebel against Him. Here in the garden, He spares our lives for the first time. Those who He promised would surely die go on to live another day, and in His mercy, He clothes their nakedness and still provides the breath in their lungs and the sun on their faces and the warm ground beneath their feet that grows food for their sustenance. And with it He gives a promise, that this brokenness will not be forever. From the moment they rebel, He already has a plan to redeem His beloved children and restore them to relationship with Him. He is a good Father. He is *trustworthy.*

In Matthew, the clouds part and God says He is well pleased with His beloved Son, the Son He sent to fulfill His promise and undo all that mess of the garden, the mess of my own heart that time and time again believes the lie that God just might not see me, or just might not care.

I am just like Eve, her lustful heart distracted from the beauty of all God has given her by the one thing He hasn't given her yet. I am just like the man at the temple gate, in need of Jesus to strengthen my feet and put His praise in my mouth. And it isn't lost on me that the temple gate is called *beautiful.*

We serve a God who makes all things beautiful (see Ecclesiastes 3:11), who redeems our fickle, disobedient hearts and clothes us in His mercy. Who urges us to repent from our sin so that He can wash us clean. Who strengthens our hearts to endure, our physical bodies to persevere, and our lips to praise. Just as the Israelites restore the altar and the temple, He restores our souls, He rebuilds us, He makes us *beautiful,* and we can join Ezra and His people in their song: "He is good, and His love toward us endures forever!" (see Ezra 3:11).

It is sobering to read these words of Peter in Acts 3:15: "You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead." But we do not despair! "By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you

see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see" (verse 16).

Beloved, you and I are healed from our wicked, lustful nature in the name of Jesus. We are made strong. We are clothed in our nakedness, and by His grace we are given another day, breath in our lungs, sun on our faces, bread for sustenance. We are restored, rebuilt, renewed. Let us praise His name!

Have you tried to hide any sins from God by not openly repenting to Him? He sees, and He is merciful. I invite you today to intentionally lay those at His feet and believe that Jesus is enough for even the worst of our trespasses.

Where does your faith need strengthening? Ask Him, and believe that He will do it!

Can you think of a time in your life when God has taken something broken and awful and made it beautiful? Praise Him for being the God who restores all things!

About the Author

Katie Davis Majors is the bestselling author of *Kisses from Katie, Daring to Hope,* and *Safe All Along.* She is the founder of Amazima Ministries, an organization that desires to empower people in Uganda through authentic relationships, education, community strengthening, vocational training, and spiritual discipleship.

Now living in Tennessee with her husband, Benji, and parenting their large family together, Katie spends her average day folding laundry in her living room with little ones underfoot, chopping pounds of carrots to make soup for her hungry crew, and whispering prayers to Jesus, who is still her very best friend.

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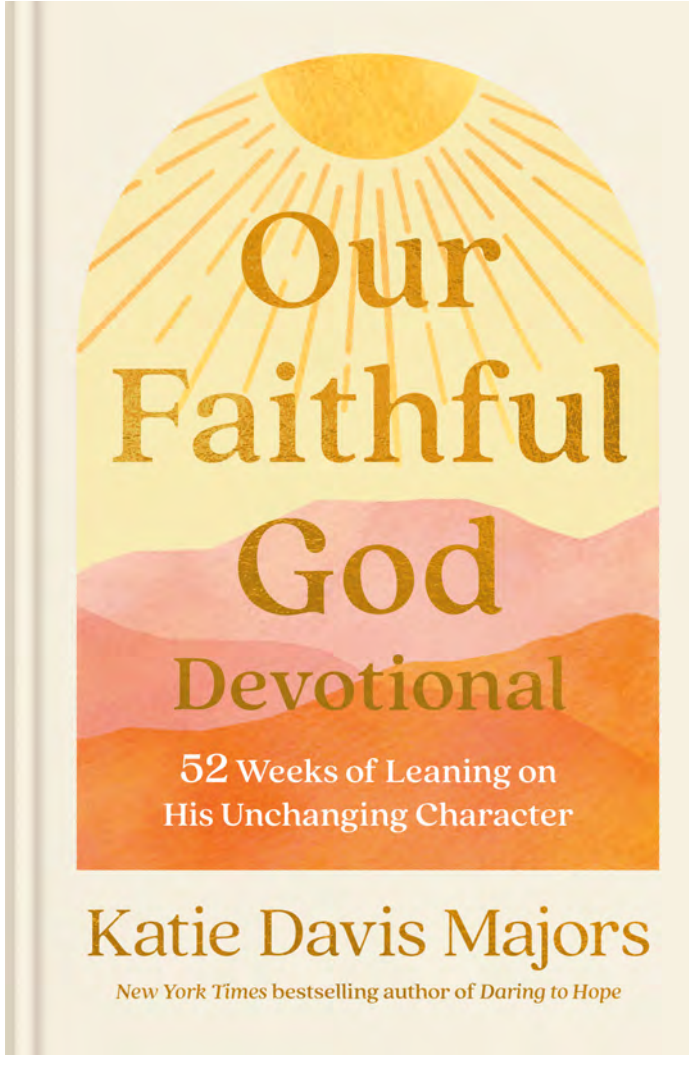

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