

You can  
trust God  
to write  
your

*Story*

*Embracing  
the Mysteries  
of Providence*

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# Notes

## **Introduction**

Epigraph: Quoted in Ryan and Tina Essmaker, “Scott and Vik Harrison,” interview published on The Great Discontent, February 12, 2013, <https://thegreatdiscontent.com/interview/scott-and-vik-harrison>.

1. In a lovely bookend, God’s Story closes in a garden city—the heavenly Eden. See Revelation 2:7 (the English word paradise comes from a Greek word meaning “park” or “garden”) and 22:1–2.

## **Chapter 1: Of Birds, Flowers, and You: Living under Providence**

Epigraph: Donna Kelderman, *Seasons of the Heart: A Year of Devotions from One Generation of Women to Another* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013), August 17.

1. Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Webster’s Dictionary 1828—Online Edition, s.v. “providence,” <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/providence>.
2. Charlie Dates (@CharlieDates), “I’m amazed at how, on a bumpy flight, the pilot’s voice is calm and assured when addressing the passengers. . . .” Twitter. January 9, 2019, <http://www.twipu.com/CharlieDates/tweet/1083043266407292934>.
3. “Those who wait for me shall not be put to shame” (Isa. 49:23) can also be translated “anyone who trusts in me will not be disappointed” (ESV). See Blue Letter Bible Lexicon, s.v. buwsh (Strong’s H954), Blue Letter Bible website, version 3, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H854&t=ESV>.

### **Chapter 2: Chosen: Esther's Story**

Epigraph: Tony Evans, *Pathways: From Providence to Purpose* (Nashville: B&H, 2019), 166.

1. "Who Was Haman the Agagite," Got Questions, accessed January 19, 2019, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Haman-the-Agagite.html>. But see also "Was Haman an Agagite," Bible Hermeneutics Stack Exchange, accessed January 19, 2019, <https://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/8193/was-haman-an-agagite>.
2. To this day, the festive holiday of Purim, named for the "Pur" that Haman cast to determine the date of his planned genocide, is recognized among Jews as the day Haman was hanged and the Jewish nation was spared.
3. Maltbie D. Babcock, "This Is My Father's World" (1901), Hymntime, accessed January 20, 2019, <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/t/i/s/tismyfw.htm>.

### **Chapter 3: Graced: Our Story**

Epigraph: F. B. Meyer, *Paul: A Servant of Jesus Christ* (1897; repr., CreateSpace, 2017), 23.

1. Katherine Hankey, "I Love to Tell the Story" (1866), Hymnary.org, accessed January 19, 2019, [https://hymnary.org/text/i\\_love\\_to\\_tell\\_the\\_story\\_of\\_unseen\\_thing](https://hymnary.org/text/i_love_to_tell_the_story_of_unseen_thing).
2. These lines are from a longer poem by the English missionary C. T. Studd (1860–1931). The entirety of this public domain poem can be found at Joshua Van Der Merwe, "Only One Life: A Poem by C. T. Studd," *With One Aim* (blog), accessed January 19, 2019, <https://joshuavandermerwe.wordpress.com/2014/01/23/only-one-life-a-poem-by-c-t-studd/>.
3. "Unexpected Grace: Nancy and Robert's Story," Revive Our Hearts, 2015, video, 16:01, <https://www.reviveourhearts.com/about/nancy-demoss-wolgemuth/nancy-and-robert/>.

#### **Chapter 4: You Can Trust God When Your Marriage Is in Trouble**

Epigraph: Larry Crabb, *The Pressure's Off: There's a New Way to Live*, 1st ed. (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2002), 76.

1. Jerry Bridges, *31 Days Toward Trusting God* (Carol Stream, IL: NavPress/Tyndale House, 2013), 50 (Day 11).
2. You can see a profile video of Lorna's testimony on the Revive Our Hearts website. See "Lorna's Story of Forgiveness (Profile Video)," Revive Our Hearts, posted October 11, 2008, <https://www.reviveourhearts.com/events/true-woman-08/lornas-story-forgiveness-profile-video/>.

#### **Chapter 5: You Can Trust God When You Long for a Mate**

Epigraph: Elisabeth Elliot, *The Path of Loneliness: Finding Your Way through the Wilderness to God* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 2007), 32.

1. Elisabeth Elliot, *Suffering Is Never for Nothing* (Nashville: B&H, 2019), 9.
2. Biographical details compiled from "About Elisabeth," Elisabeth Elliot, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://www.elisabethelliot.org/about.html>; Sam Roberts, "Elisabeth Elliot, Tenacious Missionary in Face of Tragedy, Dies at 88," *New York Times*, June 18, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/18/us/elisabeth-elliott-tenacious-missionary-to-ecuador-dies-at-88.html>; and other sources.
3. You'll note that those we've selected are women. That is not to say that men don't wrestle at times with an unfulfilled longing for marriage. But in our experience, this is a more common struggle for women, especially those who believe guys have a God-given responsibility to initiate a relationship and who may feel there is little they can do to change their marital status.
4. Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *Choosing Gratitude: Your Journey to Joy* (Chicago: Moody, 2011), 23, emphasis added.
5. Bethany Beal, "Single and Surviving Wedding Season," blog post on Lies Young Women Believe, July 18, 2018, [http://www.liesyoungwomenbelieve.com/single-surviving-wedding-season/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1532100383.1958589553833007812500](http://www.liesyoungwomenbelieve.com/single-surviving-wedding-season/?doing_wp_cron=1532100383.1958589553833007812500).

**Chapter 6: You Can Trust God When You're Pressed Financially**

Epigraph: H.B. Charles Jr., *It Happens after Prayer: Biblical Motivation for Believing Prayer* (Chicago: Moody, 2013), 40.

1. Arthur S. DeMoss, *God's Secret of Success* (West Palm Beach, FL: Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation, 2002, orig. pub. 1980), 4.

**Chapter 7: Redeemed: Naomi and Ruth's Story**

Epigraph: Jon Bloom, "When It Seems Like God Did You Wrong," *Desiring God*, April 25, 2014, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-it-seems-like-god-did-you-wrong>.

**Chapter 8: You Can Trust God When You Lose Your Health**

Epigraph: Amy Carmichael, "Tender Toward Others," in *KJV Devotional Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Bibles, 2011), 1486 (Hebrews 12:15).

1. Blue Letter Bible Lexicon, s.v. skolops (Strong's G4647), Blue Letter Bible website, version 3, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4647&t=ESV>.
2. The quotations in this section are taken from Colleen's emails and are used by permission.
3. Joshua Rogers, "My Baby Nephew Was Dying and His Mother's Response Was Unforgettable," Fox News, July 14, 2018, <http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2018/07/14/my-baby-nephew-was-dying-and-his-mothers-response-was-unforgettable.html>.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

**Chapter 9: You Can Trust God When You've Been Sinned Against**

Epigraph: Eric Liddell, *The Disciplines of the Christian Life* (London: SPCK Publishing, 2009), 121–22.

1. All names in this chapter have been changed, along with identifying details.
2. James 4:6.

### **Chapter 10: Sent: Joseph's Story**

Epigraph: John Flavel, *The Mystery of Providence* (Apollo, PA: Ichthus Publications, 2014), 45. Originally published in 1824 under the title *Divine Conduct; or The Mystery of Providence*.

1. This is indicated by Genesis 40:3–4, which uses the same “captain of the guard” title to refer to the man in charge of Joseph’s prison. See Herbert Carl Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis: Volume 1*, commentary on Genesis 40:1–23, Bible Hub, accessed January 23, 2019, [https://biblehub.com/library/leupold/exposition\\_of\\_genesis\\_volume\\_1/chapter\\_xl.htm](https://biblehub.com/library/leupold/exposition_of_genesis_volume_1/chapter_xl.htm).

### **Chapter 11: You Can Trust God When Your Child Breaks Your Heart**

Epigraph: Robert J. Morgan, *Prayers and Promises for Worried Parents: Hope for Your Prodigal. Help for You* (Nashville: Howard, 20003), 1–2.

### **Chapter 12: You Can Trust God When You Lose a Loved One**

1. Thomas O. Chisolm, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (1923), Hymnary.org, accessed January 23, 2019, [https://hymnary.org/text/great\\_is\\_thy\\_faithfulness\\_o\\_god\\_my\\_father](https://hymnary.org/text/great_is_thy_faithfulness_o_god_my_father).
2. George Müller, *Autobiography of George Müller, or A Million and a Half in Answer to Prayer*, comp. G. Fred. Bergin (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1929), 431.
3. George Müller, *A Narrative of Some of the Lord's Dealing with George Müller, Written by Himself, Jehovah Magnified: Addresses by George Müller*, Complete and Unabridged, Volume 2 (Muskegon, MI: Dust and Ashes, 2003), 392–93.

### **Chapter 13: You Can Trust God When You're Facing Death**

Epigraph: Timothy Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* (New York: Penguin, 2013), 44.

1. John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress: Complete and Unabridged*, Hendrickson Christian Classics (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 129.
2. *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003) Quotes, IMDb (International Movie Database website), accessed January 25, 2019, [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0167260/quotes/?tab=qt&ref\\_=tt\\_trv\\_qu](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0167260/quotes/?tab=qt&ref_=tt_trv_qu).

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3. Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, 133.
4. Interview recorded at staff chapel service for Life Action Ministries/ Revive Our Hearts on February 14, 2018.

### **Chapter 14: Surprised: Mary and Joseph's Story**

Epigraph: Francis Chan with Danae Yankoski, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013), 122.

1. Other Bible translations call Joseph “a good man” (CEV), “a righteous man” (NASB), a man “faithful to the law” (NIV).

### **Chapter 15: Consummated: His Story**

Epigraph: Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “A Feast for Faith,” Sermon No. 711, delivered September 16, 1866 at Metropolitan Tabernacle, The Spurgeon Center for Biblical Preaching at Midwestern Seminary, accessed February 18, 2109, <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/a-feast-for-faith#flipbook/>.

1. Text by Placide Cappeau (1847), tr. John S. Dwight, *Baptist Hymnal* (Nashville: LifeWay Reference, 2008), 194, reproduced in Hymnary.org, accessed January 25, 2019, [https://hymnary.org/text/o\\_holy\\_night\\_the\\_stars\\_are\\_brightly\\_shin#authority\\_media\\_flexscores](https://hymnary.org/text/o_holy_night_the_stars_are_brightly_shin#authority_media_flexscores).
2. Glen C. Strathy, “Effective Story Endings,” *How to Write a Book Now*, accessed January 25, 2019, <https://www.how-to-write-a-book-now.com/story-endings.html>.

### **Chapter 16: You Can Trust God . . . You Really Can: Your Story**

Epigraph: Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 203.

1. Taylor Beede, “Trusting God to Write Your Story,” *Girlfriends in God*, November 27, 2017, <http://girlfriendsingod.com/trusting-god-write-story/>.
2. Steven James, “The 5 Essential Story Ingredients,” guest column, *Writer's Digest*, May 9, 2014, <http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/the-5-essential-story-ingredients>.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

## Notes

5. Joni Eareckson Tada, "God Permits What He Hates," transcript of radio program #9169, Joni & Friends, June 22, 2017, <http://t.joniandfriends.org/radio/4-minute/god-permits-what/>.
6. Joni Eareckson Tada, "Reflections on the 50th Anniversary of My Diving Accident," The Gospel Coalition, July 30, 2017, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/reflections-on-50th-anniversary-of-my-diving-accident/>.
7. Joni Eareckson Tada, "God Permits What He Hates," transcript of radio program #9169, Joni & Friends, January 31, 2014, <https://old.joniandfriends.org/radio/4-minute/god-permits-what-he-hates2/>.
8. Vance Christie, "'In Time of Trouble Say' (Andrew Murray)," VanceChristie.com, August 29, 2015, <http://vancechristie.com/2015/08/29/in-time-of-trouble-say-andrew-murray/>.
9. Ibid.
10. Warren W. Wiersbe, *Prayer, Praise and Promises: A Daily Walk through the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 96.
11. Scotty Smith, *Every Season Prayers: Gospel-Centered Prayers for the Whole of Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), 50. Note: the phrase *carpe diem* is Latin for "seize the day."