

VIRTUOUS. FOR WOMEN, BY WOMEN.

Testimonies, interviews, devotionals, and more
to help you grow in your walk with Christ.

Proverbs 31:

1 The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. 2 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows? 3 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: 5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. 6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. 7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more. 8 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. 9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. 10 Who can find a **virtuous** woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. 13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. 14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. 15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. 16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. 17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. 18 She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. 19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. 20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. 21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. 23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. 24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. 25 Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. 26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. 27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. 29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. 30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

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Hi Ladies!

Welcome to the very first edition of Virtuous Magazine! My name is Emily, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Virtuous Magazine, and I am so excited you're here! I created this magazine at a time in my life when I felt like no one could understand how I was feeling. The story starts like this:

I woke up on the morning of my 22nd birthday and was ready to take on the day. I started the morning just like every other day, opening my Bible spending time in the word. That morning in particular, I started what is now a new birthday tradition. I sat and studied the 31st chapter of Proverbs, famous for its wise words on womanhood: the virtuous woman. I decided that on that day I would ask the Lord to begin to develop these characteristics in me, whether they are already there and need evolving or need to be introduced.

As time has passed, I see women all around me struggling to figure out life. Whether it be the little things, like what to make for dinner or when to do the laundry, or bigger life movements like getting married and moving to a new home. Each decision women make impacts the people around them, and they are looking for support. As daughters of the one True King, we can only find true support and guidance from the Lord. This magazine is not meant to replace that in any way. By reading this

magazine, you will simply see that you are not alone in your struggle to find your place in God's creation. You will see other women going through exactly the same thing, and you will be encouraged to reach out to the Lord in a way you never have before.

Starting strong with the very first article, you read about an incredibly strong woman of faith, Lysa TerKeurst. In this story, Lysa shows vulnerability in sharing how her marriage of 29 years is ending in divorce. She shares tragic elements that lead to the heartbreaking decisions, and yet, you will get a taste of optimism in her voice as she continues to 'keep pursuing joy' in the trials and heartbreak.

One of my favorite pieces in this edition comes from the Kitchen! Sometimes, the world will try to convince women that their place is no longer there, that that is an outdated, sexist point of view. It is easy to allow that negative thinking to affect our time in the kitchen, providing for our family. This next article by Nancy Campbell will help change your perspective while cooking!

Once again, thank you for picking up this magazine. I am excited for you to read the aforementioned articles, alongside the rest! I pray it will help change your outlook and perspective on life as a woman, and help you to rely on the Lord more and more each day.

Au revoir mes amours,

emily hollar



Keep Pursuing Joy

LYSA TERKEURST ON HEALING ONE YEAR AFTER
DIVORCE ANNOUNCEMENT

LEAH MARIEANN KLETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR AT CHRISTIAN POST

Proverbs 31 Ministries head Lysa TerKeurst reflected on her decision to "keep pursuing joy" one year after her marriage of 29 years ended due to her husband's infidelity and substance abuse issues.

On Christmas Day, the 53-year-old speaker and author shared a series of photos with her family, including her grandchildren.

"We made the decision to keep pursuing joy through it all," she captioned the photo. "We laugh together. We cry together. But the best part always is, we keep coming back together. Life doesn't have to be perfect to still be pretty miraculous. The hope of the world has truly come. We love you Jesus."

Last December, TerKeurst filed for divorce from her husband, Art, after he engaged in "chosen patterns of behavior that dishonor God and the biblical covenant of marriage." She publicly announced the decision in January.

At the time, TerKeurst said that though she and her husband renewed their marriage vows three years ago after a "painful separation," he had since "broken those vows."

"It has crushed my heart to know he has broken those vows," she wrote.

TerKeurst said she believed the "wisest (and hardest) choice I can make is to stop fighting to save my marriage of 29 years and, instead, accept reality."

She added that though there is "clear biblical justification for my decision to end this marriage," she would keep most of the details private out of respect for the couple's children and grandchildren and "to give space and privacy for my family and me to continue to heal."

"It's hard to face a future that looks nothing like what I desperately and constantly prayed it would look like," she wrote.

After remaining quiet on social media for a time, TerKeurst has, in recent months, posted several updates about her emotional health and personal well-being.

Earlier in December, she reflected on what healing "looks like," describing the process as "admitting I'm not fine," "wanting to give up;" but ultimately, "refusing to give over to defeat" and "kneeling to God humbly."

"Two years of healing. Two years of focusing on my own health," she wrote in another update. "Two years of learning how to sit in the quiet with myself and be okay. Two years of believing God for goodness even when things felt not good at all. Two years of learning to go home to an empty house and counting the blessings that are still abundant."

She continued: "Two years ... and I'm good. Better than good. I'm honestly surprised by how far I've come and how honest my laughter is now. My life looks different but it is full and joyful and I'm more grateful than I've ever been."

TerKeurst, who has five children, first revealed she would be pursuing a divorce from her husband in 2017 due to his infidelity and struggles with addiction. At the time, she wrote he had "been repeatedly unfaithful to me with a woman he met online" and was abusing substances. However, the couple renewed their vows just over a year later after working to restore their marriage.

In her 2022 divorce announcement, TerKeurst said her husband had "broken" those renewed vows. It was later revealed that Art TerKeurst spent over \$100,000 of the couple's money on an "illicit sexual" extramarital affair with a woman he met online.

TerKeurst, the author of numerous New York Times bestselling books, including *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way* and *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, is one of the most influential leaders in women's ministry.

She recently released her latest book, *Good Boundaries and Goodbyes*, which features lessons she learned about when to biblically end a relationship.

"A lot has been said on boundaries, but in the context of forgiveness, what we have to understand is that when Jesus said to 'Forgive 70 times seven,' He didn't mean to stand close enough to that person who's hurt us or abused us. ... He doesn't say, 'Stay in close community with that person and allow them to abuse you over and over,'" TerKeurst told *The Christian Post* in a 2021 interview.

"I believe Jesus is saying, 'Establish enough emotional distance to where it's safe enough, that, if this person never changes, and they keep doing what they're doing, you have enough boundaries in place, enough safety and emotional distance in place, that you can forgive that person 70 times seven without being destroyed in the process.'"

**Know the Truth.
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We offer a wide variety of online resources to meet the needs of women — women who sometimes feel alone. Women who are trying to figure out how to align their lives with the truth of God's Word.

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PROVERBS 31 MINISTRIES

Sadie Robertson Reveals the Surprising (and Sweet) Thing She Learned in Her First Year of Marriage

NATALIE STONE
PEOPLE MAGAZINE

It's been one year since Sadie Robertson tied the knot with Christian Huff, and she couldn't be more "thankful" to be doing life with her best friend.

"I am so thankful. I am so thankful we got married when we did. Little did we know what was to come. But very grateful for Nov. 25 last year," Robertson tells PEOPLE.

On Nov. 25, 2019, the couple tied the knot in front of more than 600 guests on her family's Louisiana farm. Following the nuptials, when Robertson, 23, and Huff, 22, exchanged both personal and traditional vows, the bride and groom joined her parents, Willie and Korie Robertson, family and friends at an outdoor reception.

Since saying "I do," it's been a whirlwind 12 months for the Duck Dynasty star and Huff, including him graduating from college, them learning that they have a baby on the way, and her battling COVID-19 while pregnant. In early November, Robertson revealed that she is expecting a baby girl — exciting news that came one month after she announced her pregnancy.

"It's been wild! Yes, it's been crazy. Me and Christian got married last year, first of all, that was before COVID happened. So COVID happened, which changed the whole world. We were in Auburn while Christian was finishing school and then we moved because school got canceled. Moved back to Louisiana and then a few months later found out we were pregnant, so it's been a whirlwind,"

says Robertson.

While reflecting on their past year of marriage, Robertson shared the sweet thing that "really surprised" her about Huff: how good of a friend he is.

"Christian and I were talking about so many questions when we had our anniversary, like, 'What surprised us about each other? What did we not expect?' and all these things. And honestly, I think with Christian, what really has surprised me, what I didn't even notice was just how great of a friend he would be," she says.

"I know he was my best friend and you say that, you're like, 'Oh, they're my best friend.' But truly like stepping into that role and just always being a friend, always being there, always being by my side, always making me laugh, always being that strength. And I'm really grateful to look back at a year and say, 'You're such a good friend,' " she shares.

Robertson continues: "I think, you know, whenever you go to marry someone or you hope to marry someone, like, you think of all these things that you wish for and you think of all these things that you want, but you can't even fully guess what God can really give you and what God can really provide through a person who's pursuing him to pursue you. And that's really special."

During her battle with COVID-19, which Robertson previously described as "a dark sickness," the Dancing with the Stars alumna got to witness Huff's care and selflessness in action.

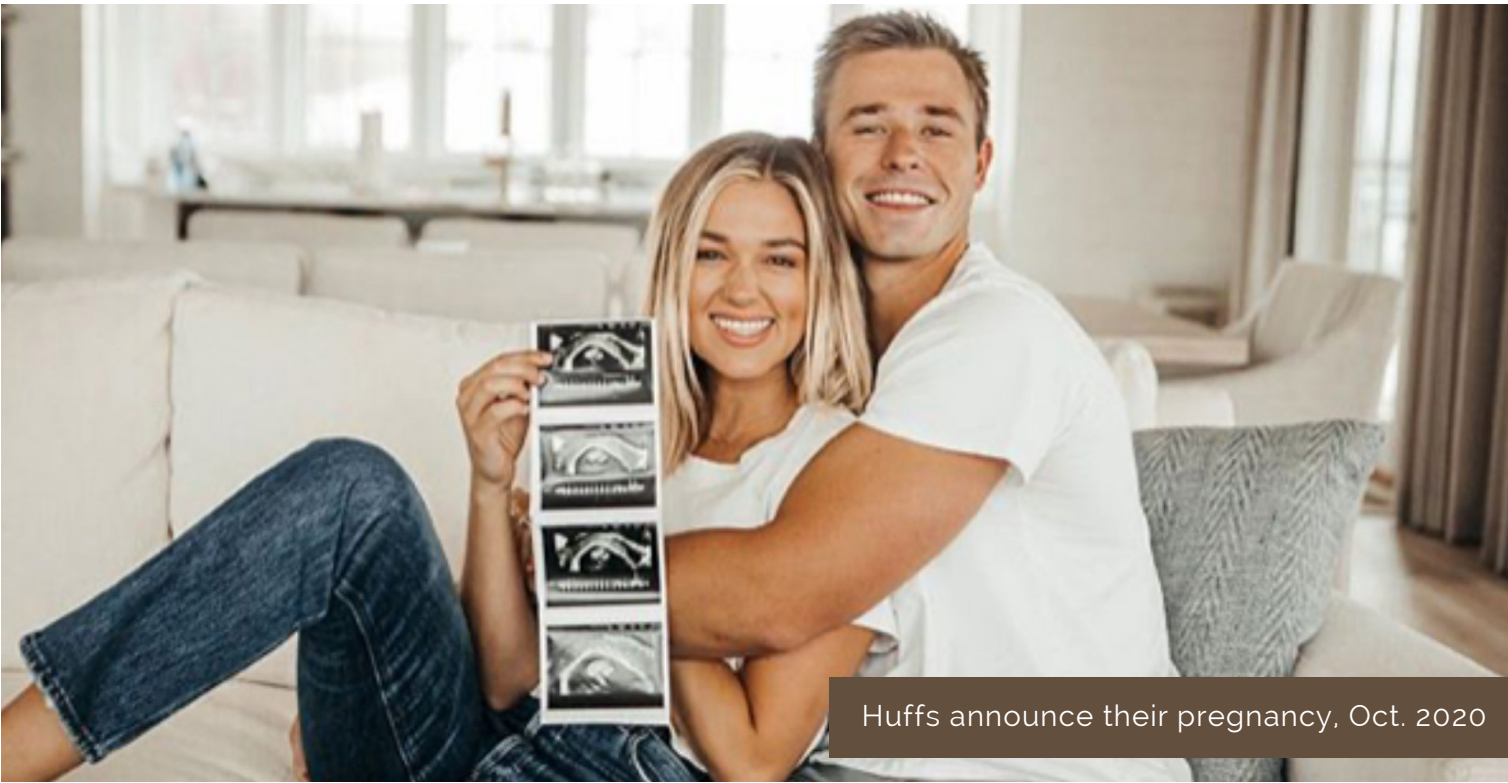
"I've been pleasantly surprised, not surprised because he



Sadie Robertson Huff & husband, Christian Huff



Robertson-Huff Wedding, Nov. 2019



Huffs announce their pregnancy, Oct. 2020

always was, but in a good way of just how our friendship could be," says Robertson. "Like on the days that you have COVID or the days that I literally threw up every morning for eight weeks straight and he was there holding my hair. It's those things that surprised me in the best way."

For single women who are hopeful of finding love, Robertson advises: "Actually date somebody who is a good friend."

"I always encourage girls, when girls say, 'Oh, but they're my best friend. I can't break up with them.' But they don't treat them like a friend at all and they're harsh and they're manipulative and they're hurtful. I'm like, 'That's not your best friend. If you had a girl best friend who treated you like that, you would never talk to her again. Like, actually date somebody who is a good friend,'" she says.

For Robertson and Huff's one-year anniversary, the couple enjoyed a romantic evening at a hotel by the sea.

"It was so pretty, right on the beach. So we had a really great anniversary. It was so fun. Just like sitting by the beach talking about life and how much has happened this year," she recalls. "It's just really cool to reflect on the past before we keep moving forward. It was such a special night."

With Christmas just a few weeks away, the parents-to-be are looking forward to celebrating the holidays with family.

"Normally my family, we go pretty all out. We have some crazy traditions, but this is my first year that I'll actually be spending it with Christian's family, which I'm really excited about. Part of marriage, we gotta change up the holidays, we gotta share. So I'm really pumped. It's gonna be fun!" she says.

Adds Robertson: "It's funny, my family, of course, there's six kids and three of us are married and two have babies, so there are so many people — it's just a tornado. And then Christian's family, he just has one brother and they are the sweetest, just calm, so it's gonna be a little bit different, the scene this year, than my traditional years past. But I'm very excited. And then we're gonna still get to spend some of the holidays with my family too and just some of the fun things that we do together. But this year will be with the Huffs and I'm very excited."

The Live author has also partnered with World Vision this holiday season, an organization she's passionate about and has been a long-time supporter of.

In partnership with World Vision, the mom-to-be designed a handcrafted gift, a "Circle of Hope" wraparound ring, for the humanitarian agency's gift catalog. The adjustable, gold-toned brass ring is made by women artisans in India who receive fair wages, business development training, a safe work environment and opportunities to build long-term business relationships in their communities.

With a \$50 donation to the World Vision Fund — which helps people rebuild in the wake of disasters and empowers entire communities to lift themselves out of poverty — the ring is free.

"I love World Vision," says Robertson, who sponsors two children — "one is in Bangladesh and one is in Zambia" — through the organization. "They just stand for so many amazing things and my family always tries to get behind people who are doing good things."

What Is God’s Calling for Women?

LINDA GILDEN
CROSSWAY.COM

When we speak of God's calling, we are not necessarily talking about gender, even though the title might suggest otherwise. You are called to do obvious things in this world as a woman or a man. Those things are not necessarily your life's calling, although they could be. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and holds fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24 (ESV)

When many think about the word calling, they think about vocation. What kind of job are you going to do? In these

1. CHILD BIRTH

One of those things God endows women to do is to give birth. Only the woman has the proper anatomy to carry and deliver a child. Women are called to nurture their families. They are to encourage their husbands in their endeavors. Whether or not children are involved, the husband and wife have created a foundational family. That is the basis for their family relationships when and if they ever add children.

Their nurturing of their husbands involves encouraging them and supporting them in their jobs and in everything they want to do as they support their families. Women will spend a lot of time nurturing their children. Because most women desire their children to grow into godly individuals,

2. NURTURE

Not only do women have the opportunity to nurture their families, but nurturing and encouraging their friends is also important. Not too long ago, I had major abdominal surgery. One of my best friends, whom I had been friends with for over 50 years, called almost every night to see how I was doing and prayed with me. I went to sleep confident each night that God held me in the palm of His hand and was watching over me. Before that, I went to lunch with one of my friends who had just found out that her adult son had just been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Because I had a family member who also had bipolar, I was able to encourage her, and we began to talk on the telephone regularly.

This can be taught to your sons and daughters by observation. One year I took my teenage granddaughter to a conference with me. At lunchtime, she asked, "Rose, may I go sit with that couple over there? They are all by themselves, and I think they could use some company." This came from many years of watching her mom seek out others who looked like they needed some encouragement.

days of high prices and inflation, it may take both parents with a job to meet all their expenses. But a calling is more than that. God has put you here on earth for a specific reason, and your calling is to fulfill that purpose. It may be a vocation, it may be to be a special friend, or it may be to have a specific job in the workplace. Whatever it is, if you believe God has a particular position for you, you must surrender to His direction and do your best to do it well. While you are waiting, the best thing you can do is pray, asking God's direction and affirmation of whatever you believe He is asking you to do. You will know what it is the moment He reveals it to you.

women want to spend time showing their children unconditional love and how to be thoughtful, loving, and kind. Just because we are talking about women here does not mean husbands are exempt from spending time with their children. Just the opposite, parenting is a family affair. Mom and Dad work together on this. One may be available at times the other is not. Dad can take the girls on Daddy/Daughter dates. Play football with the boys, take them fishing or to a basketball game. The family is a team that works together to love each other, support each other, and help each other grow into adults who have lasting relationships with God and each other. Mom and Dad may also be surprised by what they learn from their children!

Autumn began to talk to them and said, "Looks like you can use a table, mate. May I sit here?"

"Of course."

"We were just talking about our adoption. We want to adopt a teenage girl. How old are you?"

"Fourteen," Autumn said.

"Oh, my goodness. We were just talking about what we would do when our child became a teenager. I believe God sent you to our table."

"That's not all," Autumn said, "I am adopted too!" A tear slid down the cheek of the lady Autumn was talking to.

For a long time, Autumn and the couple discussed adoption, the good, the hard things, and the blessings. Autumn, too, felt as though God had given her a special assignment. They were particularly interested in Autumn's age, which was the age they were particularly worried about handling. Autumn did her best to reassure them that it was manageable and that as long as they kept their lines of communication open and prayed a lot, they would be fine.





3. MENTORING

Another form of nurturing is mentoring. Often we think of nurturing our families and mentoring friends. But that is not always the case. Sometimes your mentor could be your mother, an aunt, or a close older friend. Because many women are born with nurturing instincts, most do some mentoring even with their families, and rightly so. Even when you are not actively speaking instruction to your children, they are watching you. And when they see how you handle a situation, they make a note of the right way to handle that kind of situation.

There are many biblical examples of mentoring. Elizabeth, the cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus, welcomed Mary into her home. They were both pregnant, and though Elizabeth was older than Mary, there were many things Mary could learn from Elizabeth.

Eunice and her daughter, Lois, were both involved in raising their grandson and son, Timothy. Although Paul was considered Timothy's "father in the faith," he was always quick to give Eunice and Lois credit for Timothy's foundation in the faith. Not only for their families, but both ladies played a significant role in their church, mentoring

their church and all those who attended.

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Eunice and in your mother Lois and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also." 2 Timothy 1:5 (NIV)

Often nurturing sneaks in when you least expect it. "Spontaneous Nurturing," I like to call it. God has set Grace up to have coffee or lunch with a friend who really needs counsel. Grace was not expecting that at all. She was expecting an enjoyable "catch-up time" with Ruth and her family. As it turns out, Ruth needs to have a few questions answered and has a few questions about mothering her only daughter.

As the two ladies chatted, Ruth shared how miserable she was because she and her daughter couldn't seem to agree on one aspect of her teenage life. Immediately Grace thought back to the time when her oldest daughter was that age, and they had a similar time of disagreement. She was able to share that with Ruth and encourage her about what might help and things that were just single battles and not wars.

4. A VOICE IN THE CHURCH

If the church is going to be for all ages and genders, every one of those must be represented in leadership, in involvement, on committees, and in any way they could help. Men and women have different perspectives and ideas about how things should be run. It is good to have input from everyone, so it is important to have that balance. It is so exciting to see how a group of people all work together to be the best church ever and develop a ministry that will change the world.

These are just a few of the ways God can use women.

But despite all the choices women have, no matter what gender we are or how old, God called us to be one happy family, serving him according to our gifts and talents. When you become a believer, you become part of "the team," God's team. Our job is not to make sure our views are known or acted upon, whether we are included or not, or what position we can hold. Our job is to use everything we have in terms of time and talents to further the Kingdom of God, introduce Him to others, and prayerfully wait on Him to reveal our assignments to us.





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NANCY CAMPBELL
ABOVE RUBIES

Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.
1 Timothy 5:9-10

Do you feel like doing something good today? How about making your husband his favorite meal? Or making some healthy cookies or an extra special meal for your children?

"Goodness, you don't want me to get into the kitchen again, do you?" I hear you say. Yes! And you will be doing the "good works" God planned for you.

There are two particular passages in the New Testament that give a description of God's plan for women. As I read them again recently I noticed that they bring us back to the kitchen! God wants us to be heavenly practical. That means doing the "good works" He planned in Heaven for us to do on earth!

The first passage is in 1 Timothy 5:9-10 where it gives a beautiful description of a godly woman. We'll go through a couple of these descriptions:

Nourish children. The word in the Greek is *teknotropheo* and means "to cherish, nourish and give food to children; it is also used of a mother nursing a baby at her breast." This is all about food! It starts with nursing our babies and then feeding them every day of their lives until they leave home! [This is] all part of our nurturing, mothering anointing. And it is all in God's plan.

Show hospitality to strangers. The more people you invite to your table and to stay in your home, the more you'll be in the kitchen! Don't despair! God looks upon it with favor. He says it is a good work!

BAKED ZITI

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lbs Spicy or sweet italian sausage, ground
- 4 cloves Garlic
- 1 (28-oz) can Tomatoes
- 1 lb Ziti noodles
- 1/4 tsp Red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 1/2 tsp Sugar
- 1 cup Heavy cream
- 8 oz Whole milk mozzarella cheese

The other passage is Titus 2:3-5 where it tells the older women to teach the younger women "good things." Of the good things that are mentioned, most of them refer to food. Let's have a look:

Love your husband. You can't love your husband without feeding him. The old saying is true that "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach." One of the good things you can do for your husband is to make sure that you have a [delicious and nutritious] meal ready for him when he gets home. You abundantly bless him when he arrives home to a beautifully set table, a lovely meal, and the family waiting for him to take his place at the head of the table.

Love your children. You certainly show your love to your children by preparing wholesome meals for them with excitement and joy. They know you love them when you delight to cook for them and make special things for them. And as you cook, you will let them help you, showing the way for the next generation.

Good. Remember, cooking and preparing meals is a "good thing." God is watching!

Submit to your husband. Having a meal ready for our husband shows our deference and submission to him. What does the virtuous woman do her husband? "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life" (Proverbs 31:12).

Have fun cooking! Now you can do it with revelation, not resignation!

This baked ziti is a MAJOR family-pleaser. Loaded with Italian sausage, which packs a ton of flavor, it's similar to meat lasagna but without the fuss; it's easy enough for a weeknight but also special enough for company; and it makes a great prep-ahead potluck dish. To save time, go ahead and use pre-shredded mozzarella cheese from a bag; just be sure it's made from whole milk (low-fat won't taste nearly as good). While the baked ziti is in the oven, throw together a big Italian salad and warm some bread, and dinner is served!

Scan the QR Code below for the rest of the recipe:



Q & A with Stasi Eldredge

In a recent q&a interview with Christianbook.com, author Stasi Eldredge discusses "Captivating" (Nelson Books), her groundbreaking book that shows readers the glorious design of women before the fall, describes how the feminine heart can be restored, and casts a vision for the power, freedom, and beauty of a woman released to be all she was meant to be.

Christianbook.com (CB): Stasi, in "Captivating" you risk your very self by opening your heart to your readers. What inspired you to write this book?

Stasi Eldredge: I was inspired to write "Captivating" with John because of a love for God's women. I've seen what a glorious impact "Wild at Heart" has had on men (and their marriages) and I so wanted women to experience that healing, and deeper intimacy with Christ which I've experienced. I believe that women are desperately needed to rise up and follow Jesus into their calling in ways that many have been unable to because of their broken hearts, and because of the crushing version of "godly woman" laid on them by the church. We need women who have come alive as

CB: In "Wild at Heart" we learned that "in the heart of every man is a desperate desire for a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue." What are the deepest desires and longings that are rooted in the heart of a woman?

Stasi: If you'll watch the games that little girls play, if you'll also look at the movies women love and listen to their deepest longings, we believe you'll find that every woman longs to be Romanced, to play an Irreplaceable Role in a heroic adventure, and to Unveil Beauty.

CB: What does the heart of woman teach us about the nature of God?

Stasi: Oh my ... where do we begin?! How important to remember that Eve, also, bears the image of God. She speaks things about God that only a woman can speak. Through women we see that relationship matters so much to Him. That he is Beauty, through and through. Tenderness, and mercy. Fierce devotion.

CB: In "Wild at Heart" we learned that, in their most honest moments, men question "if they have what it takes." Is there a corresponding question that resides near the heart of a woman's soul? If so, how does their Creator provide an answer to that question?

Stasi: Deep in the heart of every little girl, and every woman is the Question, "Am I lovely? Do you enjoy me? Am I worth pursuing, worth fighting for? Am I captivating?" The way this question was answered for each of us as little girls and as women has shaped us into the women we are today. The healing of our feminine heart begins as we take our Question to God, to let him answer the deepest questions of a woman's

CB: You mention that fathers play an essential role in helping women answer their question and discover their identity. How can fathers help convince their daughters they are Captivating?

Stasi: Fathers can help their daughters believe they are captivating by telling them often, with and without words, that they are lovely – that they are worth fighting for! A father who pays attention to his daughter, knows her, enjoys her and spends time with her is giving both her and the world a great gift.

CB: How can the church come alongside of women and help reawaken their hearts?

Stasi: First, we need to recover a biblical view of femininity. Most women in the church get the message that God put you here to be a "good servant," to be a disciplined and busy woman, to be efficient. That is soul killing. The church can help reawaken women's hearts by first acknowledging their God-given desires for Romance, to play and Irreplaceable Role in a great adventure, and to unveil beauty are from him! They are the secret to a woman's life. The church can validate a woman's desires, invite her up to discover her unique feminine calling and encourage her to play her irreplaceable role. The church also has the powerful position of being able to

CB: Why has our Adversary, from the first day on, set his sights on Eve and her daughters?

Stasi: Satan hates Eve and her daughters for two primary reasons. First because Eve is beautiful and he is not. Satan fell because of his pride. He was once stunningly beautiful and now, he is not. He hates beauty in all of its forms but primarily in woman as an image bearer of God. She is an incarnation of the beauty of God, and he hates it with a jealousy we don't yet understand.

Secondly, Eve brings forth life, both physically and soulfully. Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of death. He was a murderer from the beginning. Eve is a huge threat to Satan. (It's worth noting that both Adam and Eve are targets of the enemy because of his deep hatred for God. He knows that in order to hurt God the most, he need only aim his malice at God's Beloved.)



John & Stasi Eldredge, Authors of Captivating. Photo by Joel Strayer



Stasi Eldredge

The truth is,
that as image
bearers of our
gorgeous God,
every woman
possesses
beauty. That
beauty first, is a
quality of soul.



CB: Why is a deep understanding of Jesus' mission and ministry essential to the restoration of a woman's heart?

Stasi: We believe we've missed the central mission of Jesus for too many years. Why did he come? What is "salvation" all about? He described his mission himself in Isaiah 61 (the passage he pointed to on the day he announced his mission in Luke 4). It speaks of a restoration and release of our hearts. What a difference it would make in a woman's life to know – really know – that her heart matters to God and that healing is possible! Jesus says her heart is the priority of the Kingdom of God.

CB: Let's pick up an insightful question you raise in "Captivating." "Why did God curse Eve with loneliness and heartache, an emptiness that nothing would be able to fill?"

Stasi: God cursed Eve with a loneliness and heartache, an emptiness that nothing would be able to fill in order to SAVE HER. Eve's deep longing for relationship and her profound relational ache is part of the grace given to her by God to drive her to Jesus. Women try and fill it with everything else – with food, or fantasies, with people (they can never be enough) or shopping. Only God will satisfy her deepest heart.

CB: It is wonderful that we serve a God who not only allows us to be wounded, but clearly provides a path to our restoration. What are the most essential steps that lead towards the healing of a woman's wound?

Stasi: Some of the most essential steps that lead towards the healing of a woman's soul are to first, admit the woundedness. For some women, her wounds may not be blatant or her wounds may be buried. A woman needs to ask God to reveal them to her and then ask Him to come and to heal her. It is not helpful for a woman to diminish her sorrows. Every woman has experienced sorrow that is valid and needs to be grieved. Allowing the weight of the wounds to be felt, is a first step to having those wounds healed.

CB: Why is the alluring beauty of woman most clearly revealed in the midst of pursuit?

Stasi: A woman is most beautiful when she knows that she is loved. When a woman is pursued by a good man, a question in her deep heart is answered in the affirmative. She is wanted. She is thought to be worth pursuing. Something in her soul quiets and is allowed to rest. A woman is most beautiful when she is at rest.

CB: Why is beauty "the most misunderstood of all the feminine qualities?"

Stasi: Beauty is the most misunderstood of all feminine qualities. Women are led to believe that beauty is a matter of external qualities alone and that the externals are of the utmost importance. We women also have a hard time believing that we possess any great beauty of our own. The truth is, that as image bearers of our gorgeous God, every woman possesses beauty. That beauty first, is a quality of soul. It is beauty that emerges and grows over time as a woman walks with God. And that inner beauty, makes itself known in the external as well. As Hopkins

CB: How does true feminine beauty arouse the men in women's lives?

Stasi: True feminine beauty arouses men to "play the man". There's a great line Jack Nicholson speaks to Helen Hunt at the end of "As Good as it Gets": "You make me want to be a better man." A woman who is inviting, tender and vulnerable is not demanding or controlling. She inspires men to be strong, to offer their strength; physically, soulfully and spiritually on behalf of others. She believes in the men in her life and her very support and invitation encourages the

CB: What is an inviting, arousing woman like?

Stasi: An inviting, arousing woman is a woman who is alive and present to her own heart. She is a woman who is not striving but is at rest in the love of God. She knows that she is loved passionately, by a passionate God, and she knows that she is safe in his love. She can risk offering her true heart, being vulnerable and tender, and invite others into deeper intimacy with

Christianbook.com: Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to speak with us, Stasi. We have little doubt that "Captivating" will indeed do for women what "Wild at Heart" did for men!



Daily Grace

Resources to encourage and equip disciples to know
and love God's Word and cultivate an intentional
walk with God.