



EVERY
HOUR
I NEED
YOU

*30 Meditations
for Moms on the
Character of God*

KATIE FARIS

“Katie Faris understands the challenges that moms are facing and graciously points them to their greatest hope and deepest comfort: God himself. These thirty rich reflections will help a mom in the trenches lift her eyes to her Savior, gaining a fresh perspective as she meditates on her Lord. The truths from this book will trickle down into a mom’s daily life and decisions, helping her navigate the joys and trials of motherhood.”

Emily A. Jensen, coauthor, *Gospel Mom* and *Risen Motherhood*

“I’m so thankful for Katie Faris’s book. There is nothing I need more than a clearer, closer, better knowledge and love of God; and she has given moms a gift in these meditations on his attributes. Take a few precious moments each day, read *Every Hour I Need You*, and be blessed by who your God is: faithful, strong, patient, truthful, and so much more.”

Kristen Wetherell, mom of three; author, *Humble Moms; Help for the Hungry Soul*; and the For the Bible Tells Me So board book series

“Motherhood can expose our weakness like none other. *Every Hour I Need You* by Katie Faris invites imperfect moms to rest in the God of perfect strength. Faris paints thirty glorious pictures of God’s character and calls tired, frustrated, impatient, fearful, and discouraged moms to behold the God of all comfort. Faris never fails to recall the person and work of Christ as she blends her personal stories with Scripture on God’s character. Every devotion inspired me to worship and pray to the God who gives rich mercy and gracious help in time of need.”

Nana Dolce, author, *You Are Redeemed* and *The Seed of the Woman*

“Motherhood is not for the faint of heart, and Katie Faris knows what busy moms need most. It’s not a list of parenting techniques or even a day at the spa, as wonderful as that sounds. It’s knowing the God who knows us—trusting in his sovereignty, walking in his wisdom, and resting in his love for us and our children. In *Every Hour I Need You*, Faris takes our hand and leads us to the throne of grace, where we find the mercy and help we so deeply need.”

Trish Donohue, Director of Women’s Ministry, Covenant Fellowship Church, Glen Mills, Pennsylvania; author, *You Are Welcomed* and *Between Us Girls*

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For my sisters

*I need thee, oh! I need thee;
Every hour I need thee;
O bless me now, my Saviour!
I come to thee.*

“I NEED THEE EVERY HOUR”

Annie S. Hawks and Robert Lowry

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Introduction

A Mother's Heart-Cry

EVERY HOUR I NEED YOU. Morning, noon, and night. Every minute and every second. Every breath. More than anything else in my life, motherhood has illuminated my need for God. You too?

In the mundane moments as well as the desperate times, whether life feels calm or crazy, in both the joys and sorrows of motherhood, we need the Lord. We need him when . . .

- We can't fall asleep because we're worried about our children.
- It takes longer to get out the door and things (or people) don't move according to our schedules.
- The same sin issue arises again and again.
- There's an unwanted diagnosis.

- A child is slow to learn to read.
- Our never-ending to-do lists become monotonous.
- We're pulled in multiple directions and feel overwhelmed.
- Questions are many and the answers few.
- Our spirits are willing, but the flesh is oh-so-tired.

So often, mom life exposes our weakness and insufficiency. It also reveals our children's needs. We'll never be able to answer all their questions, heal their deepest wounds, satisfy their greatest longings, or save their souls. Rather than trying to do these things on our own, in his word, God invites us to know him and lead our children to him, to discover what he means when he says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9), and to ask him to work in us and through us to accomplish more than we ever could on our own—in our lives, as well as our children's.

Motherhood Is Holy Ground

Talking with moms in my church, I hear them say things like,

"Nothing showed me how much I need Jesus like motherhood."

INTRODUCTION

“I never thought I was an anxious or fearful person until I became a mom.”

“Motherhood has been the greatest means of sanctification in my life.”

Why is this? For one thing, raising children is an earthy business. Along with lots of other realities, it’s labor and delivery or adoption paperwork, smelly diapers, and sticky fingers when children are young. It’s grass stains and tangled hair, body changes and emotional rollercoasters as they mature. There’s blood, sweat, and lots of tears along the way—for moms and kids alike. But earthiness serves a good purpose. It reminds us that we’re made of flesh and bone, dependent creatures made by our Creator for his glory (see Gen. 1:26–30). Even before Adam and Eve sinned in Eden, as humans, they were designed to depend on God for life; as their descendants, we depend on him for sustenance too. It’s when we resist this reality, when we insist on doing things our own way, that there are problems. However, a humble recognition of who God is and who we are (and aren’t) leads to our rescue from this false sense of self-sufficiency.

Motherhood isn’t just messy on the outside. Motherhood uncovers our messy hearts. Our unmet expectations and

unfulfilled desires. How selfish and sinful we are. A multitude of relationships and circumstances can do this, but for moms, motherhood is often a primary one.

When God uses motherhood to open our eyes to see who we are—our finiteness, our dependence on the Lord, and our need for him; when it leads us to look up from the playroom floor and fix our gaze on him and who he is in all his sovereign splendor; when it's the impetus for humble soul-searching and honest prayer; when it identifies our sin and leads to repentance; when God uses it to do his good work in our hearts, motherhood is a means of sanctification. It becomes holy ground when we see who we are, who God is, and cry out to him:

We're weak, but you are strong. *We need you, Lord.*

We're impatient, but you are patient. *We need you, Lord.*

We're faithless, but you are faithful. *We need you, Lord.*

We sin, but you forgive. *We need you, Lord.*

We're foolish, but you are wise. *We need you, Lord.*

We're lonely, but you are our Comforter. *We need you, Lord.*

We can't do all the things, be everywhere at once, or say all the right words. But God is all-powerful, present everywhere, all-knowing, and all-wise. We need the Lord, and so do our families.

More of God

Every hour I need you. This is a Christian mother's heart-cry for more of God—to know him better, as he reveals himself in Scripture, and for knowing him to transform her heart and her home. In his book *Knowing God*, the late theologian J. I. Packer wrote that “knowing God is a relationship calculated to thrill a man's heart.”¹ So pause and ask yourself, *Does the thought of knowing God thrill my heart?*

We can't see God, but Scripture tells us about him, and in Jesus, we're invited to know the invisible God. Read what Paul writes in Colossians:

[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. . . . He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. (Col. 1:15–19)

1 J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 32.

INTRODUCTION

Knowing God is a lifelong journey that begins with knowing Jesus. It starts at the foot of the cross, gazing at our beautiful, pierced Savior, who poured out his blood for the forgiveness of all who call on him in faith and trust in him for salvation: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

Here is where we see God’s justice, grace, mercy, wisdom, love, generosity, and all his other attributes displayed.

While our triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is three-in-one, his nature can be described so many ways and considered from multiple angles. In this book, I’ll use American author and evangelist A. W. Tozer’s definition of an *attribute* as being “whatever God has in any way revealed as being true of Himself.”² We will meditate on thirty attributes, which—all together—show us more of who God is. Each devotional chapter focuses on a single attribute and is meant to help us dwell on who God reveals himself to be in both the Old and New Testaments, connect his character to the gospel, and apply what we learn to our everyday lives as moms. Journaling space is included for personal reflection.

2 A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1961), 12.

We Need You

My family is my greatest earthly treasure. My husband Scott and I have been married for almost two decades, and our three sons and two daughters range in age from early school years to late teens. In the middle of these at-home years with them, I straddle phonics with a first grader and calculus with a high school senior, loose teeth and driving lessons. The laundry pile is endless (I'm not exaggerating), and someone's always looking for something to eat or needing a ride somewhere. As I struggle to keep up with the dishes, let alone serve sacrificially, I may think I need more caffeine or a vacation (and those things sometimes help!), but the Bible teaches that only the Lord truly satisfies (see Pss. 107:9; 145:16; Eccles. 1:8; Isa. 55:2). Ultimately, I need more of him. I need a bigger view of God, one that sees him as sovereign over my plans and schedule, powerful to heal broken hearts and bodies, and strong enough to save and keep his people.

Whether you're just starting your family or have been a mom for a while, do you feel your need? Do you want the Lord to show you who he really is, and do you desire that knowing him will impact how you approach motherhood? If so, this book is for you. As you read, join me in crying out to the Lord: *Every hour we need you.*

A Prayer for the Reader

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Colossians 1:9–12

Self-Existent

In the beginning, God . . .

GENESIS 1:1

IF I STRETCH my brain cells taut, I can remember life before children. (That's when my husband and I could go on a date without having to arrange childcare or think about what time we would get home.) Now it's hard to visualize what our days would be like without our children, each child with his or her own personality and preferences. These days, it's rare to go on a date and not spend at least half our time talking about them—their needs and achievements, our hopes and prayers for them.

Dwell: God Is Self-Existent

Scripture starts with these words, “In the beginning, God . . .” (Gen. 1:1). Can you imagine back that far, before your children, you and I, or even our ancestors were born? If you can, push

back mental images of plants, animals, water, earth, and sky. Where do you find yourself? What do you see? How do you feel?

The Bible says that before anything else was in that place, God *was*. He *existed*. God was *before* the beginning. God was there, so it wasn't empty. It wasn't an aimless place but an anchored one because God held it all together (Col. 1:17). As far back as we can go, there was *God*.

Before you can remember . . . God.

Before you were born . . . God.

Before your family history . . . God.

In the beginning, God.

Always God.

No one spoke him into being. No one formed him out of dust. He is the uncreated Creator.

The first three chapters of Genesis detail how God spoke and there *was*—light, land, plants, animals, and people. But as for God himself? He didn't need to be created but was (and is) self-existent, dependent on no one and nothing, sustained only by his own power. In Psalm 90, Moses draws attention to God's self-existence:

Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Ps. 90:2)

Read those words again slowly. Let them sink in and rewire your brain from its natural tendency to focus on self. Then, gaze at the self-existent one, our God who was before everything and who created everything we see and touch. Rocks, trees, skies, seas. Our Maker is from everlasting to everlasting, and he is God.

God's self-existence highlights how different he is from us. We are creatures; he is Creator. "All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:3–4). Even so, he humbled himself. He took on human flesh. God, who existed before time and exists outside of time, entered the constraints of time in the person of Jesus Christ so that we might have eternal life in him.

This is really good news for us as moms. Not only does God exist theoretically, not only did he set everything in motion, but the everlasting God also cares about us and our families in the here and now. He pursues a relationship with us.

God's self-existence is also reassuring. Especially in their younger years, our children's very existence seems to depend on us. As they grow older, they need our help with homework, rides to practice or work, a sympathetic ear to listen to their sorrows, focused attention when they process their struggles, and our encouragement and prayers. It's a joy and privilege to care for them in all these ways. But God isn't a

needy God; instead, he gives *us* life. He supports, refreshes, satisfies, and strengthens *us*.

In fact, he welcomes us to come to him as needy children, just as ours do to us, saying, “Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:4). In God’s kingdom, humility and weakness aren’t frowned upon but honored, and the self-existent one welcomes us. So let’s go to him, pouring out our sorrows and asking him to sustain and help us.

Reflect

God created us, but he was not created. He existed before the beginning, outside the constraints of time and space as we understand them. How does God’s self-existence reassure you as a mom? How does it inspire reverence and awe?

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SELF-EXISTENT

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Draw Near

Praise God for his self-existence, using either Moses's words (Ps. 90:2, quoted earlier in this chapter) or your own words. Prayerfully consider how God is unlike us, and let it lead you to awe: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10).

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SELF-EXISTENT

God Is Self-Existent

This means . . .

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This matters to me as a mom because . . .

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