

# Anchored and Assured

Karen Martin

A girl's guide to  
acquiring true  
beauty



CHRISTIAN LIGHT

PUBLICATIONS

Copyrighted material. May not be reproduced without permission from the publisher.

To Sheree, Ashlee, and Britnee

Your sincere questions and profound observations  
have given us many opportunities for deep discussions.  
I love learning and growing with you, and I'm blessed to  
be your mom.



# Contents

Introduction	vi
--------------	----

## **Understanding God**

His Love	1
His Wisdom	3
His Blessings	7
His Omnipresence	9
His Omniscience	12
His Mercy	15
His Grace	17
His Truth	20
His Promises	23
His Jealousy	26
His Judgment	28

## **Understanding Myself**

Who I Am	31
My Purpose	34
My Zeal	37
My Integrity	40
My Uniqueness	43
My Emotions	46
My Desires (short-term pursuits)	49
My Goal (long-term pursuit)	52

My Disappointments	55
My Responses	57
My Temptations	61
Competition (from within)	63
Competition (from without)	66
My Inner Dialogue (part 1)	68
My Inner Dialogue (part 2)	71
Self-Gratification	74
Shadow Friends	76
My Destiny	79

## **My Questions**

What If I Struggle With Assurance of Salvation?	83
What About My Dreams?	87
Does God Care About the Hard Things I Face?	89
How Can I Stay Humble?	93
How Do I Break a Sinful Habit?	95
How Crucial Are My Daily Choices?	98
Do My Mundane Duties Have Any Value?	101
Is Submission Really That Important?	105
How Can I Overcome Feeling Inferior and Being Jealous?	107
How Can I Stay Serene in Stressful Situations?	111
How Can I Know I'm Making a Good Decision?	114
How Do I Deal With Hurts?	118
Acknowledgments	121
About the Author	122

# Introduction

I have always enjoyed observing people and trying to understand their reactions and responses. As a teenager, I noticed that some women seemed perpetually burdened and downhearted, while others were full of beautiful peace and joy. I wanted to be full of joy, so I put on a happy face and laughed, anticipating the day I would finally have the perfect set of circumstances so that I could quit pretending.

As a newlywed and young mom, I despaired. I had a good husband and three beautiful, healthy daughters but . . . I failed at being like the women I admired. Where was the natural joy I thought would accompany my dreams-come-true? I wanted to blame my despair on other people, on difficult circumstances—but I was still observing people, and I saw that perfect circumstances were not part of many beautiful, joy-filled women's lives.

It took me years to understand that it is not my circumstances but how I *think*—about God, myself, and my circumstances—that produces either frustration and despair or beautiful peace and joy.

My search uncovered unexpected answers in obvious places. Having escaped from despair into a beautiful life of genuine purpose and joy, I'm excited God has given me this opportunity to share what I have learned. I pray other girls will not need to struggle with despair on their journey to beautiful, abundant living.

Always remember—it *is possible* to experience genuine soul beauty, no matter who you are and what circumstances you face.



# *Understanding God*

*"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3).*



# His Love

**Bible reading:** 1 John 4:7-19

Personally,  
intentionally,  
unconditionally—GOD LOVES YOU.

So often we get this mixed up. We think we must somehow earn God's love. When we do good, we feel like God must love us extra much. When we do wrong, we think God must love us less. But how can Someone who *is* love be changed by unloveliness?

Believing God is love is a bit like knowing fire is hot. Fire gives heat to everything around it. Put something small and cold onto a fire, and the fire will heat it up—the item will not cool or put out the fire. In the same way, our unloveliness is small in comparison to God's great love. It's never big enough to stop His love. So . . . does that mean we can do whatever we want and God will just keep loving us?

While God's love can never be extinguished, we can choose to move away from His love by disregarding His plan. Just as we can choose to walk away from the comforting warmth of a fire and shiver in the cold, we can choose to question God's love and try to find our happiness in self-love.

We can live selfishly and even convince ourselves we are feeling God's love when we have merely wrapped ourselves in our own blanket of self-love. Since the devil will do everything in his power to make self-love feel like God's love, how do we know which love we are feeling?

Self-love chooses to serve God so God will love me and do nice things for me.



Self-love seeks to find favor with God while thinking about myself and what is in life for me.

Self-love makes me feel vibrant one day and depressed the next.

Self-love causes the Christian life to appear exhausting, overwhelming, and often impossible.

While . . .

God's love is generous and merciful to others, because I understand that God has been generous and merciful to me.

God's love makes me grateful to God and others, because I know there's so much I can learn from them.

God's love gives me steady purpose, because I know I am loved, regardless of the circumstances I face.

God's love produces rest, because I have nothing to earn and nothing to prove.

"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3).

**Assessing flaws:** Have you been doubting God's personal love for you? Write about it.

**Anchored in truth:** What solid truths can you anchor into concerning God's love for you?

**Assured through prayer:** Ask God to help you destroy your doubts and be reassured by the truth of His love. Spend some time thanking Him for His love.

**Acquired beauty:** "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4:18).

# His Wisdom

**Bible reading:** 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; Job 23:8-10

When we love someone, we give them nice things—childhood treasures like pretty little stones and dandelions, and later, bigger gifts like Visa gift cards or smooth gel pens with beautiful leather-bound journals. We invite our friends to share coffee with us at an upscale coffee shop and pay for their coffee and their decadent muffin. We listen attentively, with nodding of head and sympathetic expression when they share their heart.

And then we expect God to meet us on a friend level. We expect Him to give us nice things. We want Him to show by some miraculous gesture that He's listening when we share our heart with Him. But God is not like us; we naturally give what we want to receive, but God gives us what we *need* to receive. He gives us what will draw us to deeper dependence on Him.

The all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise Creator God doesn't need to prove anything to us. Let's quit thinking He needs to show us His love in the circumstances He allows and let Him be God! A God who can fill our hearts and minds with peace even in the midst of troubling circumstances. A God whose ways we can never fully comprehend, but who is wise enough to always work things out for our good and His glory.

“Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite” (Psalm 147:5).

**Assessing flaws:** Have you been doubting God's wisdom? Write about it.

**Anchored in truth:** What solid truths can you anchor into concerning God's wisdom to replace your doubts?

**Assured through prayer:** Ask God to help you surrender your human wisdom and find reassurance in His unfathomable wisdom. Spend some time thanking Him for His wisdom.

**Acquired beauty:** "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16).

*God gives us what  
will draw us to deeper  
dependence on Him.*

