

6 ways for

**Moms to Deepen Their
Relationship with**

Jesus
TODAY

By Tara L. Cole

6 Ways FRO Moms to Deepen Their Relationship with Jesus TODAY@ Tara L. Cole. All Rights Reserved

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How to Read the Bible When You Don't Have Time

I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word...Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart...Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalms 119:15-16, 34, 105 (ESV)

Are you too busy to sit down and read your Bible because your plate always seems too full? Full from work, full from kids' activities, full from your activities, full from house cleaning...

Listening to the Bible can help us to abide in Christ no matter how busy we are.

There have been some seasons in my life when I didn't have time to get up early in the morning and was so exhausted by bedtime that trying to read the Bible then was hopeless, but I've found listening to the Bible allows me to connect with God during the spaces of my day.

Whether you're driving to work, eating lunch, nursing a baby, folding laundry, washing dishes...we all have regular stretches in our day where our body is in motion but the task doesn't require much thought. Those are great times to listen to the Bible and abide in Jesus.

You could listen straight through the whole Bible or just

listen to one book and stop to think about what you've heard. You could begin to study with a spouse or friend as you listen separately during the day and discuss what you heard at night or over coffee once a week.

Even if you do have time for regular Bible study, try listening to the Bible today. Taking every opportunity to draw close and abide in Jesus helps us to hear his voice clearer and connects us to him deeper.

Listening is much easier than you think. Fifteen years ago my husband had to spend over \$100 to purchase the whole Bible on CD. Now it's free! Just download the YouVersion Bible app, find your favorite version, and enjoy listening. Most versions have a play button towards the bottom of the screen.

Today, I'm praying for you as you begin listening to the Bible and abiding in Jesus throughout the moments of your day. Those moments may seem small and insignificant at first, however, they will add up to so much more over time.

Abide

Download the Youversion App if you don't have it already. The versions with the speaker symbol beside them have the audio included for free. Click on your favorite of those versions and begin listening. Good places to start are Genesis 1 or John 1.

What verses did you listen to today? What did you learn? Did you notice anything that you missed before?

How To Invite Jesus into Your Daily Chores

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV)

Praying while doing chores has been an attitude changer for me. I'm not a fan of chores. I know, who is, right? Praying is one way I've found to give me a better attitude in the midst of them and invite Jesus in, instead of complaining to myself about the fact I have to do them.

Today, while you fold the laundry, clean the kitchen, pick up the house, etc... try praying for those you're picking up after. As you fold your husband's shirt, say a prayer for him. Thank God for him and pray God guides him throughout the day. This idea is especially helpful if you're upset at the person you're praying for. It's hard to pray for someone and stay angry with them.

If you live alone, this is a good time to pray for your family members who live away from you. Ask God to bless them today and help them through any specific circumstances you know they might be going through.

Also, take the time to pray for yourself, especially if you're like me and struggle with a good attitude while doing chores. Tell God. Ask him for a better perspective on this type of work. He loves to answer those types of prayers!

Abide

Try this way of abiding today. What chores are on your list? Who could you pray for while doing them?

Connecting with God When You Have No Time

“As a deer pants for flowing streams so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul longs for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”

Psalm 42:1-2 (ESV)

Do you struggle to find time to spend with God? Like the Psalmist, does your heart long for time to meet with God?

This is my desire many days. I long for God, but the time is so short. Kids wake up early, a full schedule overwhelms me, someone gets sick, and I sink into bed at night exhausted and empty, longing for God.

During those times, a good devotional can help sustain you when you're short on time.

Devotionals are different from a Bible study because they are short, and you can read them in just a few minutes.

I also find devotionals helpful when I'm struggling to connect with God on my own. When I read his word and it just doesn't sink in, or when I'm so weary I can barely get myself to his feet, having someone else's thoughts and words to guide me helps me continue to abide and connect deeper with my Father when I don't have time for a longer study.

My favorite right now is the *Hope for the Weary Mom Devotional* by Brooke McGlothlin and Stacey Thacker. I have

it laying on my kitchen table, so if a kid wakes up early or I have just a moment to spend with God, I still can get some good quality time in with thoughts to follow me throughout my day.

You can find devotionals in many places. Often your local church will have Power for Today or something similar for free, or you can find devotionals by browsing your favorite book store whether mortar, online, or on the YouVersion app.

Today, find a devotional and try it out. You might even have an unread one laying around your home. Whatever devotional you choose, I pray it gives you new insight into God and gives you a hunger for him as you seek to abide in him daily.

Abide

There are many great devotionals out there. I have some of my favorites listed as resources below and some come with a Kindle version, too. To abide today go to your favorite Bible app — YouVersion or BibleStudyTools are two good ones — and find a devotional series to get you started. On both apps, it's as easy as opening the app and clicking on the "Plans" link at the bottom. I would suggest starting with a short plan, so you feel like you accomplished something, but it's not too overwhelming.

Resources

Here are some of my favorite devotionals for myself and my kids:

- *Hope for the Weary Mom Devotional* by Brooke McGlothlin and Stacey Thacker (Kindle, too)
- *God's Little Devotional Book for Women* by David C. Cook
- *Our Daily Bread for Kids* by Crystal Bowman, Teri McKinley, and Luke Flowers (Kindle, too)
- *Growing with God: 365 Daily Devos for Boys* (Veggie Tales)
- *Wise for Salvation* by Christie Thomas
- *Pressing Pause* by Karen Ehman and Ruth Schwenk
- For more resources follow me on Instagram @taralcole. I share a new one every week!

Connecting with Jesus Through Music

“I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.”

Psalm 9:1-2 (ESV)

When I’m overwhelmed and exhausted, one of the best ways I’ve found to connect with Jesus is listening to Christian music. We’ve all been moved by a song sometime in our lives, whether it’s a special song that was “our song” with our spouse or one that got us through a hard time in the past.

Christian music has the ability to connect with us in those ways and helps us to abide in Jesus throughout our days. When I was a teenager, listening to songs like Point of Grace’s “Jesus Will Still Be There” got me through some very hard days. On the other hand, listening to Toby Mac’s song “Feel It” has helped me connect with my sons as I introduce them to Christian music.

Songs also have the ability to stick with us and play on a continuous track in our heads months or even years after we last heard them. Often God has used songs I’ve heard years before to encourage me at just the right moment. Even as I write these ideas for you, old church songs like “Nearer my God to Thee” and “Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross” play in my head throughout the day.

No matter what type of music you like, there’s a Christian

artist out there who sings it. Check out national radio stations like KLOVE or AIR1. You can Google to find others in your area or search phone apps like Amazon Music or Spotify.

Some of my favorite children's Christian music like Seeds Family Worship and Go Fish Guys are available on Amazon Music. Other favorites like Jeremy Camp, Hillsong, Hawk Nelson, and Third Day are often on a radio station or app.

Today, begin listening to Christian music on a regular basis. The connection it gives you to God and the encouragement it brings will give you hope and lift your spirits even on the hardest days.

Abide

What songs are your favorites to help you abide in Jesus? I'd love to find some new favorites.

Where will you begin your search for more music to strengthen your walk with Jesus?

Making Mealtime Meaningful

"So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it."

Luke 22:8 (ESV)

I have three sons. Getting them to sit down for devotional time can be a challenge. Okay, "challenge" is mild. It can be impossible with their little bodies constantly moving, usually all three in different directions at once!

However, I long to encourage them toward godly thinking. I desire to pour Christ's life into them, even from a young age.

Reading Sally Clarkson's book, *The Life-Giving Table*, was the inspiration I needed to begin to make our table a place to pour Christ's life into my sons. Through her many ideas about daily life-giving at the table as well as special occasions, she inspired me to begin seeing my table not as just a place to refuel the body, but also to refuel the spirit.

Through Christ's example of using the table as a place to meet physical and spiritual needs, Sally teaches us how to do the same with our table. Like all her books, she doesn't give a paint-by-numbers formula to follow, but ideas and inspiration to help us use our own God-given gifts and personalities to make our tables life-giving.

For me this means putting breakfast on the table before I try to read the boys a Bible story or have them say their memory

verses. It means pausing for a Sunday afternoon tea time (Yes! even with boys), to read a chapter from a favorite book together. It also means inviting friends in and intentionally making our home a place that gives life to those who enter through simple decor, good food, and good conversation.

It doesn't mean stressing out because my home doesn't look like the ones in HGTV magazine. I do have boys after all, and any decor that comes in must either be inexpensive or boy proof. Remember, our homes need not be comfortable and beautiful only for our company but also for our families.

If you would like to learn what it means to develop your own life-giving table where the life of Christ is shared, check out Sally's book *The Life-Giving Table*. You can find it [here on Amazon](#) or wherever Christian books are sold.

Abide

The table isn't only to refuel the spirits of others, but it can refuel us as well. Today, take time to fill your own cup. For me this looks like hot tea, a favorite chocolate, soft music, and a good book. If I do this, even a few times a week for 15-20 min, I find it gives me a renewed strength for the rest of my day. Consider what does that for your soul and take time to do it today.

Learning to Love Through Service

"And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commands abides in God, and God in him..."

1 John 3:23-24 (ESV)

Abiding in Jesus is good! As we connect deeper with him each day, it can bring us such joy, but if we never get past ourselves and hoard that joy, then we're not abiding in Jesus fully.

James 1:27 tells us, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." Then in the Old Testament in Isaiah 58:6-8, God condemns Israel for going through the motions and appearing religious, but not actually treating others kindly in their day-to-day lives:

"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard."

As these verses in the Old and New Testaments show, helping others isn't just a good thing to do but is essential in the life that is seeking to abide in Jesus. God goes where the hurting people are. He did it as Jesus, and he asks us to do it as his followers.

Serving others can take a hundred different forms. It can be taking a meal to someone who needs it. It can be giving time and money to a cause close to your heart. It can be giving away a pair of shoes you just bought to a person who may need them more. It can be raking a neighbor's leaves. It can be driving someone to appointments who can't drive themselves.

Also, think about ways you can get your family involved. When our family chooses Compassion children to sponsor, we let our sons pick the kids. When I take a meal to someone, I often let my sons help me prepare it and carry it to the door just like my Mom did with me. Kids like to "help" and they want to feel needed. Helping you serve fills those needs while giving them a foundation for abiding in Jesus themselves through service later on in life.

It doesn't just have to be your kids. My friends and I recently had a yard sale to benefit another friend who has Lyme's disease, and my sister and brother-in-law take a yearly trip to serve in Romania. Serving with others helps connect you to each other and the heart of God.

As you spend time with God today, ask him to open your eyes to all the opportunities around you to serve. Then dive in. You may not feel comfortable at first, and you won't be able to

help everyone, but helping even one person can make a big difference. God loves people, and as his followers, we should see and love them, too.

Abide

Pray and make a plan. Ask God to open your eyes to the needs around you. Then write your plan and give it a date, so you'll remember to follow through.

Connect with Tara

I'd love to hear from you! Connect with me online at:

- taralcole.com
- [Instagram: @taralcole](https://www.instagram.com/taralcole)
- [Facebook: Tara L. Cole - Writer](https://www.facebook.com/TaraL.Cole)
- [The OverACup Podcast](#)

Resources by Tara

Need more ways to help you and your family build a lifetime of faith? Check out these books and resources:

- *[Abide: 40 Ways to Focus on Jesus Daily](#)* - More ways to abide in Jesus for you and your family like the ones in this book.
- *[Sacred Pathways for Kids](#)* with Christie Thomas - Discover your child's "spiritual love language" and how to help them build a relationship with Jesus in the special ways he made them.
- *[Everyday Prayers for the School Year](#)*-A 30 Day Devotional Prayer Journal for Moms to help you pray over your child throughout their school year.
- *[Sharpen your Sword](#)* memory verse e-course - A course that teaches you how to develop a memory verse habit with your family, so you're better equipped to fight Satan's lies.