


The background features a light gray, stylized flower with many thin, radiating petals and a central dark gray circle. Surrounding the flower are several thin, elegant, swirling lines that curve and loop across the page. Small, light gray dots are scattered throughout the background, particularly around the flower and the swirling lines.

Godly Moms

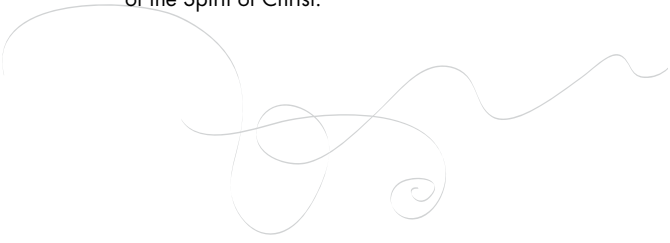
Strength from the Inside Out



To our daughters, Bev, Donna, Robbie,
and Janet, the joy of my heart. Without
you I wouldn't have a word to say.

And to my husband, Bob, the love of
my life, for all the ways you lift my heart.

I thank God for any wisdom in my
words. It came through the gentle teaching
of the Spirit of Christ.



Godly Moms

Strength from the Inside Out

Lenore Buth



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From Lenore, with Love

Dear Mom,

Think of this little book as a warm hug from a friend.

It's about deepening your inner strength and helping your kids develop theirs.

I've walked in your shoes. I know that feeling of being overwhelmed, always tired to the bone, and aching for an encouraging word. My continual prayer was "Lord JESUS, help me, please!"

Before I became a mom, I thought, how hard can it be?

Afterward, I knew.

This is the book I longed for then, but never found. Like you, I wondered how to sort out wisdom from passing theories. I wanted our girls to grow up with a solid foundation of faith and sound values. Close behind were confidence and common sense.

But how to do it?

One day an older friend stated her guiding principle for parenting: "A mother's job

is to work herself out of a job long before her children leave home.”

My jaw dropped. Did she mean that the way it sounded?

Yes. She went on to explain that it means letting youngsters assume an ever-increasing responsibility for themselves. Allowing them to discover that choices bring consequences. As they acquire self-discipline, their can-do attitude grows. In effect, our children are ready to live on their own before they leave home.

Naturally, Mom feels less stressed and harried. As she watches her kids cope with daily life, she feels joy and satisfaction.

When they fail—and they will—this mom picks them up, doles out hugs, and nudges them to try again.

They grow stronger.

Their healthy self-image is based on proof, not praise.

Jesus told us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and our children qualify as “close neighbors.” We love them most truly when we help them become stronger from the inside out, when we teach them from

the start that our value comes because there is One who loves us perfectly despite ourselves. They grow up to be balanced young adults, ready for life. That's our gift to them.

And to ourselves.

This is not a book of techniques but rather principles. It's as much about you as your children. I want you to know that nothing else in life carries the same lasting significance.

I pray that my simple sharing will be a blessing to you.

Oh, one thing more. God made you a mom. He will supply the wisdom and strength you need for each day.

You see, I can say this because I lived it and know it to be true.

With love,
Lenore



Made for Each Other

Your family is no accident. God gave you to each other.

Each child who calls you “Mom” was created just for you.

God placed you together because you need each other.

Let those sentences sink deep into your heart and your mind.

This is true even when you have conflicts and difficulties. Even if you are as different as plums and peanut butter. Even though it seems you always say or do the wrong thing with one of your children.

Your Designer Kids need *you*, not the Ms. Flawless Mom who lives on the corner.

And vice versa.

You don't need the placid child next door, nor Super Kid across the street. You need that one who most often baffles you or challenges you.

God tailor-makes our children to stretch us.

To teach us.

To grow us.

Mothering opens our minds and strips away old, comfortable illusions about life.

And about ourselves.

Day after day, we're forced to cope. As we do, we may discover strengths we didn't know we had.

Weaknesses too.

No mom would label this process easy or comfortable. Growing pains never are.

When you feel overwhelmed, reassure yourself with what you know. God put together the pieces of your family jigsaw puzzle according to His plan.

It is a good one.

So walk on, trust Jesus, and be at peace.

Like your kids, you're in the process of becoming. Your heart will never shrink back to its original size.

[The Lord says,] "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you." Jeremiah 1:5a

P.S.

Ignore those stretch marks on your tummy. What counts are the stretch marks on your heart and mind and spirit. New ones will keep showing up over the years—and that's a good thing.

Be a Mom like Harold Hill

Maybe you remember Professor Harold Hill from *The Music Man*.

This fellow could talk, and he drilled confidence into his “players.” They would be wonderful, he said. If they only believed, they would out-perform every other band. Finally the rag-tag group held real instruments. To everyone’s amazement (including the professor’s), they played a halting version of *Minuet in G*.

Call it Exhibit A in helping each youngster “fake it ‘til you make it.”

We moms possess far greater power than Harold Hill did.

Our children naturally believe our words. When we express our confidence, they gain courage, even when they pretend to be too cool to care.

You may say, “I know you can do it,” and hear, “Well, you’re my mother. You’re supposed to say that.”

Pay attention, however, and you’ll notice your son or daughter stands a bit taller. Knowing their parents believe in them helps kids do better and tune out the pint-size critics around them.

Kids listen especially well to your casual, not-meant-for-them-to-hear remarks, so watch your words. As a mom, every word you say is worth its weight in rubies.

Or rocks.
Even Professor Harold Hill couldn't make that claim.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, . . . that it may give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29

P.S.

Ask God what "Harold Hill" words each one needs to hear, then specialize in speaking rubies.

Abandon the Struggle to Know It All

Some moms live in Tension City and they're proud of it.

They devour guidebooks on child development at different ages and stages. They track their children's progress, constantly wondering whether their kids measure up.

Who wouldn't be uptight?

Rearing a child bears no resemblance to conducting a science experiment. Step A does not necessarily lead to Step B. Research studies abound, each one citing endless statistics and averages. Yet even world-famous experts can only guess about any individual.

Every child is a one-time creation.

Unpredictable.

Full of potential we cannot glimpse.

Remember that.

Otherwise, you may slot your son or daughter into a category, then adjust your perception and expectations to fit. Or you might compare your child using timetables written by "the experts" instead of your eyes and ears.

When you do that, you cheat your kids.

Rearing our children remains one of the great adventures in life. No doubt God planned it that