

YEAR 2, MONTH 1

Part I. Prepare

Topic: Amazing Girls: God's Intentional and Perfect Design

Key Verses:

Psalms 139: 13-14 "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."

Key Take-Away:

This month's focus is on God's intentional design for girls. We were not created by accident! God designed us to be unique and special, and to reflect many of His characteristics: love, gentleness, strength, resilience, steadfastness, courage, loyalty, grace and protectiveness. We were most certainly created on purpose and for His purpose!

Important notes for this meeting:

Today's first meeting is going to set the groundwork for the rest of this year's meetings, all focusing on understanding ourselves better as girls. The significance of the pressure girls and women feel today is not to be diminished, but it is our hope and prayer that understanding their special design and purpose will empower girls and their moms to live courageously different in this modern generation. Girls and moms will gain a better understanding of their own doubts and concerns about the way they were made, and hopefully this will set the stage for prayer and more discussion ahead.

NOTE: *If your CG group started in year 1, then you already made CG journals for the mom and daughter relationship. Feel free to dedicate these new journals for another significant relationship, like a dad or a specific grandparent. These journals can also be prayer journals between the girls and God, where they learn to write their prayers down and then noting God's answers. In some cases, the girls will need a new journal if the first year journal was completely used.*

Materials needed for this meeting:

- Bible
- Notebooks (1 per daughter). You can start new notebooks or continue with the notebooks you used last year, space permitting.
- Memory Verse Notecard Rings
- *Looking Within* Handout (found on the CG website, Year 2, Month 1 Printables)
- New blank Journals & a picture of mom/daughter pairs for the journal cover
- Crafting supplies to decorate the journals: Colorful paper, stickers, permanent markers, Mod Podge glue, paint brushes, scissors, embellishments/adornments.

Part II. Lead

First 15:

Gathering time. Welcome everyone. Name tags are handy to use during the first meeting so that everyone can re-learn names. Grab a snack if your group is providing that. Remember, water and a simple snack are best; keep it simple! Gather your group together in a circle (or as close to a circle as you can make). Make sure there is room for everyone and that everyone can sit comfortably where they are at. It is not necessary for you to be seated at a table, but you may choose to be.

Let's Go 70:

This is the heart of your gathering time. Use the following outline to help guide you in this process, but don't feel bound by it. Take some time with the material before you lead so that you can adapt things to best meet your group's needs. The action steps are **bolded**.

1. Open in prayer

2. Have the girls **update their Bible verses by adding this month's new verse: *Psalms 139: 13-14***. While we are only going to write down 2 lines of this chapter on notecards, we will be reading a much larger portion of this Psalm at the beginning of today's lesson.

3. **Read the Key Verses out loud** (maybe have one girl read a line or two, then switch readers to encourage lots of participation with something simple). **Then, read *Psalm 139* starting at line 1 all the way up through line 18**. Again, encourage participation.

4. **Have the girls identify key attributes of God in verses 1-18. What do we learn about God from reading the lines?** Go through the verse again, line by line, and talk about the significance of what the Bible is saying. Here are a few key points to get your conversation started:

- God knows us inside and out!
- He knows what we do and everywhere we go — there is nowhere we can hide from God. Even in the pits of dark places, He is there, too.
- God makes our paths for us - he goes BEFORE us to make sure it is the best way.
- God knows what we're going to say before we even speak it out. He understands our thoughts in our heads — nothing is secret from God.
- God formed us inside of our mothers; He put all of us together just as he desired us to be. We are His amazing designs.
- We can praise God by loving ourselves. God loves us and made no mistakes when He created us. No part of us was an accident. He knows our frames, our eyes, our hearts and our innermost parts. We can use this to pray!

5. **Ask - Why is it sometimes hard to love ourselves?** Answers will vary, but take note of a few that are given.
6. **Ask - What messages are we told in our culture that differ from the messages God tells us in His word.** Moms may need to help this discussion.
7. **Pair/Share:** Today's pair/share time will be spent with **each daughter filling out the Looking Within form** that can be found on the website (Year 2, Month 1 Printables). The handout has 2 sides, both of which can be done during this pair/share time with moms (about 10-15 minutes).
7. Finally, wrap up today with a little mother/daughter craft. **Girls will make a CG Journal to share with their moms.** This is different than the notebook where handouts, notes and questions are kept. This journal will be kept at home is primarily for girls and their moms to use to communicate with one another. Here's how it works (**Read this to everyone**):

You write your mom a note in the journal. Leave it on her bed when you're ready and let her find it and read it on her own time. Then, she'll respond to you in the journal. Sometimes it's fun to write down Bible verses that you both want to memorize and challenge each other to do that in the journal. Mom, if you have to be gone or leave town, leave daily notes and affirmations for your girl in her journal before you go. This is a powerful tool to open the doors of communication WIDE between the two of you. It is imperative that this journal stay safe and private, just for the two of you, unless your daughter chooses to share something with dad or another trusted adult like a counselor, teacher, etc. Either way, permission should be granted by BOTH of you if anything is going to be shared from your journal.

Craft materials like embellished paper, stickers, colorful markers (permanent work best), adornments, scissors, paint brushes (for the glue) and Mod Podge glue will help make this journal colorful and personal for the two of you to share. Consider putting both your names and a picture of the two of you together on the cover of the journal.

-  **Getting to the HEART of the issue:** Girls & Moms - you are wonderfully made! You are exquisite creations of the King. Sometimes it is hard to feel special or worthy in our world, but that is exactly what you are — special and worthy! There is no other you! You are the only YOU that God made. The best way to honor God is to just BE YOU! Your mamas were chosen for you (by God) and it's not an accident that you ended up in the very home you are growing up in. Remember that! There will undoubtedly be some tough times and hardships. That is life! But, God walks through ALL OF IT with us. His plans aren't always our plans, but He IS always GOOD and He provides people to help us remember His truths when we doubt. He will always produce fruit in every circumstance we face and fight on our behalf. God delights and even sings over you!

For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.” - Zephaniah. 3:17 (NLT)

Final 5:

Gather everyone back together to wrap up the meeting. **Circle up and pray** over this sweet tribe that has come together. Make sure to dismiss on time; it is extremely important to honor everyone’s time, especially those that desire structure and schedules.

Suggested Homework for the Month: Write your first journal entry to your mom/ daughter in the new journal you created together. Write out Psalm 139:13-14 and put it on the mirror where you and your daughter will see it every morning as you get dressed. For an extra challenge, memorize all of Psalm 139 and watch how God uses His words to transform the way you see yourselves.

Part III: Reflect and Connect

This year is going to walk us through some challenging discussions with our girls! As moms ourselves, we are going to need to be prepared to tackle these topics head on and without fear. Thankfully, God equips us to do this, but it is important that we are also well-counseled and resourced ourselves. Encourage your moms to visit the CG website to find a wide variety of resources for moms in all life stages and challenge each of them to read a few this year. Take an inventory of this year’s topics that will be discussed (the annual overview is listed on the website under *Year 2 Overview*) and encourage the moms in your group to do the same. Look for any topics that bring you a feeling of discomfort or uncertainty. There are many things we NEVER talked about when we were growing up on this year’s agenda — everything from what we are eating to how our fallopian tubes work! All of this can potentially stir up nerves or doubt in us moms when we have not addressed the issues much ourselves.

But take heart, you will be doing this together in the safety of your CG circle. Most importantly, communicate with your group and make sure everyone knows what’s ahead. It’s critical that all moms feel aware of what they will be addressing with their girls so as to not get side-swiped by a topic that they didn’t know to expect. Reinforce the fact that each mama has the ability to opt out of any discussion, but that her hesitancy to approach that topic may speak more to something SHE needs to address within herself rather than something her daughter is not ready for. We have thought very carefully about when these topics are introduced and the timing is key. This can be the catalyst for some great growth and healing in all of us. As the group leader, be open to talking with your mamas personally about these possible concerns and point them toward outside resources when necessary. You are not meant to be a counselor or pastor to these women; you are simply the group’s facilitator and should be ready to call in back up when needed! Praying and being a listening ear to one another is a powerful way to calm anyone’s fears.

