

Reach UP

The Magazine to Empower and Enrich Today's Woman

Winter 2016

Family
Memory Making Simplified

Lifestyle
5 Tips to Reach Your Goals Now



CHRISTMAS

“

*I love the Lord
He heard my
cry and pitied
every groan.*

”

I remember a time in my life when I was so depressed that I sang this song over and over again along with Whitney Houston from the soundtrack of “Preacher’s Wife.” This song seemed to help me grab onto God’s hand and not let go. The line, “*Long as I live and troubles rise, I’ll hasten to His throne – I’m gonna’ run!*” became what I willed to do.

And run I did. But because I was so focused on me, I could not see that God was already there reaching, grabbing onto me.

At this very special time of Christmas, I picture God reaching down to earth and placing His Son, Jesus, in the middle of earth’s chaos.

The Bible has lots to say about why Jesus would leave the marvels of heaven, but I want to focus on the part about

God hearing our cries. Psalm 107:5 says it like this: “*Then in your desperate condition, you called out to God. He got you out in the nick of time.*”

Many times I’ve called out to God, and He was always there and helped me. Every person on our *Reach UP* team has called out to God when they felt desperate and God has helped them. And I believe that, if and when you call out to God, He’s going to hear you and send help too.

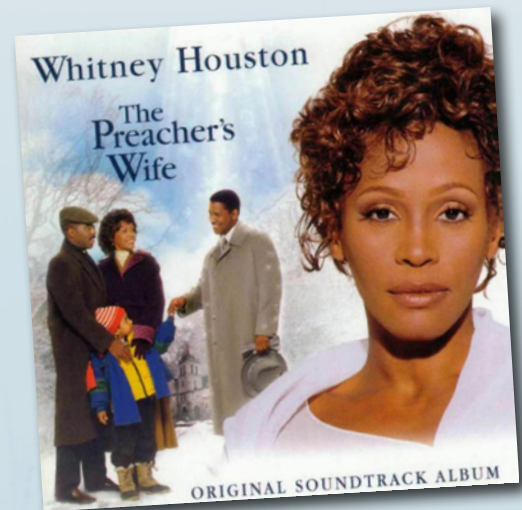
God’s personal plan to help you started long ago when Jesus came to earth. That’s why we celebrate Christmas. How awesome is it that God heard our cries from “locked cells” and “heavy hearts!” (Psalm 107:10, 12)

Help is on its way! Help may come through the person who gave you this magazine. Help may come through what you read in the Bible. Help may come after a whispered prayer – a God-thought especially for you.

And that’s something to celebrate during Thanksgiving and on into the Christmas season.

Together, let’s REACH Up,

Crystal Wacker Knapp



Want to hear the original soundtrack:

<http://y2u.be/BdH9tVor7WU>



by Amy Wedel (mom to six kids)

As a mom, I want to make the Christmas season the best for my kids! This includes making cute homemade crafts, going to all the special Christmas programs, having the house totally decorated for Christmas, baking cookies for the neighbors, and of course, buying my children everything on their wish list. Are you like this too?

Well, let me tell you from experience that trying to squeeze in every holiday activity and party is exhausting! Believe me, I've tried. So now, every year I remind myself to take a step back and ask, What will my kids really remember about Christmas?

This year I actually asked my two children, ages 13 and 15, "What do you remember about the Christmases we celebrated when you were a child?"

To my surprise, they hardly remembered any of the homemade crafts we made, or how the house was decorated, or even what most of their gifts were! I found out that what they remembered the most were the things we did as a family.

They remembered that we would take all afternoon getting ornaments out and decorating the tree. (And yes, some of those ornaments were ones they made.) Then we would make a fun supper together (my kids liked having breakfast for supper, which works for me!) and watch a

Christmas movie. They also remembered our tradition of getting hot cocoa and donuts after going to the Christmas Eve service at church, and then driving around looking at Christmas lights.

Generally speaking, young kids don't remember activities or events, but they do remember how they feel. If they have a favorite teacher, it's probably because that teacher makes them feel valued and important. It's a good thing when an older adult in a child's life makes them feel safe and worth listening to.

So if you have kids of any age in your house this Christmas season, remember that it may not be the gifts, parties, or crafts they will remember most. They just may remember the quiet, simple moments of Christmas that you have together.

One more thing... As a mom, I have to let go of trying for perfection. For example, when we make cookies for our neighbors or firemen, the kids frost the cookies. Let me tell you, they don't end up looking exactly how I would frost them! But that's okay. I just let it go and watch their joy.

So, join me this Christmas as we put more attention on enjoying our children than on our to-do lists. And have yourself a memorable Merry Christmas this year!

Memory-Making Simplified!

A few simple things to do with kids during this Christmas season are:

- ~ reading all kinds of Christmas books from the library
- ~ driving around to look at Christmas lights (walking or taking the bus works too)
- ~ walking to the biggest tree decorated tree close by and drinking hot cocoa
- ~ decorating the tree as a family (again, moms, let go of perfection!)
- ~ going to a Christmas Eve service at church, then have a treat afterwards
- ~ watching a Christmas movie together (this is a big deal for my kids since I usually do not like sitting through kids movies)
- ~ simply being home and available for them. Turn off all electronics!

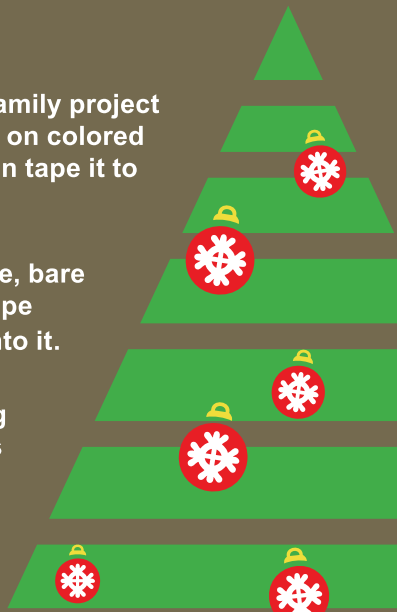
NO Christmas Tree? **NO PROBLEM!**

🎁 Make it a family project to draw a tree on colored paper and then tape it to the wall.

🎁 Find a large, bare branch and tape ornaments onto it.

🎁 Tack a long ribbon across the top of a door. Attach cards and small stockings to it with paper clips.

🎁 Pick up leftover branches at Christmas tree lots. They will fill your house with the aroma of pine, and you can make decorations with them for your tables. Or, a large bough can be secured in a bucket to stabilize. Use ribbons, paperclips, or pipe cleaners to attach ornaments.



CHRISTMAS

SAFE AND SECURE IN God's Hands

by Babs Kincaid

*God went to great lengths to reach out to you.
Jesus humbly born as a baby is just a preview.*

*God couldn't bear to see you suffer anymore.
So Jesus was sent as a gift to open Heaven's door.*

*Jesus willingly came to earth to set you free.
He has cast all your sin into the deepest sea.*

*God reached out to you in your anxious hour,
so you could live safe and secure from Satan's power.*

*Your Heavenly Father longs to heal your broken heart.
He holds the keys to give you a fresh start.*

*God desires to walk with you hand-in-hand.
He has a hopeful future for you better than grand.*

Merry Christmas



Table of Contents

Lifestyle

No Tree, No Problem Page 3
5 Tips to Reach your Goals Now Page C

Faith

You Have Now Page B
Safe and Secure in God's Hand Page 3, D
Help is on the Way Page 1

Food

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds Page D



by Karen Duckett
 Founder, Rescued for Destiny

TIPS

5 to Reach your Goals in the

NEW YEAR

NOW!

Many people make goals they call **Many people make goals called resolutions at the beginning of the New Year. But almost as many stop working on them after a short time. Here are 5 tips on making and reaching your goals this year.**

#1 Start now. Why wait? You

don't need to wait until January 1 to get started on a goal for your life. The moment you decide you'd like to do something, get started!

#2 Work on your goal in bite-

sized pieces. When you have something really large to do, break it down into small steps that you can handle. Then do one step at a time.

For example, let's say your goal is "Get my GED." That's a huge and wonderful goal you can do over time. So the first step may be, "Find out where I can take classes." Even that step can be broken down into a smaller step: "Talk to three people today about where to take classes." Write out the bite-sized steps. You can use this worksheet on the next page to get started.

Another bite-size tidbit — **1 x 6 = 6**

— This formula helped me years ago when I had a goal to write a book. I

was working full-time, married with two children, and also very involved

in my church. How could I write a book? **1 x 6 = 6!** 1 hour a day for

6 days a week (1 x 6) is 6 hours a week. That's quite a bit of time!

That's how I wrote my book.

The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my

heart. He helps me, and my

heart is filled with joy. I burst

out in songs of thanksgiving.

Psalm 28:7 NLT

#3 Celebrate! Celebrate every

time you complete a **small step.** After all, you are one step closer to your goal! Making a list of small steps will give you the joy of crossing things off your list.

Celebrate big when you complete a major set of steps. This is called a *milestone*, a word that refers to a marker for each mile on a road. Pause at that marker and say, "Wow!

THANKSGIVING



The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. *Psalm 34:17 NLT*

#5 Ask God for help. He loves to

give it! You may also choose to get your support partner's help or feedback about your goal and the steps you've written. But it is always up to YOU what you do and which steps you take. After all, it's your life!

#4 Get a support partner. Ask a friend, spouse, or anyone you respect and trust to be your partner. Share your goal and list of steps with them. On a regular basis, let them know how you're doing. This will help keep you focused and motivated.

Look how far I've come!" Then you will go on to the next step with new energy. You can begin now by using the worksheet on the back side of this article.

Encouragement for Today!

by **Kim Fredrickson**, author of *GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK*, Marriage and Family Therapist and contributor to *Reach UP* Fall 2015 on the topic of "Being Your Own Best Friend."

A little something to remember if the holidays hold memories that make you sad.

No matter what you have going on in your life - **You Have Now!!**

Don't let what has happened - is happening - or your fear of what might happen take away your NOW. I still have NOW, no matter what the future holds ... so do you!

Don't let what has happened - is happening - or your fear of what might happen take away who you are. You can have hope in your future and in God who holds you in His hands.

Sad to say, but people who attach their identity to what has happened to them rarely get better. They stay stuck and sink deeper into the problem. They lose their NOW and risk losing their future. Of course when things are bad we all need a long period of time to grieve and process what has happened, and work through it. This is normal. Just don't camp there and end up living there forever.

Whatever has happened, whatever / whomever you have lost is **HUGELY** significant. Take care of yourself in the process, be a compassionate and kind friend to yourself and grab hold to what you still have - who you still are. Remember, no matter what - **You Have Now!!**

You have Now!

About a year ago I was helping a lady from church who had cancer. I went to the grocery store for her and took her to treatments.

One day last February I dropped her off at an appointment. When she called for me to pick her up, she asked if I'd first stop at CVS and get a few things. I bought them, and the items cost a little over \$21. On the way home, she asked how much everything was so she could pay me back. I told her, "Don't worry. I've got it." Naturally she insisted on paying me back, but I told her no. It was my blessing to provide these things for her.

When we got to her house, she stayed in the car while I came around to open the door for her. When I opened my door and stepped out, I put my foot right on a twenty dollar bill!

Only God is so good and faithful! He knew I didn't have any extra money, but

Thankful
I Could Help!

Thankful
God Helped ME!

Reach UP **B**

THANKSGIVING



Jo Ann Butler is currently preparing to serve on Mercy Ships for a year as a volunteer. Pray for her.

To learn more about Mercy Ships:

www.mercyships.org

Jo Ann Butler
His servant,

I felt led to help her anyway. My great God rewarded me in a special way! And in case you think this could easily happen, I want to tell you that this street had only three other houses and no sidewalks. There wasn't much foot traffic there!

Given to you by:



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