



the  
**GRACE**  
guide



Live Your One Beautiful Life

**SUSIE DAVIS**

This book is presented to:

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From:

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On this day:

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**GRACE**  
guide



Live Your One Beautiful Life

**SUSIE DAVIS**

 Abingdon Press  
NASHVILLE

THE GRACE GUIDE

LIVE YOUR ONE BEAUTIFUL LIFE

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# Introduction

This is a book about you.

I want you to know you. I want to hear your story—and for you to tell it to yourself again. Because inside your story, there is God-sized wonder. Inside your story, there is awe.

The kind of awe you feel when you look up at the big blue Texas sky. Or when you see the Colorado mountains standing sturdy and strong, sentinels to the glory of creation. The thing is, the grandeur you see in nature isn't just external—it is internal, too. It's tucked deep in your narrative.

Outside, I see God's creativity and care everywhere



in nature. Inside your story, we'll see his creativity and care, too.

This book is a guide to help you understand and celebrate your unique story. Inside your own narrative, you'll find discoveries big and small that point to the God who loves you.

I'd like to start with a small story of my own that often reminds me of how God shows his love.

Twice a year, my daughters and I make a trip to Round Top, Texas, to see the largest antique show in the state. We shop and play and spend some good time together.

A couple years back, our trip together was over my birthday. To celebrate, my oldest daughter, Emily, surprised me with something special and amazing: she made flower crowns out of delicate pink and white roses for me and her younger sister to wear. It was delightful. In the moment, I was giddy. The gesture was so kind and thoughtful and whimsical. It was the first time I can remember ever wearing a flower crown.

When we left the country cottage where we were staying to go shopping, I suddenly felt self-conscious as a fifty-year-old woman walking around with a flower crown on her head. Certainly, I've seen women wearing

them before but usually only at weddings or in fairytale picture books for children. But every time I started to feel awkward, I would just look over at my daughters and see them laughing, smiling, and happy. When I looked at them, so free in their joy, I would toss off the self-consciousness and sink into my own wonder.

The flower crown made me feel loved and free in the face of shyness, self-doubt, and preconceived ideas about who I was supposed to be. Who the world tells me I'm supposed to be. And the flower crown became an emblem of grace for me: an unexpected gift that let me live more freely.

In your life and mine, God offers grace. It's all ours. But until we put it on and actually walk around in it, we don't experience the freedom.

As you are reading this book, and uncovering your story, you will be reminded that you are a **dearly loved daughter of God**.

His love for you started even before you were born, and his love follows you everywhere. You will see his hand of blessing all over your story and, I hope, wear that blessing like a crown of flowers upon your head.\*

---

\* Psalm 138:5 NLT

CHAPTER ONE

*God's Grace for*  
**You**



*He converses and delights Himself with me  
incessantly, in a thousand and a thousand ways,  
and treats me in all respects as His favorite.*

—BROTHER LAWRENCE

In a small vintage suitcase on the top shelf of my closet sits a treasure trove of handwritten letters. Some are love notes from my husband penned thirty years ago, back when we were dating. Others—irregular shaped pages ripped from spiral notebooks covered in crayon marks and unsteady penmanship—are from my children when they were young. Of course, I have dozens of notes and letters from both my mom and my dad over

the years. And then a few saved from my grandmother, mostly birthday cards when I was little. I love seeing her long slender lettering, ever always signing “Lovingly, Grandma.”

I keep old letters. And I read them when the world knocks my heart around. They center me. They remind me of the important things and the beautiful things. And more than anything, they remind me I am deeply loved. I am grateful that the people in my life took time to write me letters, because it's tangible evidence that I matter to them.

God writes us letters, too. He doesn't slip them in the little suitcase at the top of the closet. He doesn't leave them in the mailbox to be discovered at the end of a long day. He leaves them outside all over creation and inside sprinkled into the details of our daily lives.

I am wondering ... do you recognize the love notes he leaves in your life?

When I look back over mine, I see his love and care in my story everywhere. There is one incredible story with God and me concerning a tree my dad planted on the grounds of my junior high school. Another in the thoughtfulness of an older woman who invited me to

her Bible study that eventually resulted in God starting a huge healing process in my life. I can look back and remember God's kindness to me when, as a young mother in a new city, the ladies in my new neighborhood included me in their book club. In each of these instances, I felt seen, cared for, and loved.

I see his love in the way he answers my prayers. And how, even when I am by myself, I never feel alone. I look back over my life and see that it's even in the way God brings little things into my life to delight me, like the yellow finches I see at the bird feeder outside my window right now. In all my life, God pads my path with little love notes, spreading his love and light through everything everywhere.

Over the years, I have come to understand that I am a well-loved child. The center of God's focus. Someone he longs to care for, communicate with, shower his love on. And you know what? You are, too.

Inside the Bible there are all kinds of personal love letters to you and me from God. Inside those pages, there are all sorts of truths meant to bring us closer to who God is and how he feels about us. One of the most beautiful little love notes is tucked in the Gospel of John.

It says,

*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.\**

Do you think of yourself as his child, his daughter? Because I sure do. And what's written there for me is also true for you. When you believe God is who he says he is and then you accept his gift of love through Jesus, you become a dearly loved daughter. Isn't that incredible?

All those years ago when I accepted God's invitation to trust him, I became his daughter so that means I am in his family. And that decision was the best decision I've ever made in my whole life. Because it's impacted every single aspect of my life.

My relationship with God made a huge impact on who I chose to marry. It impacted how my husband, Will, and I raised our children. It made a big difference in the vocation I chose. And the decision to become a daughter is why I'm even writing this to you now.

---

\* John 1:12 NLT



What if God could write you a letter right now?  
What do you think he would say to you?

I imagine if he could write you a note right now,  
here's what he would say:

*Dear Daughter,*

*I love you. I've always loved you. And you need to know, I will never leave you. I will never abandon you. Others may come and go, but I will always stay. There is nothing you could do to undo my love for you. There is nothing you could say to drive me away. You are my daughter, and I delight in you. More than anything, I'd love to talk with you. I want you to include me in your day. But even if you don't, I'm leaving signs all over creation to remind you of how much I love you. I'm orchestrating the tiniest details in your life to show my affection ... because I'm always right there. Loving you, watching out for you, and taking care of you.*

*Love, God*

Do you believe it? Can you embrace it? I pray so. Because when you do, that's when you'll see how you

When you  
believe God  
is who  
he says he  
is and then you  
accept his gift  
of love through Jesus,  
you become a dearly  
*loved daughter.*



are the recipient of the best and biggest love ever: God's love. And you'll see how his love for you overshadows and showers your entire life with blessing.

You'll be able to look back on your life and see all the love letters. Far too many to fit in a little suitcase at the top of your closet. You are deeply loved by the God of all creation. He offers grace and kindness to you. My prayer is that you also offer that grace and kindness to yourself.









