

God's Girls

*Talk About
Guys, Virtue, & Marriage
Bible Study*



Meredith Curtis

MEREDITH CURTIS

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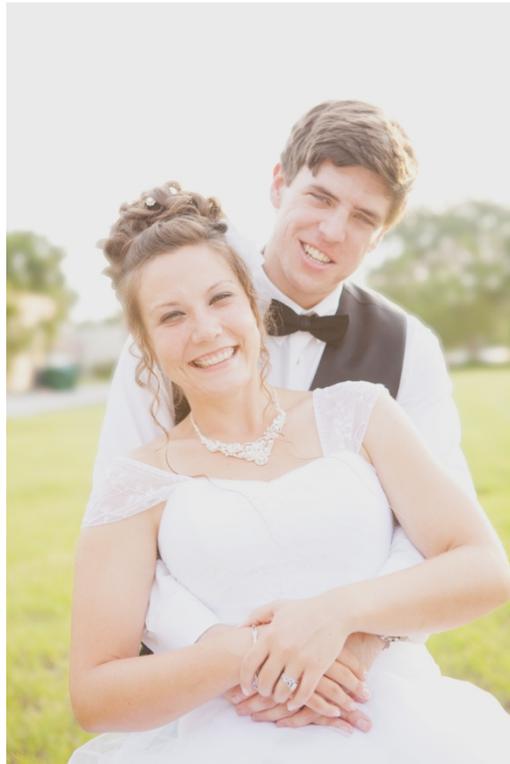
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Talk about Boys, Dating, Courtship, & Marriage

Lesson # 5

Friendship with a Purpose



How will you find a husband?

Now go ahead and read what the God's Girls have to say.

“Wait patiently and let my dad look. Build friendships with the godly guys around me, while thinking of them as brothers.”

Brooklynn

“By asking Jesus to bring him to me at the perfect time. In the meantime, I will build Christ-centered friendships with my brothers in Christ.”

Madelynn

“I will wait for the Lord to bring me one and reveal His timing to me. I trust my parents and leaders to confirm when there is someone who wants to marry me and I want to marry him. My father said no to someone and after so many broken hearts, I realize that my parents are right about the guys in my life. They care about me and I trust them and they can see flaws in a man that I can see because it's fogged by my emotions.”

Aisha

“Courtship. Dating with Integrity. Special friendship. Whatever you call it, I'm putting God in the center. If I'm called to marry someone, I'll know through a deeper friendship with that man and our relationship will be under the guidance of outside accountability like my parents.”

Jenny Rose

“I am determined to wait for him until God brings him into my life. I know that if I wait, instead of seeking him, God will bring the perfect man for me into many life. (Not saying he will be perfect, just perfect for me).”

Mae

Jack had a conversation with a young girl who was interested in him. She asked him a lot of questions about his thoughts on dating and physical affection. She was not happy with his thoughts because he wanted to reserve some physical affection for engagement and the rest for marriage. It made Jack feel a little awkward. No guy wants a pretty girl to think he's strange, even if he thinks his plans for the future are wise.

After the conversation, Jack wondered if he was on the right pathway. After talking to his parents and older brother, he felt good about his choice.

Brent and Stephanie decided to save their first kiss to their wedding day. It was not their parents' desire for them to wait for their first kiss, it was the couple who thought it would be special to wait for that first kiss. Many people thought it was sweet and romantic. Some of the people at Brent and Stephanie's church gave them a hard time.

Why did Jack, Brent, and Stephanie want to do things differently from most other people their age? They tried to follow a pathway to marriage that was pure, but purposeful.

If you want to be married, then I encourage you to follow a purposeful pathway to marriage. What is a purposeful pathway to marriage?

This is not a list of rules or a one-size-fits-all program. It is a prayerful way of viewing men, marriage, and an alternative to dating. Instead of seeing dating as a casual thing, investing in a romantic relationship is reserved for the day when you are ready for marriage. In the meantime, you

GOD'S GIRLS TALK ABOUT GUYS, VIRTUE, & MARRIAGE

have lots of friends, both guys and girls, that you hang out with and have fun together. These friendships are also focused on growing in Christ and ministry.

In the Bible, we see a process called betrothal. This is not betrothal where two families come together and arrange a marriage between a man and woman. Betrothal took place in a public ceremony and required a divorce to end the commitment. The physical relationship was held off until marriage.

Let's take a look at another alternative God offers to the world's way of dating. This is a way of purposely pursuing marriage based on biblical principles that offer guidelines to keep our eyes on Jesus.

Read Romans 12:1-3

How can we be transformed?

What ideas do you have about dating that God needs to tweak or change?

How can you renew your mind?

Read Proverbs 13:20

Who grows wise?

Who comes to harm?

Who you choose to have close relationships with will determine who you become (wise or foolish) and what happens to you (experience blessing or suffer harm). Choose carefully who your close friends will be. This especially applies to someone you are considering marrying.

Read Hebrews 13:4

Who should honor marriage?

That's right ALL, everyone, married couples, singles, children, adults. Everyone should honor marriage. The first way to renew your mind is to start to honor marriage.

Honor Marriage

Honor your own future marriage, honor your parent's marriage, honor your friends' future marriages, and protect everyone from stumbling into sin. This is a heart issue and a starting point. The Biblical principle of honoring marriage begins in your heart and influences your decisions and behavior.

Honoring marriage helps you to obey the command to "guard yourself in your spirit" so that you are preparing for a strong marriage, rather than the heartache of break-ups and divorce. So, reject the American dating game and embrace a purposeful pathway to marriage instead. Let's start with a commitment to marriage. Make a decision that you will not enter a romantic relationship with a man until you are ready to get married.

Make a decision that you will do everything you can to support the marriages of other people. You will speak well of one spouse to another. You will pray for married couples that God will bless their marriages. You will pray with couples when they are struggling and offer biblical advice. Remember Paul was single when he wrote Ephesians 5. You don't have to be married to help married couples grow stronger.

Make a decision that you will treat someone else's future husband the way you want other girls treating your future husband. If you don't want girls pawing all over your future husband, than don't paw all over theirs. There is no guarantee that you will marry someone until you say 'I do'. In the meantime, even if you have feelings for a certain guy, treat him with honor so that you will not feel awkward if you both marry someone else.

Live In Undivided Devotion To Christ

This is not a replacement for dating. Instead, this is a deliberate pursuit of marriage. There is no reason to even think about considering someone as a husband until you are ready to marry, start a family, care for a home, live within a budget, and make a lifelong commitment. If you think you still have "growing up" to do, then put a romantic relationship with a guy on the back burner. I am always amazed when people are in a hurry, as if finding someone is more important than cultivating the godly character required to have a good marriage.

Part of your parents' job is to get you ready for marriage. They are trying to prepare you through education, life skills training, financial management training, and character building. Christian

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couples will confess to you that marriage takes hard work and depends more on BEING the right person than “falling in love.”

If you are already an adult and are no longer learning from your parents, it's not too late for you. You can still develop the life skills, management, and character needed for marriage. That's why God gave us the church. If you are not currently being mentored by someone, find an older godly woman to mentor you. Let this woman speak into your life, meet with you regularly, teach you the Word, and help you grow in Christ. Ask him to point out areas that would make you a less than ideal husband. Then ask him to help you grow in those areas. I'm not saying that you have to be perfect before you get married. If that were true, no one would ever get married.

Right now, your goal might be to “fall in love,” but a better goal would be to have a happy, healthy, lasting marriage. Don't rush God! Don't be in a hurry. Enjoy your life right now. You certainly don't need a “boyfriend,” or even a husband, to be happy.

The single years are an amazing time to serve Jesus with an undivided heart. This is your time for mission trips, evangelism, blogging, mentoring younger guys, writing songs, supporting missionaries, traveling, and saving money. Now, I'm not saying you can't do those things when you are married, but it can be harder with a wife and children to take care.

While you are waiting, pursue friendships with your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Make memories with good friends who love Jesus too!

Make a decision that until you are ready to get married, you will have wholesome friendships with members of the opposite sex!

Singleness is not a punishment, nor is it a time of waiting for real life to happen. Single years are a gift from God to serve the Lord without the distractions of a wife and family. Take advantage of these years to jump into ministry with both feet at home and church. Singles in our church lead worship, play on the worship team, lead Bible studies, lead LIFE groups, serve as deacons, plan church events, go on mission trips, share the Gospel with friends, and mentor younger Christians. They also serve in countless ways setting up equipment, helping people move, cleaning the church building, coaching sports teams, and being available for meeting needs.

Marriage is an opportunity for Christian ministry in God's eyes, not an opportunity for your dreams to come true. Christians should choose to marry one another when they know that together they will be more effective in ministry than they are separately. We have a self-centered view of marriage that needs to change!

Say along with devoted Christians who make the most of every season of their life: “I will see my single years as a gift from the Lord to serve Him more fully and love Him more deeply!”

First I Will Get to Know Him In Normal Life Situations

Make a decision that before you pursue a purposeful friendship with someone, you will get to know him and build a friendship with him in “normal life” situations. In the course of everyday life, you see what people are really like. It is easy to impress someone on a date, but not as easy when your little baby brother poops all over your outfit. Be yourself. Don’t try to impress the young men you know. Just try to impress the Lord and please Him.

There are two opportunities to see who a guy really is. One is when you are serving with them over a long period of time in ministry. Why? Because things go wrong or get boring, so the “real person” comes out. There are always situations with conflict involved. How a guy handles conflict is important to know about him.

The other place is with his family. Does he treat his mother with respect and courtesy? Is he kind to his brothers and sisters? Does he work well with his dad? These are little glimpses into his future when he is a father and husband. He will treat his wife the way he treats his mother, in most cases.

You don’t have to be alone with his family. You can visit them with other friends or you can ask your parents to invite them over for dinner.

I Will Seek Accountability From Godly People Who Will Speak Into My Life

A Purposeful Pathway to Marriage requires accountability to work. The ideal accountability is from the parents of the young man and young women. When it is time to enjoy courtship, find people who will give you counsel, and input. These folks should be willing to help you create guidelines for your relationship.

Parents are to mentor their children; let them mentor you through this time of friendship with a purpose. Allow them to supervise so that you can avoid temptation and other pitfalls. Establish physical boundaries and stick to them.

Fathers and mothers are a spiritual covering for their daughters. A young man should ask a girl’s father’s permission before speaking to her of courtship. Trust your father and mother to protect you, God’s Girls! You are priceless treasure to him. If he doesn’t feel right about a boy, he is probably right. Men can see through young men easier than women. Women can see through young ladies easier than men. Trust Dad to see who the boy you like really is and encourage young men to trust Mom.

Your Dad will want to talk to you about your feelings for the guy. Sometimes, guys have asked to pursue a relationship with one of my daughters and she is not interested in a relationship with him that could lead to marriage. My husband and I won’t try to talk them into it. That is their call to make.

Friendship With A Purpose

Read Proverbs 20:5

If the purposes of the young man's heart you court are deep waters, how will you draw them out?

Now is the time where we get to know one another better! Learn to listen closely and ask questions to build your relationship during this time of friendship with a purpose. One of the fun things to do in courtship is to enjoy deep discussions about various things. You can get to know how each of you feel and think about dreams, relationships, family, experiences, ideas, and Jesus. Obviously, you cannot pursue marriage with a non-Christian since the Lord forbids us to be yoked with unbelievers. This is a great time to learn about each other's journeys in the Lord.

It is nice to get to know each other without the emotional roller coaster that physical affection brings to a relationship. Enjoy the time you will spend time talking and learning all about one another.

Physical affection is left for engagement or marriage, depending on you and your parent's philosophy in this area. You and your parents might decide that kissing on the cheek or holding hands is permitted. In our house, we just keep affection to the level that friends would show like hugs.

Many couples choose to hold hands and kiss during engagement, while others wait until marriage. Every relationship will look different as you seek God for His will. This time, though, is a time to build a deep friendship. This deep friendship is more important later on, when you are married. It also keeps our head a little bit clearer so that we can pursue marriage, which is such an important thing, with wisdom, rather than being led by the emotions that affection stirs up.

Now, of course, when you like someone enough to wonder if you should marry them, emotions are there. There is no way to have an emotion-free friendship. They won't go away if you try. Just keep them in proper perspective.

I'm not saying that emotions don't have a place in courtship. It is highly likely that you and your beloved will feel all kinds of butterflies and mushy-gushy feelings. What I am saying is that feelings are not a reliable thing to base your decisions on. Holding off on physical affection helps to keep your mind clear and makes it easier to listen to the people in your life who are giving you counsel.

Also, physical affection is a "sign of ownership." When a young woman holding a guy's hand, she is telling the world, "He's my guy!" When a guy has his arm around a young lady, he is communicating, "She's my lady!" We don't own another person unless we are married to that person. So, in that way, physical affection before marriage is putting the cart before the horse. It's communicating ownership that you don't have yet. Wait until you're married and then tell the world, "She's my girl!"

Let's Review

This is a brief look at a Purposeful Pathway to Marriage, focusing on the Friendship with a Purpose Stage. We'll talk more about this later, but for now, consider this as a better alternative for a Christian than the dating—break-up—dating—break-up cycle!

The time to begin this process is when you are ready to get married. A Friendship with a Purpose is begun by two people ready to be married and sensing that God is calling them to be married to one another. If you choose to take this route, your relationship is overseen by parents and other wise adults who love the Lord and both of you. These adults give you counsel and accountability. Courtship is a time to grow closer in your friendship and to find out if marriage is the next step.

The big difference between Friendship with a Purpose and Dating is that they have different intentions from the very beginning. Recreational Dating's purpose is to have fun. The purpose here is to pursue marriage.

"When a couple begins a courting relationship, they both know the purpose of the relationship is to consider marriage. Conversely, casual dating is a romantic linking of a couple simply to enjoy each other's company for the present. In dating, both parties understand that while marriage may be possible in the future, neither person is seriously considering it at the moment. As a result, immediate pleasure is the whole purpose for dating, even for the Christians who draw the line at sexual immorality. Courting has a long-term end in view. There are no casual "tryouts" in courtship, and it is reserved only for couples spiritually and emotionally ready for marriage" (Dr. Don Raunihar, *Choosing God's Best: Wisdom for Lifelong Romance* pg. 20; Prince Press of Hendrickson Publishers; 2003).

What Should I Call It?

People call this kind of relationship many things: courtship, dating with integrity, Christian dating, and more. I like to call it Friendship with a Purpose or Purposeful Pursuit of Marriage. It doesn't really matter what you call it because every relationship will look a little different. The big issue is that the purpose is to honor Christ and pursue marriage with a heart to stay pure, stay involved in ministry, and make decisions about the relationship together with parents.

Here are three principles to keep in mind if you want to honor Christ and your future spouse.

Commitment First; Intimacy Second

Intimacy is the reward of commitment—I don't need to pursue a romantic relationship before I'm ready for marriage.

Intimacy is reserved for marriage because it is a benefit from God, a reward of commitment. If you are not ready for commitment to marriage, you are not ready to be intimate with someone. Though we practice the reverse of this truth in our culture, we see the tragic results: divorces, disease, unplanned pregnancies, abortion, and broken hearts. Don't choose that route. Go God's way! Save intimacy for marriage.

Only Married Couples "Own" One Another

I cannot "own" someone outside of marriage.

Ownership is another benefit of marriage that nonbelievers, and some Christians, like to enjoy before they make a commitment. Unfortunately, "ownership" changes constantly, so people are very insecure not only before, but after marriage. Just remember, no guy is YOURS until he is your husband.

Purity Matters to God

I will avoid situations that could compromise the purity of my body or mind.

The best way to stay pure is to FLEE from temptation. Simply stay away from situations that will put you in a place of temptation too! Avoid being alone with a guy that you are attracted to. Don't watch movies that show things that are inappropriate for Christians to see. If you know God doesn't want you to do it, then don't watch other people do it on a movie or television screen—this would include sex, drinking, disrespecting parents, swearing, or checking out women. Yes, I realize that 99% of movies and TV shows are out of the picture now! Don't worry, there's plenty of others things to do for fun!

*"Controlling our sexual desires in volatile situations often means doing one of two things: escaping from the situation or breaking off the relationship. First, when you get into a situation that you cannot control, be honest with yourself about your weaknesses. If you can't handle it, get out of there. Run as fast as you can! An excellent biblical example of this is the story of Joseph" (Josh McDowell, *Why Wait: What You Need to Know about the Teen Sexual Crisis* by Josh McDowell and Dick Day, pg. 375, Here's Life Publishers, 1989).*

A Word from a Guy!

Let's hear from a guy now! Brian is 19, a college student, bass player, and my sound guy!

Why I Have Chosen Courtship

By Brian Webb

I have decided to court rather than date. I want to honor the Lord and I want a strong marriage that will last.

The mentality that goes with dating is selfishness. You want to have fun. You want to benefit yourself in the short-term; there is no commitment. How many dating couples have you seen that genuinely had a commitment to one-another? How many dating couples have you seen that just wanted to have fun and feel good about themselves? I'm sure that the former is much rarer than the latter.

Most people who date will stay with one person for a few weeks or months and breakup. Then they will find some other person to do the same thing to. I have known very few people who ever knew, let alone married, the first person they dated. If throughout your romantic pursuits, you completely lack any form of commitment and rarely even get to know the latest person you "love," then how will you stay married? Too many couples have learned a pattern of indifference rather than commitment. They then carry that mentality into marriage.

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With dating you are not only setting yourself up for failure but, you are also putting yourself into very dangerous situations. When dating temptations can be very real and it can become very easy to cross a boundary line you have set for yourself. I have decided that I want to wait until my marriage ceremony to experience my first kiss. Last year I almost crossed that line when I got too close to someone I liked. But I was not yet ready to commit to marriage. Thankfully, the Lord had grace on me and gave me strength to not only have self-control in that situation, but, also, to end that aspect of that relationship. If you compromise a little, then you will eventually compromise a lot.

I have decided to court because I care more about my future wife than how I feel now; I care more about the Lord than to break His heart with a failed marriage. Marriage is all about commitment which is something to practice and get used to while courting. With that in mind, why would I want to try anything else?

Resources for A Purposeful Pathway to Marriage

Authentic Beauty: The Shaping of a Set-Apart Young Woman by Leslie Ludy; Multnomah Publishers, Sisters, OR; 2007.

I Kissed Dating Goodbye by Joshua Harris; Multnomah Publishers, Sisters, OR; 2003

Boy Meets Girl by Joshua Harris; Multnomah Publishers, Sisters OR; 2005.

Passion and Purity: Learning to Bring Your Love Life under Christ's Control by Elisabeth Elliot; Baker, Grand Rapids, Michigan; 2002.

Of Knights and Fair Maidens: A Radical New Way to Develop Old Fashioned Relationships by Dr. Jeff and Danielle Meyers.

God's Girls Talk about Guys, Virtue, & Marriage Bible Study by Meredith Curtis; Powerline Productions, Lake Mary, FL; 2016.

Real Men Talk about Freedom, Girls, & Marriage Bible Study by Pastor Mike & Meredith Curtis; Powerline Productions, Lake Mary, FL; 2016.

The Making of Real Men Bible Study by Pastor Mike & Meredith Curtis; Powerline Productions, Lake Mary, FL; 2016.

Choosing God's Best: Wisdom for Lifelong Romance by Dr. Don Raunihar, Prince Press of Hendrickson Publishers; Peabody, MA; 2003.

It Takes A Gentleman and A Lady by Eric and Leslie Ludy; Ellerslie Press, Windsor, CO; 2011.

When God Writes Your Love Story by Eric and Leslie Ludy; Multnomah Books, Nashville, TN; 2011.

God is a Matchmaker: Seven Biblical Principles for Finding Your Mate by Derek & Ruth Prince

Passion and Purity: Learning to Bring Your Love Life under Christ's Control by *Why Wait: What You Need to Know about the Teen Sexual Crisis* by Josh McDowell and Dick Day; Here's Life Publishers, San Bernardino, CA 1989.)

Sex is Not the Problem, Lust is: Sexual Purity in a Lust-Saturated World by Josh Harris; Multnomah Publishers; Sisters, OR; 2005.

And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity by Dannah Gresh; Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL; 1999

Meet Mr. Smith: Revolutionize the Way You Think about Sex, Purity and Romance by Eric and Leslie Ludy; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; 2007.

Creative Counterpart by Linda Dillow; Thomas Nelson; 2003.

Feminine Appeal: Seven Virtues of a Godly Wife and Mother by Carolyn Mahaney; Crossway Book, Wheaton, IL; 2004.

Let Me Be a Woman by Elisabeth Elliot

Jesus, Fill My Heart & Home Bible Study by Meredith Curtis; Powerline Productions, Lake Mary, FL; 2010.

If Only He Knew: Understanding Your Wife by Gary Smalley; Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI; 1979.

For Better or for Best: A Valuable Guide to Knowing, Understanding, and Loving Your Husband by Gary Smalley; Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI; 1960.

Resources & Links

Courtship Page on Joyful and Successful Homeschooling
joyfulandsuccessfulhomeschooling.com/hshs/courtship.html
jshomeschooling.com/hshs/courtship.html

How Courtship is Different than Dating iblp.org/questions/how-courtship-different-dating

Dugger's Seven Rules of Courtship today.com/parents/duggars-7-rules-courtship-love-air-no-kissing-2D79464674

A Practical and Biblical Understanding of Dating & Courtship charismamag.com/life/men/22803-a-practical-and-biblical-understanding-of-dating-and-courtship

Leslie Ludy's Set Apart Girl setapartgirl.com/

Set Apart Girl Blog setapartgirl.com/leslie-ludy/blog

The Rebolution from Alex and Brett Harris therebelution.com/blog/

Elisabeth Elliot elisabethelliott.org/

Christian Courtship polynate.net/books/courtship/

Relationships and Dating in the Bible titusinstitute.com/datingbible/relationshipsdatingbible.php





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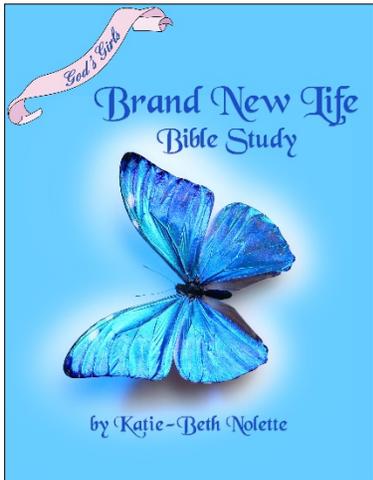
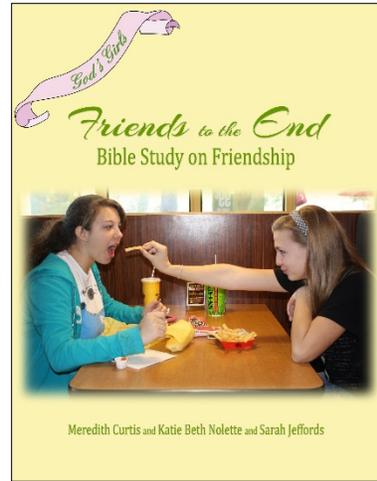
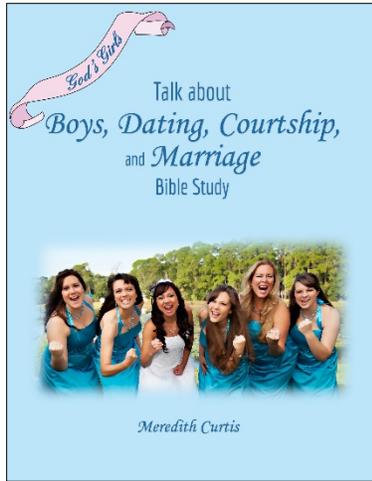
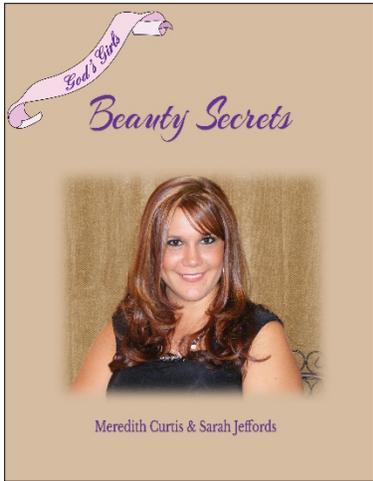
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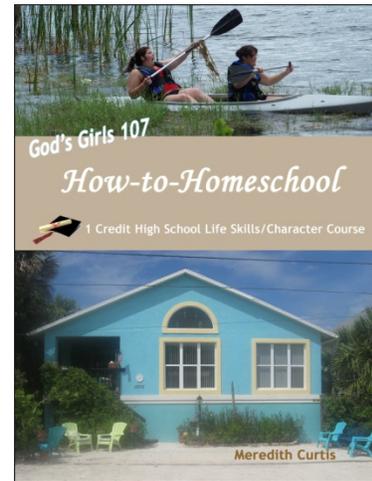
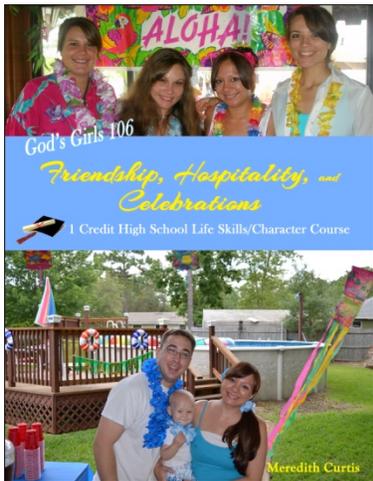
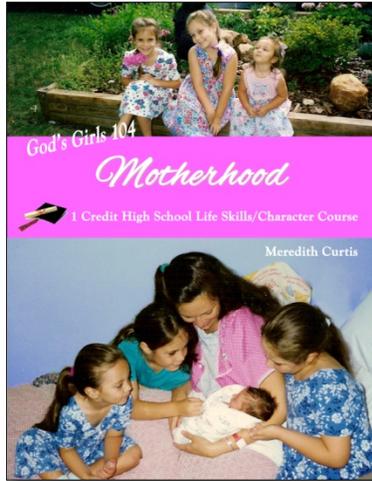
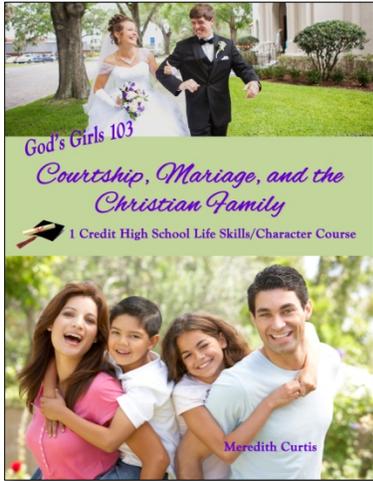
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God's Girls Bible Studies & Classes

God's Girls are just like you! They want to grow closer the Lord, find the perfect man to marry, and change the world! God's Girls want their life to count for eternity. They are His set-apart young women who refuse to compromise. If you're a God's Girl, you will love these Bible studies and one-credit life skills classes.



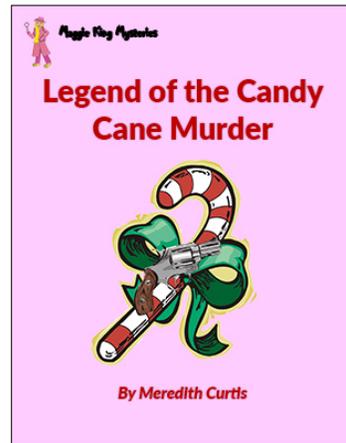
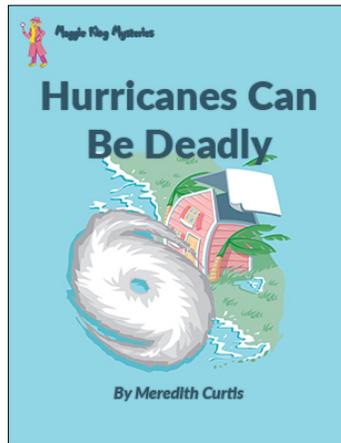
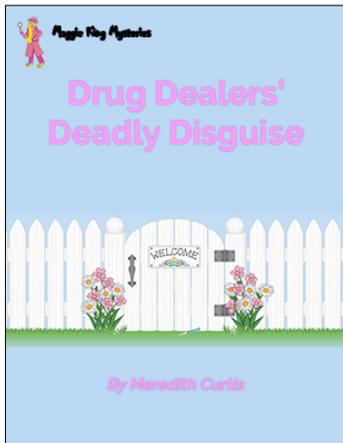
God's Girls Classes



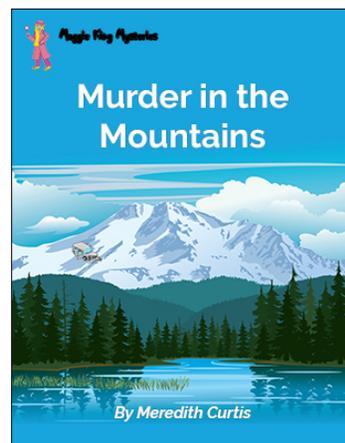
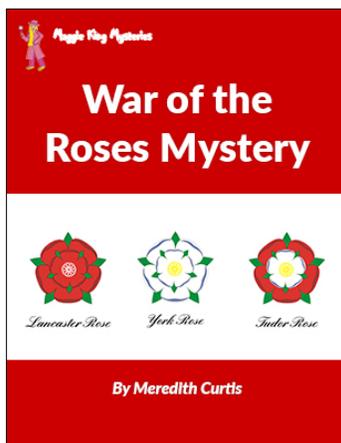
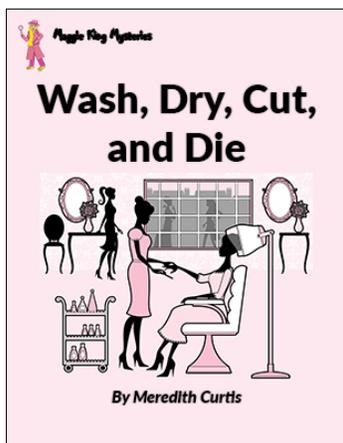


Maggie King Mysteries

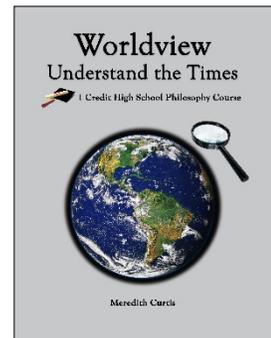
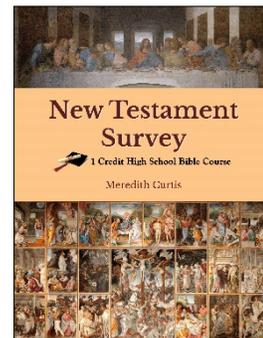
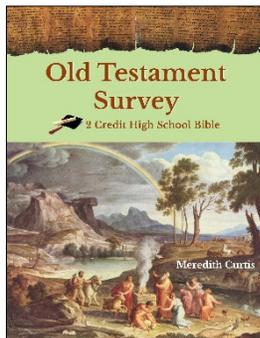
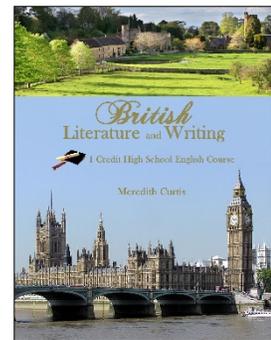
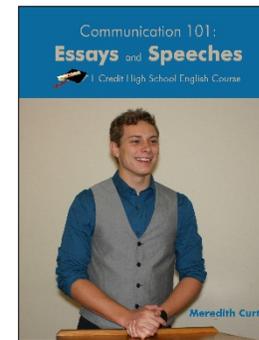
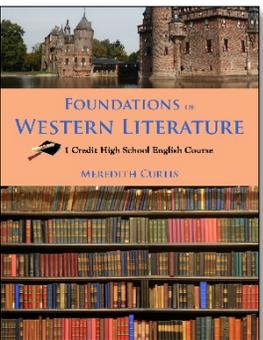
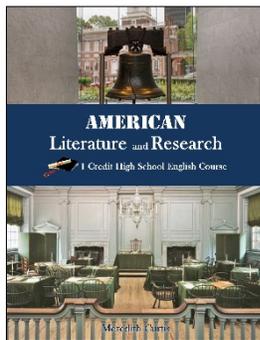
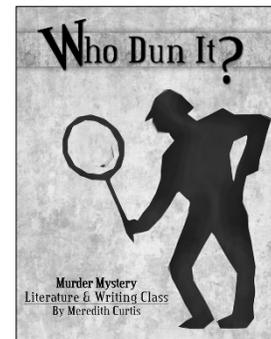
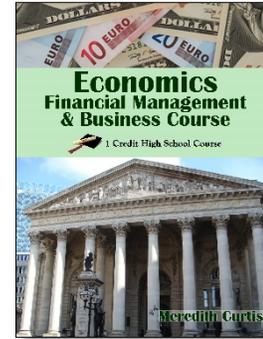
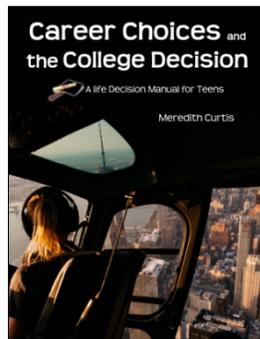
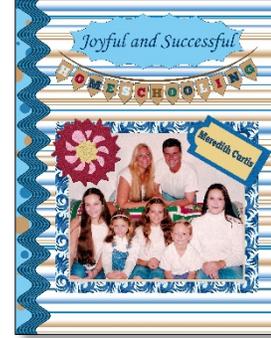
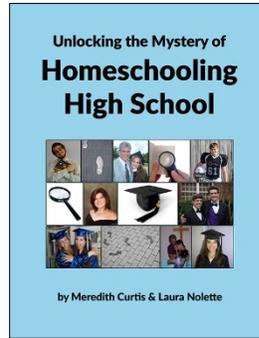
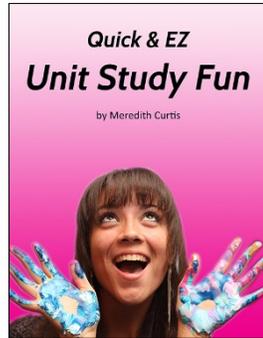
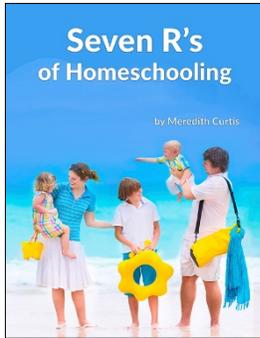
If you like cozy mysteries, you will love this series! Meet Maggie King, a pastor's wife and homeschool mom who keeps stumbling across dead bodies. With her sidekicks, Sophia and Mary-Kate and her curious children, Maggie is on one adventure after another.



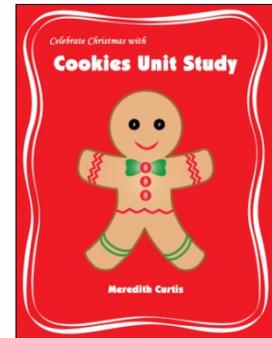
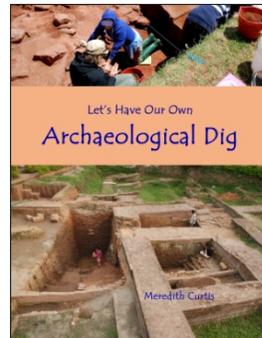
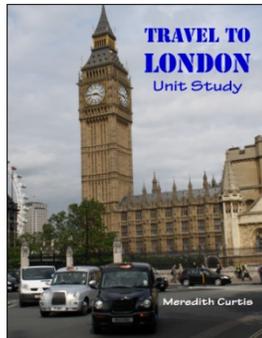
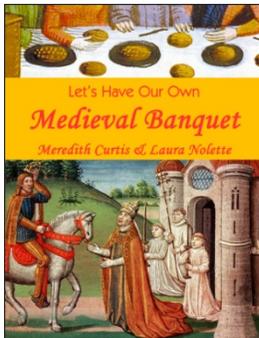
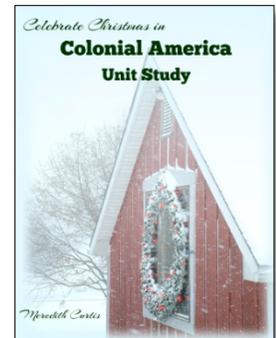
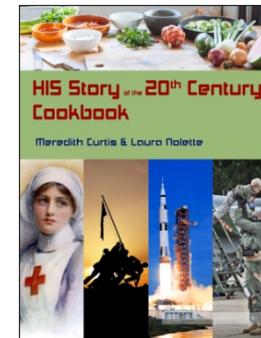
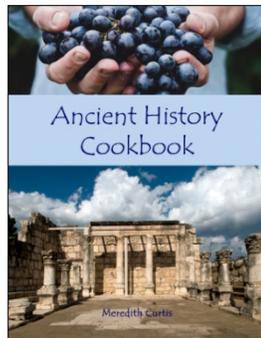
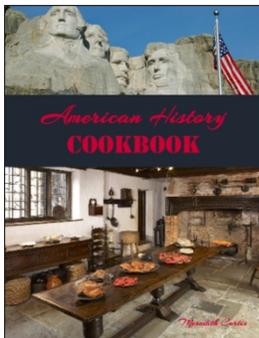
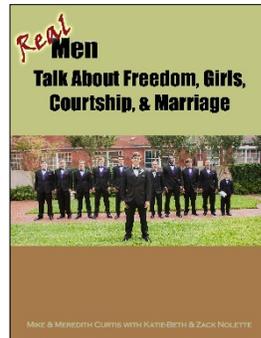
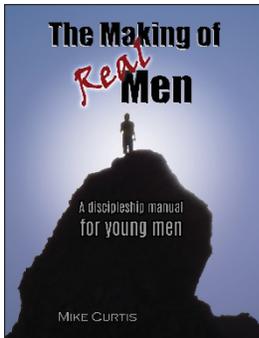
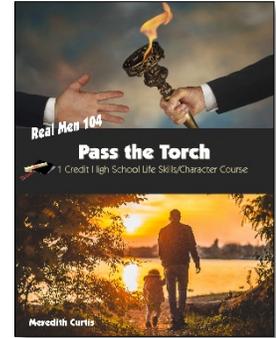
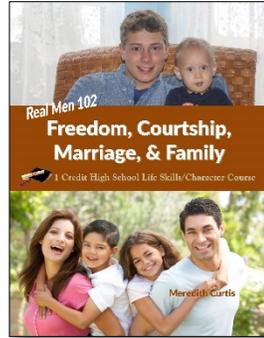
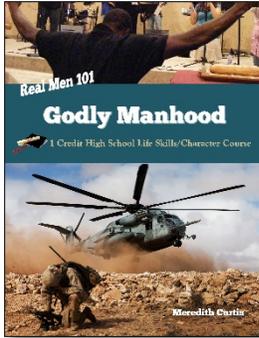
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meredith Curtis, a pastor's wife and homeschooling mom of five amazing children, leads worship, mentors ladies, and, sometimes, even cooks dinner. Her passion is to equip people to love Jesus, raise godly children, and change the world around them with the power of the Gospel. "Lives are changed in the context of relationships," Meredith often says, as well as, "Be a world changer! Raise world changers!" She enjoys speaking to small and large groups.

All inquiries can be made to the author, Meredith Curtis, through email: Meredith@powerlinecc.com or contact her through her websites: joyfulandsuccessfulhomeschooling.com

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Meredith is the author of several books.

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