

“*They Call Me Mom* is spit-out-your-coffee hysterical and equally poignant. Michelle and Bethany hold nothing back in these highly relatable devotions about their lives as mothers. Full of God’s love and encouragement, this book is one you’ll binge read in between making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for your kids—it’s that addicting!”

SARAH PHILPOTT, PhD, farm mama of three, award-winning author of *Loved Baby*, and blogger at allamericanmom.net

“If you’re a mom looking for wisdom, advice, and spiritual support, read this book. With gut-level honesty and laugh-out-loud humor, Michelle Medlock Adams and Bethany Jett reveal their own teachable moments and insights from the best and worst days of motherhood. This is a book you’ll want to give to every mom you know!”

CAROL KENT, speaker and author of *He Holds My Hand*

“A beautiful and thoughtful devotional from Michelle Medlock Adams and Bethany Jett, bathed in spiritual truths yet honest that even one of God’s greatest gifts to women has its difficult moments. Highly recommended for all moms who recognize this incredible motherhood thing is full of joy and sadness, peace and chaos, successes and, well, the other stuff. This devotional reminds us that all these are the plans of our Savior, and they are all for our good. Oh, and if you’re the ‘perfect’ mom, this might not be the devotional for you!”

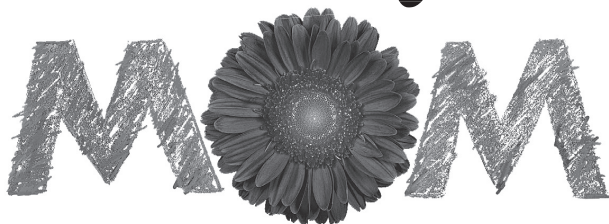
MICHELLE TESORI, cofounder of the Tesori Family Foundation

They
Call
Me



They Call Me

52 Encouraging
Devotions for
Every MOMent



MICHELLE MEDLOCK ADAMS and BETHANY JETT

 Kregel
Publications

They Call Me Mom: 52 Encouraging Devotions for Every Moment

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For my precious daughters,

Abby Leigh and Allyson Michelle:

*I'm so honored that you call me Mom and I'm so excited
that you two are now experiencing this amazing thing
called motherhood.*

Love you more!



To Jeremiah, Jedidiah, and Josiah:

You are the three best gifts a mom could ever wish for.

I love you millions and millions and more.



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Introduction

“**M**om” is the best title we’ll ever have the honor of holding, yet it’s also one of the hardest jobs we’ll ever have the pleasure of doing. That’s why we need our #momtribe to support us, pray for us, and cheer us on as we care for those precious gifts from God.

It was our greatest desire to be real—no pretenses—in this book, because being a mom means we’re real, sometimes raw, and usually running on caffeine.

We hope you’ll enjoy a good laugh as we share our crazy, idiotic mom moments, relate to our biggest mommy fails and challenges, and be inspired to run this mommy race with a bit more pep in your step.

Within these pages, you’ll find inspirational messages with Scripture verses and applications, as well as sidebars featuring practical, helpful information. We hope you find it all useful.

It’s our goal that you feel supported, encouraged, and loved as you read each entry, because we are in your corner and we prayed over this book from the planning stages to the moment we hit Send on this manuscript.

Lastly, remember: they call you Mom, but God calls you chosen, empowered, treasured, and more than enough.

And us? We call you friend. Hugs!



1

They Call Me Dream Chaser

Bethany's JETTLiner

The *Greatest Showman* soundtrack gets my pulse racing and my blood pumping. When little P. T. Barnum sings “A Million Dreams,” I feel the words soar through my soul, and when I look at my kids, I see that same starry-eyed look reflected in their faces.

The look of a dream chaser.

What dream do you chase?

Does your heart stretch out its fingertips to grasp the elusive tail end of a fantasy so big that it doesn't seem like reality could ever be possible?

Do you ever read a book or watch a show and resonate strongly with a character because you want to be her or wish you knew the things she did? Have you ever wondered what your life would be like if you'd taken a different path?

Sometimes you don't know what your dreams are, and sometimes there's a tiny niggle in your heart—an unspoken unrest—when you just know that you're meant for greater things. You were meant to make a difference.

Sometimes it's fear of failure that keeps us from stepping out of our comfort zones.

In Ephesians 4:1 Paul begs that we live a life worthy of our calling, because we *have* been called. Indeed, God has a purpose for our lives. Granted, that purpose is not always revealed right away. Sometimes we are in the training-pants part of our journey while we prepare for our big-girl panties.

Sometimes we don't always follow the path God laid out for us. However, our loving Father always provides a way for us to return. We can open our arms and catch the vision and purpose God has set.

If you ask my kids right now what they want to do when they grow up, all three of them will say the same thing: "I want to be a YouTuber." And I say, "Baby, you can definitely be a YouTuber." In fact, many YouTubers make a ton more money than we do. If they can support themselves, help others, and honor God, then babies, go be YouTubers.

It's important that our kids walk through the dream-chasing process with us. When I have a business meeting that I'm nervous about, I ask my boys to pray for the call. We'll jump up and down together if the call went well. When a book contract comes in, we pile in the car and head out for frozen yogurt covered in fruit, candy, and syrupy goodness.

They see the hustle and they witness the heartache. Owning a business means putting out fires along with storing up wins. Our kids need to see that not everything goes right all the time. The example we set instills the confidence and coping skills they'll need as adults when they face these same types of issues.

Not everyone is nice. Not every dream pans out.

The key is to know that you've got God on your side and when you confidently walk in His plan, those missteps and hardships are redeemed in His timing.

God's purpose for us and our natural inclination and talents work

hand in hand. We encourage our kids to chase their dreams by encouraging them to share with us their passions.

It's not our job to squash their dreams but to guide them into following the call God has on their lives. I don't know God's plan for each one of them, but I know my job is to help water the seeds that God has planted in their hearts. When they are old enough to make decisions for themselves, I'll be right there to guide them as I pray for them.

And when we turn the volume high and belt out "A Million Dreams" together, the look on their faces matches the song of my heart, and I dream.

Michelle's Intel

Whenever I speak about being a writer at Young Authors Day programs, I always take time to ask the students what they want to be when they grow up.

You know what I've discovered?

Little bitty kids can have great big dreams. Some children answer "firefighter," "nurse," "teacher," "writer," "artist," "policeman," or "movie star." Still others say "model," "race car driver," "professional baseball player," "scientist," "president," and so many more awesome occupations.

Bottom line—children know how to dream big.

Do you know why? Because no one has told them yet that they can't dream big, and they don't have that inner dialogue that says, "You can't be a movie star. You're not pretty enough. You'll never be able to accomplish your dream." They truly believe they can do anything. And you know what? They're right!

Encourage your children to dream big, and then follow their example.

We should all be able to believe *big* when it comes to the dreams and ambitions that God has placed within us. Our heavenly Father wouldn't

have placed them there if He weren't going to help us achieve them. So, encourage your little dreamers, and use your childlike faith to start believing *big*.

God Calls Me Dreamer

The Bible says that God will give us the desire of our heart (Ps. 37:4), but it's important that we also pray for God to align our hearts with His. We don't want to chase the dreams of our own making, but the dreams that God gives us. Psalm 32:8 says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you." Our prayer should be for our children to pursue God's will and for God to equip us with wisdom to help guide their paths.

How to Create Vision Boards

Vision boards are creative expressions of our goals and passions . . . and they're an inexpensive and relatively nonmessy activity! Supplies needed: construction paper, poster board, magazines, glue, scissors, and any fun crafty extras you have on hand. This is something you can do right alongside your kids.

Step one: Brainstorm with your kiddos, discussing wishes, dreams, and goals that could be the inspiration for your individual boards. (By the way, you can have more than one board. For example, I have a health and fitness vision board and a family vision board.)

Step two: Pull or cut out anything from the magazine that conveys the goal or want. It can be pictures or words.

Step three: Space the cutouts in a pleasing way on the poster board.

Step four: Glue the pieces in place.

Step five: Hang the poster somewhere it can remind you and your children of your goals.

Voilà! Your very own vision board. As a bonus, have your children share why they chose the words and pictures they did and what those things mean to them. Lastly, be sure to hang on to those vision boards for nostalgia's sake and so you can celebrate together when those goals and dreams are accomplished.



2

They Call Me Loving (No Matter What)

Michelle's Intel

I already had one beautiful baby girl, Abby Leigh, and as I watched baby number two on the ultrasound screen, I couldn't help but secretly hope for another girl. I loved the Laura Ashley nursery at our little house. I loved all the pink outfits, the ruffles, the bows, the sparkly shoes. I loved it all! But I also knew I'd love a baby boy just as much, and I was well aware that a boy would make Jeff's mom happy since he would carry on the Adams name. With Jeff being an only child, that duty fell on us.

"Let's see if your baby is going to cooperate today," the nurse whispered in the dimly lit examination room.

Jeff squeezed my hand. I smiled up at him, so excited to learn the sex of baby number two.

It seemed like the nurse moved the wand up and down and across my petroleum-jellied belly for an hour.

“Oh, there it is. I can confidently tell you the sex of your baby,” she said, printing out a few pictures. “Are you sure you want to know?”

“Yes,” we said in unison.

“You’re having another little girl! Congratulations!”

Jeff kissed my hand he was already holding, and I cried tears of joy. I was so happy I was having another baby girl, a little sister for Abby.

Jeff’s mom also cried when she heard the news—I’m not sure her tears were ones of joy because she really wanted a boy, but what she didn’t know at that moment was how close she and Allyson would become. Best friends.

On the drive home from the doctor’s office that day, I worried Jeff might be disappointed we weren’t having a boy, but even before I could voice my concerns, he said, “I’m so glad we’re having another girl. They are so precious.”

And boy, do they love their daddy. There’s truth behind that song, “Daddy’s Little Girl,” for sure!

Life with girls has been such a blessing; okay, not every day but most days. If you’re a #momofgirls you’re nodding your head right now. Being a mom of two amazing daughters is great in many ways—we share shoes, clothes, makeup, and a love for romantic comedies. It’s been great to see my girls excel in gymnastics and cheerleading since those were sports I also enjoyed when I was growing up. And I’ve loved being able to give them advice about dating, frenemies, and “girl stuff” over the years.

I’ve also enjoyed sharing some not-so-girly passions with them—Cubs baseball and bass fishing. Yes, we’re a Cubbies-loving, bass-fishing family, and we wouldn’t have it any other way.

Now, listen. Raising girls hasn’t been all butterflies and sunshine and bluebirds sitting on my shoulders. We’ve had screaming matches. We’ve had seasons when Abby wanted to move out because I was, and I quote,

“the worst mother in the world.” And we’ve battled some serious health issues with Allyson. It wasn’t always easy, but it was always worth it.

So many times, I’ve fallen on my face before God and asked for His intervention—that He would help me parent my girls—because many days I felt like I was falling short. I wondered if I was good enough, smart enough, strong enough, or simply enough. I found out that I wasn’t, but He was, and with God’s help, I can testify from the other side—we made it!

Both Abby and Ally have grown into remarkable young women. Both love Jesus. Both graduated college and are excelling in their respective careers. And both are happily married and starting families. Jeff and I stand in awe of our daughters.

I wish I could take credit for any of it, but honestly, I can’t.

It’s all Jesus.

I don’t know what stage you’re in these days, but wherever you are on this motherhood journey, just know you’re not alone. Include God in every stage, at every age. Let Him direct your steps, as it says in Proverbs, and trust Him in the big and little decisions. Whether you’re a #boymom or a #girlmom, it doesn’t matter because you’re a loved #childofGod, and with your heavenly Father by your side, you’re going to rock this!

Bethany’s JETTLiner

I was thrilled when I found out I was pregnant with baby number one. It didn’t matter if I was having a boy or a girl. But apparently my husband had secret hopes for a boy—his face when the ultrasound technician pointed out our son on the monitor was priceless. I prayed for a girl with baby number two, but once again we saw male baby bits on the monitor. I teared up but found solace that my sons would have each other and would be best friends.

When God blessed us with baby number three, I prayed hard for a

girl. I knew this might be my last opportunity to be pregnant, so I asked God for the desire of my heart.

When baby number three revealed himself at the ultrasound, I cried.

Then I felt guilty for crying. My baby was healthy, and he was a blessing.

I'll never know what a little mini-me would look like or be able to raise a godly daughter. However, I have the privilege to raise three amazing little boys into godly men.

My boys know that at one time I'd wished for a girl, but they know this truth: God told me *no* because He has a special plan for each one of their lives. He wanted Jeremy, Jedidiah, and Josiah to be each other's brothers, and God wanted my husband and me to raise them to love Him and one another.

I take this responsibility extremely seriously. The Bible says that God knit every single one of my crazy, rambunctious children together in my womb. I've grown into my role as a boy-mama, and I cherish every dirt-filled mischievous moment. I may have had a different original plan, but my boys are exactly what God knew I needed.

God Calls Me His Child

John 1:12 says, "But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God" (NLT). Isn't that amazing? I know that's a title we throw around a lot in Christian circles, but when you realize that you're a child of God—that's life-changing. If God had a hashtag, it would be #FatherofAll followed by #HeAdoresUs—how great is that? He loved us before we were even born, and though we can be a handful (like our own children), He still adores us, believes in us, and is proud of us. Think how much you love your kiddos (regardless of whether they wear tiaras or dirt). Well, God loves us even more! That changes everything.

Five #MomofGirls Quotes

- "A mother's treasure is her daughter."
- "A daughter is someone you laugh with, dream with, and love with all your heart."
- "A daughter is just a little girl who grows up to be your best friend."
- "Happiness is mother-daughter time."
- "A daughter is God's way of saying, 'Thought you could use a life-long friend.'"