



Day One

**IT STARTS WITH
AN INVITATION**



A unique sense of hospitality is prevalent among my friends and family. When we invite people over, we want them to feel welcome, comfortable, relaxed, and better as a result of being there. Many of our traditions are centered around food, and some are centered are the holidays or other special occasions.

None of them, though, compare to the hospitality of Cathy.

My friend, Cathy brings a new definition to the phrase hostess with the mostest, especially at Thanksgiving.

Every November, all are welcome to gather around her table, enjoy great food and even better company. She usually has a theme, a few table decorations to match that theme, and games and activities for all ages. She has a unique joy for Thanksgiving and her goal for that day is to share that joy with anyone she comes in contact with.

When people come over to her house, no parts of it are off limits. There is no kids table vs adults table, you can eat inside or outside (if the weather is favorable), and you become a part of her family for the day. She opens her doors, welcomes all who enter, and encourages them to abide within.

Our God is good and big. His joy is found in the opportunity to experience life with us daily. He wants to walk with us, guide us, instruct us, and be intimate with us. He created this world with us in mind and has invited us to live with Him in it.

Like Cathy's house at Thanksgiving, no one is excluded from God's invitation and everyone is welcome. In order to accept Him into our lives, the rules are simple. We need to get to know Him as well as He knows us. We do that by reading His word, praising Him daily, talking to Him through prayer, understanding the power of who He is and what He can do, and obeying Him. Furthermore, we must accept Him fully.

We can't decide that we only want to see Him once or twice a week and ignore Him on the other days. We can't praise and worship Him one moment, yet cut someone off in traffic the next. We can't say we want Him to do incredible things in our lives if we aren't willing help Him in doing incredible things for others. And lastly, we can't say we want the best marriage with the best spouse if we don't check ourselves first to make sure we are doing our best as well.

When you accept His invitation, you decide to let Him in your life completely. Let's consider this book as part of our invitation. My hopes are that you incorporate it into your daily quiet time and use it to allow God to permeate your life completely.

He is the ultimate host. Accept His invitation. You'll be glad you did.

How is God inviting you closer to
Him today?

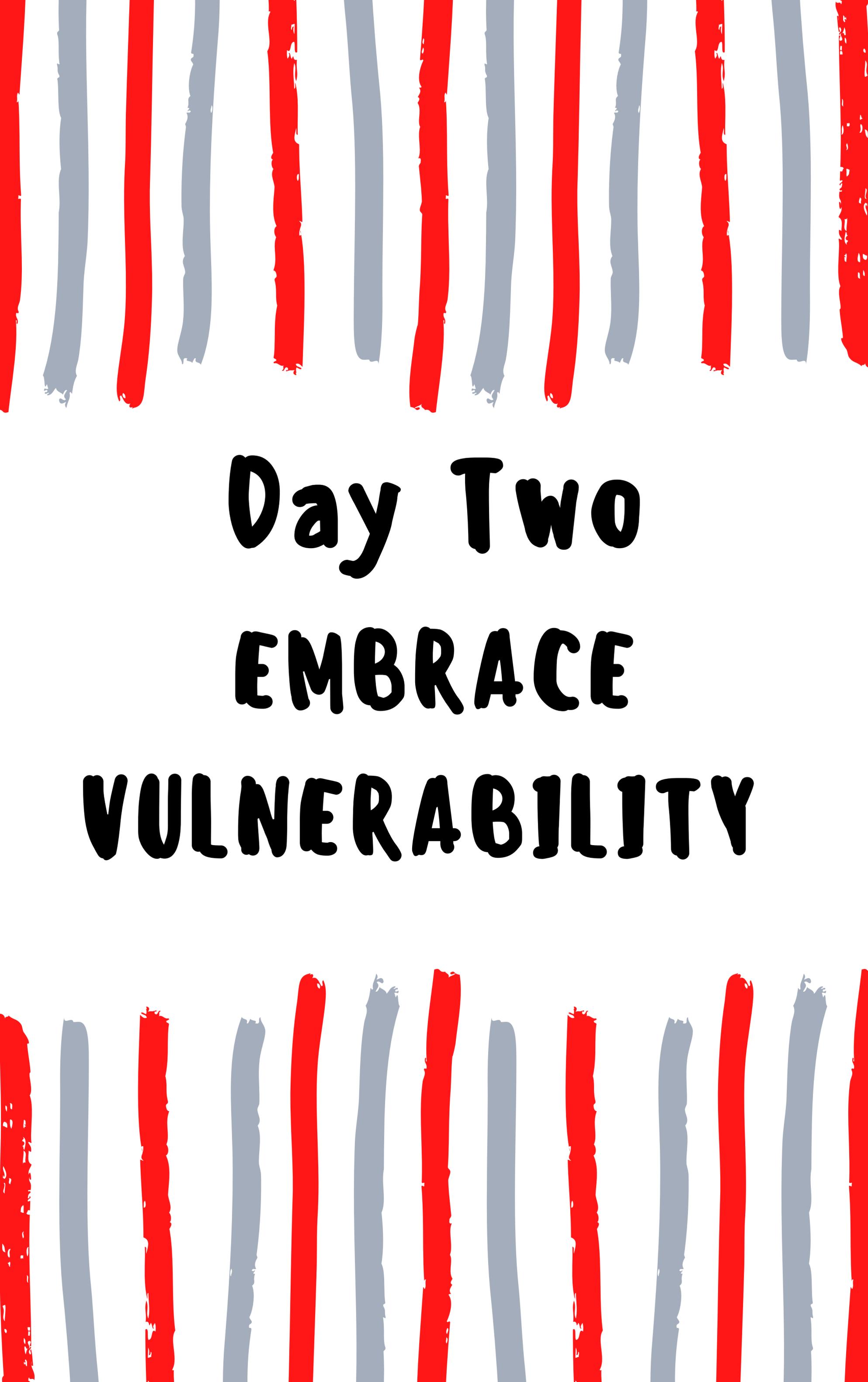
“

*Remain in me, and I in you. Just
as a branch is unable to produce
fruit by itself, unless it remains
on the vine, neither can you
unless you remain in me.*

John 15:4

”

How will you respond?



Day Two
EMBRACE
VULNERABILITY

Remember, God cannot heal who you pretend to be. Healing takes realness. Realness takes vulnerability.

Vulnerability is the state of being so honest and transparent that you risk the chance of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally.

God needs us to be vulnerable with Him.

Experiencing God in big and good ways will require you, me, all of us to do the following:

1. Face the unfaceable. The very thing you have buried and hidden inside of your heart from 1982 (or earlier) is the very thing you need to address.
1. Admit the unthinkable. You are not perfect. You've thought some weird thoughts. And you've even done some bad things. Admit it to yourself so you can move on.
1. Be okay with being different. When you're close to God, you are going to be different, think differently, and act differently. Be vulnerable enough to know that it doesn't matter what people think about your different-ness. Those who matter won't mind and those who mind won't matter.
1. Do what you can to fix the situations you've labeled as unfixable. Do you need write someone a letter granting them forgiveness? Do you need to admit that you aren't always right? Do you need to apologize for hurting someone's feelings? Their response doesn't matter. You are doing this to free yourself from the guilt and the shame of hiding it.
1. Encourage yourself through the process. You can do this. You can be successful at doing this. You are already equipped to do this.

When has God placed you in situations where you need to be vulnerable?

“

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.”

Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may reside in me. So I take pleasure in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and in difficulties, for the sake of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

”

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

What did you learn from it?



Day Three

**THE TRUTH ABOUT
SUBMISSION**



My first memory of actually feeling the presence of God was when I was 13. I renewed my faith at age 21 when I chose to join a specific religious denomination. Our relationship got deeper in 2008 (divorce) and even moreso in 2013 (thyroid cancer.)

Even though I was a saved Christian, I did not know I would need Him -- really need Him -- until my marriage fell apart. I have not been the same since the day that I made an intentional decision to submit to His will. On everything.

People often ask me how I was able to do all of the things I have done as a single mom. My honest answer to that question is, "I don't know." My surviving and eventual thriving as a single mom of three is nothing but the grace of God. To let me do what He needed to do in my life, I needed to submit to Him.

As an extrovert, it's very easy, and sadly somewhat natural, for me to attempt to dominate a relationship. From start to finish. And when I do that, the finish sometimes comes quicker than anticipated.

Save yourself the time and trouble of the correction, reproof and consequences for not submitting to His will. Trust me, it's not as bad as we think it is.

In what area of your life is it hard
to submit to God?

“
*Therefore, submit to God. Resist the
devil, and he will flee from you.*”
James 4:7

Write at least three
additional scriptures that
can help you stay focused
on God's will.



Day Four
OBEDIENCE



Some years ago, I thought I was having the worst year of my life. The death of a close family member, heartbreak, and severe job stress were the contributing factors.

As bad as that year was, it shined one huge light in my face. The obedience light. With the exception of the death of the family member, most of the drama of that year came from my direct disobedience to God.

Once you submit to His will, you then have to do what He says and live how He says live.

His directions guide us through our trials. If I can be completely honest with you, the obedience thing is hard for me. Very hard. So hard I sometimes spend time justifying all of the reasons I shouldn't obey. In case you are wondering, that is not a good idea. At all.

For all of the times I argued and was stubborn though, there were some times that I actually did what God said.

When I did obey Him and follow His direction, I was absolutely amazed at the results. That led me to realize that maybe, just maybe, I needed to be more intentional about obedience. Specifically, obedience when it comes to the word of God.

So that we're clear, I have not mastered this. In all honesty, it's a doozy, but each day I try. And every time I try, if I fall, I pray, get right back up, pray again, and obey.

Take a few minutes today to figure out where you are on the obedience spectrum.

Is God calling you to do
something you do not want to do
right now?

*Now if you will carefully listen to me
and keep my covenant, you will be my
own possession out of all the peoples,
although the whole earth is mine,
Exodus 19:5* ”

How can you get the
necessary peace so you
obey Him?



Day Five

REMEMBER THE
POWER OF SEVEN





When my daughter turned 7 years old. I had the opportunity to spend some time with her and her friend to celebrate her birthday.

Because I personally believe that children can be so much smarter than adults sometimes, it's worth sharing what I learned that day several years ago on the importance of turning seven. Which, incidentally, represents completion in the Bible.

→ Too much of anything, other than God can make you crazy.

→ People have different priorities in life.

→ Slurpies or icees or slushies and a few minutes alone with the Bible are the best cure for any ailment.

→ Cheerleading is a skill that everyone should know and practice daily. Positive cheering daily can help everyone's self-esteem. God does it to us, so we should do it to others.

→ Be nice to everyone you meet. You never know what people are going through. Jesus lived His life that way.

What has God revealed to you
through the eyes of a child?

“*Jehoash was seven years old when he began to reign.*”

2 Kings 11:21

What can you do to
intentionally pour into the
life of a child you know?