

Morning Glory

By Anna Baber

Since I was about nine or ten years old I've had a passion for encouraging teen girls in the Lord. Obviously as a nine-year-old, I could not exactly do that. But God used those years to cause me to bring this desire to Him, build my own character, and cultivate important friendships with godly girls.

Late one January night in 2014, I was reading a book a lady from my church had given me. It was talking about using the freedom in my single years to impact people for Christ. And I was yet again faced with my longing to reach out to my sisters in Christ, but not having a way to do it beyond talking with girls at my church.

I remember leaning back and thinking, "How can I impact girls on a heart-to-heart level—all around the country—in an way that doesn't require an Internet profile, my parents' time, or a driver's license?"

The answer came so quickly it surprised me.

Start a devotional over email.

From that very first moment, what later became known as Morning Glory became my passion. I fell asleep that night working out the details in my head. A devotional would be sent out every morning of the week except for Sunday, each day having its own writer. The next morning, I emailed my church friends and several of my closest TeenPact friends to see what they thought. The idea was for girls to be able to relate and encourage each other as we all struggled through our own various trials.

Several weeks later, on Monday, February 10th, 2014, the first devotional was sent out to a whopping eight people. I'm not sure what I was expecting, but over the next few months, I was blown away by how God chose to use this little devotional.

I started getting emails in response to the devotionals. Most often, they said things like, "Anna, you have no idea how much I needed this today." It opened doors for deep conversations and bonding with other like-minded girls.

And Morning Glory grew at a rapid pace. Despite having no way to promote it socially, in three months, Morning Glory grew from eight people to over fifty ladies from all over the country. Through my grandmother, an unbelieving elderly lady in Massachusetts began receiving the devotionals. This lady told my grandmother that these devotionals gave her day meaning and purpose and she looked forward to receiving them every day. I also received an email from someone who told me that Morning Glory was the only godly influence in her life at that time. It was so neat to get emails regularly explaining how that day's devotional helped someone stay focused on God through a struggle.

Around the time I began using MailChimp to send out the devotionals, my mom gave me the idea to name it Morning Glory: A Girl's Daily Devotional. The motto became, "Pursuing Jesus with Your Whole Heart."

Not only has Morning Glory blessed me and the people receiving the devotionals tremendously, but it has also provided unique opportunities for girls to write devotionals on a regular basis to impact a large group of people. It has also become a venue for ladies to share with others what God has been teaching them and minister to

others who are struggling with the same sins, fears, and doubts. It is a safe place to struggle, share, and grow.

I have written devotional every week for almost a year since the start of Morning Glory. God has grown me so much through this exercise of writing over 50 devotionals. So many times, I've received an email from one of my writers saying that she, for some reason, cannot send me a devotional. God has always been faithful in these situations. Many times the Lord has given me the strength to stay up late and write one. And other times, within hours, someone sent in a guest devotional!

Currently, there are eighty-seven ladies from all over the country being encouraged on a daily basis by six young Christian writers from various places around the United States. I have been so astounded by what God has done with this ministry, and I cannot wait to see where He will take it from here.