



INTRODUCTION

When my children were little, I invited a small group of moms to meet at my house each week. We read a book together, discussed it, and prayed together. We were all in the same stage of life: early motherhood. Our children were under five years of age and we were knee deep in childcare, exhaustion, and parenting dilemmas. We often felt helpless and insufficient to the task of motherhood. Those weekly meetings kept us grounded and helped us realize we weren't alone. We prayed with and for each other, spurring one another on in the faith.

One of the books we read together was Tim Keller's *Counterfeit Gods*. It was eye-opening for me. I hadn't studied the topic of idolatry in depth before. It helped me see that idolatry is more than worship of a statue or the love of money. *Counterfeit Gods* helped me see how even good things can become idols. Because my life was centered on motherhood, I found myself reading the book

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and relating the idols Keller described in the book to my life as a mother. I could see ways in which I worshipped success as a mother. I saw how I looked for life, purpose, and meaning in motherhood. I realized I worshipped control in the ways I sought to order, structure, and command the chaos of life.

As a result, I ended up writing an article for *Desiring God Ministries*, titled, 'The Idols of a Mother's Heart.' It was about idols specific to motherhood. The article ended up in the book *Mom Enough: The Fearless Mother's Heart and Hope*.

I knew there was more I wanted to explore and learn from this topic and am thankful that Christian Focus gave me the opportunity to write a book about it.

This book is something you can't breeze through. You need to take your time. Be thoughtful and prayerful about your own heart as you read. Pray for wisdom and discernment. Pray that you will have spiritual insight to see the idols you worship. And pray for God's grace to transform you in the process, because isn't that what we need most of all? Learning about idolatry is one thing. But having mere knowledge doesn't change our lives. We need the Holy Spirit to work in us and change us. We need the truths we read to intersect with our hearts, changing us from the inside out. Only God can do that deep surgical work. Prayer is an integral part of identifying idolatry in our lives and rooting it out, so I encourage you to be in prayer throughout the reading of this book.

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What You Can Expect

The first chapter is about motherhood. All mothers know how challenging motherhood can be. Whatever expectations we had at the start of our journey in motherhood were quickly dashed after we first held our child in our arms. Motherhood has stretched us in ways we never saw coming. But just like physical stretching, though it makes us sore, it is for our good. God uses motherhood, as another of many means, to sanctify us and chapter 1 discusses that truth.

Chapters 2-4 are about idolatry. In chapter 2, we look at how we were created to worship and what happened to our worship in the Fall. In chapter 3, we explore idolatry and its impact on the heart. In chapter 4, I identify specific questions you can ask your own heart to help you see and evaluate the idols you worship.

Chapters 5-9 focus on a few different idols that mothers might worship. These are not all the idols mothers have; I've just chosen a common few. As you read, explore your heart, and pray through the chapters. And as you do, other idols might come to your attention.

The final chapters are about facing idols, dethroning them, and turning our heart back to the one true God.

I encourage you to read this book with other moms and explore idolatry together in community as I did with my discipleship group. I've included discussion questions, Scripture readings and prayers at the end of each chapter to help you in personal reflection and in group discussion.

Don't Waste the Season of Motherhood

Moms, we all find unique and different challenges in motherhood. Mine are probably different from yours and yours are different from another mom friend of yours. Some days are harder than others. Some weeks are joy-filled and others are more than you can handle. These years of raising children and helping them grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord provide an opportunity for us to grow as well. See the hardships, challenges, weaknesses, and frustrations as a place for God to work in you, transforming and sanctifying you by His grace.

When my kids were little, older women would tell me how fast the season of motherhood passes and to enjoy every minute of it. Looking back, I agree with them. Not only should we enjoy the precious few moments we have with our children, we also need to seize the opportunities for our own growth during this season. Let's not waste the season of motherhood. Each late night visit from a little one, every tantrum in the middle of the grocery store, each disruption to our routine, and every unexpected illness is an opportunity for God to show us our need for Him. He alone is our salvation and our life. Hard as we try, we cannot find life outside of Him.

Will you join me in this journey?

In Christ,

Christina Fox