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# Long Days Of Small Things: Motherhood As A Spiritual Discipline



## Synopsis

Rich, soul-inspiring practices for moms who have neither quiet nor time. Dirty laundry, crayon-smearred bills, and smashed crackers . . . And there's your Bible buried under a pile of diapers. Bleary-eyed from lack of sleep, without a moment of peace and quiet, you wonder if the spiritual life you crave is even possible. But God sees you. He designed this parenting journey, after all. He understands the chaos of motherhood. And he joins you in everything—whether you're scrubbing the floor, nursing a fussy newborn, or driving to soccer practice. Catherine McNiel invites you to connect with God right here, in the sacred mundane of every mothering moment.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Motherhood is about the sculpting of souls, and Catherine McNiel hands you desperately needed tools." --Ann Voskamp, New York Times bestselling author and mother of seven "McNiel shows readers how to keep company with God in the everyday...How I wish I'd had this book -- and her example -- when I was just beginning my journey into motherhood." --Jen Pollock Michel, author of the award-winning book *Teach Us to Want* "[McNiel's] book can help a weary parent wake up a bit more to the eternal life they're living." --Ted Olsen, director of editorial development at Christianity Today "Nothing short of a banquet table of nourishment for a hungry mama's soul...Read and be seen, feel valued, and awaken to the beautiful, spiritual practice of motherhood." --Aubrey Sampson, author of *Overcomer* "Offering simple doable practices to connect to God, McNiel's beautifully woven words will strengthen you for your journey." --Margot Starbuck, author of *Small*

Things with Great Love --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Motherhood is about the sculpting of souls, and Catherine McNiel hands you desperately needed tools. Not only for the formation of your family but for your own soul. Let God do a holy, needful work through the pages you hold in your hands. (Ann Voskamp, mother of 7 and NYT bestselling author) Catherine has written so beautifully of a woman's spiritual pathway to God. She has found the words to express what so many of us experience: repetitiveness of service that becomes a mysterious celebration of the sacredness of life and the presence of God. I wish I had written this book myself: a book that celebrates the spaghetti days of family, the wonder of pregnancy and birthing, and, above all, the sacredness of the journey. (Valerie Bell, President and CEO of AWANA) Writing in the tradition of Brother Lawrence, Catherine McNiel shows readers how to keep company with God in the everyday. But she is no monastic. She is a mother, caught in the turbulence of life with small children. How I wish I had had this book and her example when I was just beginning my journey into motherhood. (Jen Pollock Michel, Author of the award-winning book Teach Us to Want) Here's a book for every Christian parent forced to smile through an exhortation to "enjoy every moment; it's all over so fast!" Catherine McNiel doesn't urge you to "make time for God" in early parenting but rather to see God there already: in the trial, in the joy, in the leaky diapers, plugged ducts, and scraped knees. Instead of being one more call to "sleep when the baby sleeps," her book can help a weary parent wake up a bit more to the eternal life they're living. (Ted Olsen, Director of editorial development at Christianity Today) Catherine's words are nothing short of a banquet table of nourishment for a hungry mama's soul. Long Days of Small Things invites the reader to see the mundane tasks of motherhood (changing diapers, folding laundry, planning meals, etc.) not as interruptions to our spiritual life but as an oft-overlooked path closer to Jesus. Accept Catherine's invitation, mom. Read and be seen, feel valued, and awakened to the beautiful, spiritual practice of motherhood. (Aubrey Sampson, Author of Overcomer) Moms, if you don't have time to read a book, this is the book for you! If you hunger to connect to God, these words will nourish your deep places. On every page you will be reminded that your children don't distract you from the way they are the way to a richer, more meaningful life. Offering simple doable practices to connect to God, McNiel's beautifully woven words will strengthen you for your journey. (Margot Starbuck, Author of Small Things with Great Love)

Although my kids are 'tweens and teens now, I found this book encouraging, challenging, and refreshing. Catherine meets moms where they are at (often in messy, chaotic places!) and encourages them to see God at work. I love the way she spurs us on to see the bigger picture--how God is building faith in us and in our children, and I especially appreciate her insight that radical, God-centered obedience and discipleship happens, not just in the grand gestures, but especially in the small, daily acts of sacrifice and obedience. This is a word for all followers of Jesus, not just moms, but Catherine brings it home for moms in a special way. I can't wait to see what insights she brings to us when her own kids are teens and 'tweens!

Catherine McNiel has a gift for pushing through the mundane to discover the spiritual. In the pages of *Long Days of Small Things* she writes, "Walk with me in these pages through daily life, with all its beauty and pain. We'll look honestly at the journey of motherhood and the spiritual fruit that hides there." She calls mothers to pause in the midst of changing diapers, washing piles of grass-stained clothes, and preparing endless meals to see, hear, touch, and taste the goodness of God. She beautifully and thoughtfully elevates the role of motherhood by reminding us that God chose to show up in our world in the womb of a woman.

I'm only halfway through the book but so far it has been great! I read a few pages at a time and have appreciated how honest the author is and how simple the ideas are. It's a very encouraging book as it shows how God has designed motherhood to be a place where He reveals Himself to us anyway- it's just a matter of opening our eyes to seeing Him in the mundane and/or trials of motherhood. Highly recommend!

Catherine brilliantly uses scripture, and her own experiences, to give examples of how motherhood is a spiritual journey itself. *Long Days of Small Things* should be a part of every mother's, especially mothers with small children, library. It is an easy read. I finished in less than 24 hours, granted the bulk of it was read on a road trip from west central FL to northwestern IL. I will be recommending this book to all my mommy friends! It may even become a regular baby shower gift!

I wish Catherine's book had existed when my daughter was an infant. A lover of the disciplines of silence and study, I felt spiritually crippled as a young mother. Catherine sheds new light on the mundane, menial, and even excruciating tasks of motherhood and helps us find God in the midst of

the mess.

This is a must-read for moms who are in the trenches of raising little ones! Highly readable, Catherine McNiel's book points moms to the truth that motherhood itself can be a spiritual discipline. Ordinary activities--nursing little ones, chopping vegetables, changing diapers, and disciplining errant small ones--can all be in service to the Creator, the One who formed and fashioned us for days such as this. The author does not sugar coat the realities of sleep deprivation and isolation, but instead shows moms that the ordinary, unseen, and underappreciated tasks we undertake daily can be the best sort of spiritual discipline, bringing us to the place where we know Jesus more intimately than ever before.

A must-read for moms! Catherine uses the small things in life, things that we could easily spend our time complaining about, and eloquently writes tangible ways to give each small thing to God. Read her words and be reminded that God has ordained you for this amazing job as a mama. We have the opportunity to see tasks we do each day as a spiritual discipline if we just change our mindset and practice seeing Him in these long days of small things.

So different from other mom books/blogs out there. I have a hard time connecting with super peppy or whiny writers when talking about parenting, and this was neither. Its so real, so moving, and so encouraging. Both her writing style, and the impact it's had on me, remind me of reading Anne Voscamp. I'm just thankful I found this book!!

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