

A BOY AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Action
Devotional

JIM GEORGE



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Hey There!

I'm Jim. I'm so glad to meet you, and I think it's awesome that you're diving into this book of devotions. Our journey together is all about the most important adventure of your life—your adventure of living for God. Being a boy after God's own heart in today's world can be challenging and sometimes a struggle. But it's like that with anything that's worth going for!

As we get ready for our exciting trip together, I want you to know that I have you totally in mind as I write to *you*! I'm thinking about the things you're dealing with, the friends you're hanging out with, and the choices and decisions you're making. Everything that's big in your life. All the important stuff.

Your adventure with God is the most important adventure you will ever have. It's the experience of a lifetime. The biggest thrill in the universe. And the best thing about it? It leads you straight to God. God loves you. He loves you so much that He sent His precious and only Son, Jesus, to die for you on the cross so that you could know Him and live with Him forever.

So let's get into this! All it takes is a minute or two each day to learn more about God and how much He

cares about you. You're valuable to Him. He has big dreams and huge plans for your life, and He's ready for you to discover them.

So—ready...set...here we go!

In Jesus' great and amazing love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim George". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Jim" and "George" being capitalized and prominent.

Dream Big!

Do you ever dream about your future? Maybe you imagine yourself as an all-star professional athlete. Or a doctor who discovers the cure for a disease. Or a world-renowned explorer who dares to go where nobody has gone before. It's fun to dream big!

God wants you to dream about your future—and He wants you to dream big. That's because He has all sorts of plans for your life—people for you to meet, places for you to see, adventures for you to embark upon. With God, there are no boundaries. No limits. He loves to surprise you as He takes you on the ultimate journey to becoming a boy after His own heart. So never be afraid to set crazy goals and shoot for the moon. God wants you to go for it!

God, thank You for putting dreams in my heart and adventures in my life. Help me to stay focused on You as I discover what it means to be a boy after Your own heart. Don't allow me to settle for anything less than Your biggest and best dreams for my life. Amen.

Distracted

It's easy to get hooked on things you enjoy. A major example for almost every guy your age? Video games. Sure, they're fun and entertaining, but if you're not careful, they can totally eat up your time and distract your attention away from what's truly important. Like homework. Or eating dinner with your family. Or spending time with God.

Distractions like video games can give you a needed break from schoolwork or provide you with some downtime when you've been super busy. But be careful that you don't escape there too often. If you find yourself unable to stop thinking about playing video games or watching TV shows or doing anything else that takes your attention away from what you should be doing, stop right there. Talk to your mom or dad about setting limits on how much you play, and then get back to the things that are truly important!

Jesus, sometimes it's hard for me to stop playing video games or watching my favorite shows or escaping into my favorite books. Please help me not to get so distracted and not to let these things replace time with You or time with my family. Amen.

Focus

There's nothing wrong with fun distractions like video games or hanging out with your buddies or just goofing around. These things are just fine as long as you've taken care of your responsibilities. And as long as the fun stuff doesn't get too out of hand or go to extremes. The key here is keeping your focus on the big picture—knowing where the Lord wants you, as a guy of God, to focus your heart.

I know that talking about your heart isn't exactly a "guy thing," but hang in here with me. Jesus told all the people who wanted to follow Him, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). He wanted them to think of the big picture—living a life that honors the Lord. So say a prayer to God and ask Him to work on your heart, and He'll show you where to focus your time and your attention.

Lord, it can be hard to keep my focus on what I need to do when my friends and my interests are pulling me in a bunch of different directions. Show me the big picture of what You want me to do with my life, and help guide my heart. Amen.

The Most Valuable Treasure

Your treasure is the thing that's most valuable to you. For some boys, it might be their favorite sport. For others, it's their desire to be part of the "in" crowd at school. And some guys might consider their best belongings their treasure—the coolest games, the trendiest shoes, the nicest ski equipment or skateboard.

That brings us to the biggest, most important question of all: Where is *your* treasure? Where's *your* focus? Where's *your* heart? A boy after God's own heart wants to make sure his treasure—what he thinks is most valuable and important in the whole world—is what God says it should be. Here's a hint: Your treasure shouldn't be about *you*. It should be about other people. And it should be about God. So go ahead and ask the Lord to lead you on a treasure hunt. It will be totally worth it!

God, thank You for directing me to the treasure You have for me. Help me to keep my mind and my heart always seeking treasure where You want me to find it.

And please help me to make Your treasure my treasure. Amen.

Like a King

As you begin this awesome adventure in following Jesus and obeying Him, here's a key verse that shows you that God wants to be first in your life. It's Acts 13:22—and it's dynamite: “I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; He will do everything I want him to do.”

In this verse God is describing the heart of the man He chose to be king over His people. God doesn't say the man had to be really smart or a super great athlete or the most popular guy around. He was concerned with one main thing—that the future king was *a man after God's own heart*. That should be the goal of your life too. That you'll be growing into a boy after God's own heart, a boy who follows God and is willing to go on the amazing journey of doing whatever God wants you to do.

Lord, I'm excited to begin the awesome adventure of becoming a guy after Your own heart. Thank You for giving me everything I need to begin this journey and for making me like a king if I follow You. Amen.

God's Great Love

Being a guy after God's own heart starts with realizing that He loves you. As much as your parents and grandparents love you, guess what? No one loves you more than God does. Let's look at what the Bible says about God's love.

- "God is love" (1 John 4:8).
- "God so loved the world [including you!] that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

It's totally hard to imagine that anyone could love you more than your mom or dad love you, but it's true. God loves you more than anyone ever could. After all, He sent His Son to die for you so you could have a place in heaven forever with Him. There's no way anyone could ever love you more!

God, I want to experience all the cool things You have for me. And the biggest and best of those things is Your incredible love for me. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for me so I can live with You forever. Help me to live for You as I experience Your love for me. Amen.