

THE  
*Little Women*  
DEVOTIONAL

A CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER COMPANION TO  
*Louisa May Alcott's*  
BELOVED CLASSIC



RACHEL DODGE

## PRAISE FOR *THE LITTLE WOMEN DEVOTIONAL*

“The story of *Little Women* has always been the literary form of a cozy blanket from which generations of readers can seek comfort and warmth time and again. In this new devotional, Rachel brilliantly draws parallels between the scriptures and the most memorable excerpts of the beloved yet bittersweet classic. And just like the original story, this new book has the power to captivate hearts for years to come.”

–Jen Smith, book collector, photographer, and curator  
of Storybook Style (@storybookstyle)

“Rachel Dodge has a way of making you feel as though you’re with an old friend, chatting about life and love and faith over a cup of tea. *The Little Woman*

*Devotional* is no exception. The moment you open its pages, you’re swept into a well-loved favorite and with that comes all the comfortable, warm feelings of Christmas dinner and fireside conversations. This isn’t merely a charming tribute to the Marches, though. Rachel has woven eternal truths into each passage in an encouraging and gentle bid to help you see past the story. To think more deeply about what you initially read. It’s the perfect book for any young lady in your life but I challenge you to not fall in love with it yourself.”

–Kimberly Duffy, author of *A Tapestry of Light* and *Every Word Unsaid*

“This is a charming devotional that brought back fond memories of my first reading of *Little Women* as a girl. I especially appreciated the prayers and personal applications at the end of each section. The book will become a treasured addition to your devotional library. Buy a copy for someone you love. Within its pages, faith, hope, and love abound.”

–Shirley Raye Redmond, author of *Courageous World Changers: 50 True Stories of Daring Women of God*, the 2021 children’s

book recipient of the *Christianity Today* Book Award

“Rachel Dodge has given us a great gift in *The Little Women Devotional*. Reading these pages is like having a cozy chat with a friend by the fire. Dodge connects Alcott’s classic about the March girls’ life with our own spiritual lives in a beautiful, grace-filled, and encouraging way. I plan to buy a copy for every dear sister and friend I know!”

–Carrie Stephens, author of *Holy Guacamole*

“When I heard that Rachel Dodge was writing a devotional based on *Little Women*, I couldn’t wait to read it. The book was even more wonderful than I expected. Rachel has a special gift for drawing biblical truths out of classic stories in a way that makes readers appreciate them in a deeper way. *The Little Women Devotional* invites those who have already fallen in love with Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy, Marmee, and Laurie to see how their adventures, lessons, and losses reflect God’s grace and work in all of our lives. This is a perfect book for women to read with their daughters, sisters, friends, or alone while drawing closer to Jesus.”

–Jeanette Hanscome, author of *Suddenly Single Mom: 52 Messages of Hope, Grace, and Promise*

“This beautiful devotional is Truth-filled and God-honoring. It highlights events and conversations in the chapters and also goes in depth into scripture themes throughout the book. I have purchased the author’s *Anne of Green Gables* and Jane Austen devotionals as well. They are simply wonderful and I really can’t recommend them enough!”

–Lucy McCracken, artist, designer, and literary gift shop owner at Lucy in the Sky Creations (@lucyintheskycreations)

“My own daughter who has read the novel *Little Women* numerous times was struck by how each chapter in the March sisters’ lives apply to so much in her life. Her first comments to me were how delighted she was to find so many lessons in this devotional that



applied to her no matter how different her situations are than the characters in the book. This devotional encourages girls to think deeply not only about their reading but about their lives and relationships with God.”

–Lea Ann Garfias, author of *Everything You Need to Know About Homeschooling*

“As a Homeschool Mom and road school travel blogger, I classify *The Little Woman Devotional* as an heirloom treasure. I found myself curled up in a blanket with my kids and coffee in the morning, being transported back in time. Each devotion provoked amazing conversation and teaching moments. This devotional and Rachel Dodge’s other classic devotionals will be a staple in our family’s library. I highly recommend them to be in yours.”

–Bethannah Guzman, blogger and designer at  
BethannahGuzman.com  
and @lovebethannah on Instagram

“Rachel Dodge has a gift for connecting the greatest classic book of all time—the Bible—with the characters and themes of the beloved classics. In this luminous devotional, each day she links a story or anecdote from *Little Women* and ties it into scripture, making both the novel and the Bible come alive in a new way. The best part for me is the daily personal applications, which allow me to live out new truths gleaned from the pages of God’s Word and one of my all-time most cherished novels. It was a joy to meet again with Marmee, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy (not to mention Laurie and Professor Bhaer) as I drew closer to God’s loving, guiding heart.”

—Lorilee Craker, the author of 15 books, including *Anne of Green Gables*,  
*My Daughter and Me: What My Favorite Book Taught Me About Grace, Belonging and the Orphan in Us All*



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*Our mission is to inspire the world with the life-changing message of the Bible.*





*To Bobby, Lizzy, and Jack,  
who love me so well*

*“Go to God with all your little cares,  
and hopes, and sins, and sorrows,  
as freely and confi dingly as  
you come to your mother.”*

MARMEE

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## *A Little Women*

### WELCOME

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I'll never forget the first time my mother put a copy of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* in my hands. She said, "You will love it, but it will make you cry."

And isn't that true? *Little Women* has warmed hearts for generations now—making us laugh, smile, *and* cry each time we read it. The story is sweet and tender, familiar and comforting. Even the names of the characters—Marmee, Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy, and Laurie—evoke vibrant memories. Opening the first few pages of *Little Women* feels like stepping in the front door of the March home and joining the cozy family circle by the fire.

When we think of the March family, nostalgic images of hearth and home immediately come to mind. We picture a snug house bursting with activity, plays and club meetings up in the garret, hymns around the piano by candlelight, and lively meals at the table. Most of all, we imagine a dear family that loves together, prays together, and believes together.

Though it was written long ago, *Little Women* still strikes a chord with readers today. Its relatable characters and themes stand the test of time. In it we read about family and friends, war and peace, work and calling, love and loss. We learn that hard work is good for us and a cheerful heart makes it more enjoyable. We discover that the key to contentment isn't found in having everything we want but in learning to make much of what we've been given.

*Little Women* is also a treasure trove of timeless spiritual themes. Many of its lessons and motifs are drawn from the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, and other Christian writings. In

the March home, Christian morals are valued and practiced. Faith, hope, and love abound. Mr. March leads his family with loving care and patient kindness. Mrs. March (“Marmee”) teaches and trains her daughters with tenderness and practical wisdom. The March sisters learn to pray, have personal devotions, and walk with God in their daily lives. And faith is at the center of it all.

Finally, *Little Women* shows us what it looks like to live in close community with other believers. In the March family—as in the family of God—everyone has a part to play and no one walks alone. As they work and live side by side, they soften each other’s rough edges and sharpen one another as “iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17). They each use their unique gifts and talents to serve the Lord and others. They learn to care for their neighbors, comfort each other in their afflictions, hold fast to God’s Word, walk in close relationship with Jesus, and invite others to gather with them around the fellowship table.



You are holding this book in your hands for a reason. The Lord wants to meet with you and speak to you through His Word. As you spend time with Him each day, your faith will grow and flourish. God will direct your path, comfort you, and encourage you. Listen for His voice, and keep a notebook and a pen handy so you can take note of all you’re learning. Press into Jesus, and allow Him to do a new work in your heart and life.

In this book, you’ll find one devotional entry for every corresponding chapter of *Little Women*, each with key moments from that chapter of the novel, thoughts for personal reflection, selected Bible passages, and a short prayer. When you sit down to read, take time to prepare your heart. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak and move. Come to God with a posture to receive—hands open, head bowed, heart humble.

As you begin this journey, I invite you to curl up in a cozy spot and enjoy a nostalgic visit with the March family. There is so much

God wants to do in your life. Things He wants to teach you and show you. Wounds He wants to heal. Places where He is calling you to serve. And a unique role for you to play in His kingdom. May your time reading this devotional inspire a newfound joy in the Lord, a greater passion for Jesus, and a deeper understanding of His plans and purposes for your life.

*Day 1*

BEGIN AGAIN  
IN EARNEST



*Live a life worthy of the Lord and please him  
in every way: bearing fruit in every good work,  
growing in the knowledge of God.*

COLOSSIANS 1:10 NIV

“Now, my little pilgrims, suppose you begin again, not in play, but in earnest, and see how far on you can get before Father comes home.”

[CHAPTER 1]

*Little Women* opens with Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy by the fire, “knitting away in the twilight,” sighing over a “Christmas without any presents,” and lamenting the absence of Father, who is “far away, where the fighting is.” They decide to buy gifts for themselves and “have a little fun,” but when Beth sets Marmee’s slippers on the hearth to warm, the “sight of the old shoes” has a “good effect upon the girls.” They decide to spend their money on Marmee instead.

After supper the girls gather close around Marmee’s chair to read a letter from Father and the special note he included for his “little girls at home.” He says he thinks of them by day and prays for them by night. And he encourages them to use their time apart to “do their duty faithfully, fight their bosom enemies bravely, and conquer themselves so beautifully” that when he comes home, he may be “fonder and prouder than ever of [his] little women.”

As the girls sniff back tears, Marmee reminds them of how they used to “play pilgrims” from *Pilgrim’s Progress* as little girls. She inspires them to “begin again, not in play, but in earnest,” now that they are older, and see how far they can get in their journey of faith before Father comes home. Delighted with the idea, they



agree to try it and start making plans. Marmee tells them to look for their “guidebooks” under their pillows on Christmas morning.

Like the March sisters, we all are on a pilgrimage. As followers of Jesus Christ, this world is not our permanent home (Hebrews 13:14). But while we’re here, we’ve been given important work to do: We each have a road to travel, burdens to carry, and weaknesses to overcome. We have people to love and duties to fulfill. And every day we have the opportunity to “begin again, not in play, but in earnest” on our journey toward loving Jesus more and pleasing Him in every way (Colossians 1:10).

In the New Testament, we find an inspiring picture of what it looks like to follow Jesus “in earnest.” After Jesus ascended into heaven, His followers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42 esv). Each day, they attended services together at the temple and broke bread in their homes (Acts 2:46). And everywhere they went, they told people about Jesus. As a result, “the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47 esv).

*Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*

HEBREWS 12:1 ESV

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

Do you want to “begin again” in your walk with God? Is there something you’ve been “playing” at but now want to pursue “in earnest”? Maybe you want to grow in your daily devotions, join a Bible study, or find an accountability partner. Or perhaps you’re ready to fully commit (or recommit) to following Jesus with all your heart.

God wants to do a new work in your life today! He is the God of new beginnings, revival, and renewal. Make it your prayer to “live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10 niv). And if you’ve been trying to make this journey of faith on your own, join hands with your brothers and sisters in Christ. We all are pilgrims, and yet we are never alone.

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## PRAYER FOR TODAY:

*Heavenly Father, I want to start fresh with You today. Please do a new work in me. I want to draw close to You and renew my commitment to follow You and love You all the days of my life. I give You my whole heart and soul. In those areas where I’m weary and need Your encouragement, please speak to my heart. I especially need Your strength to begin again in earnest in this area of my life: [your prayer]. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

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*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.”*

LUKE 10:27 NIV

*Day 2*

THE LEAST  
OF THESE

---

*“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for  
one of the least of these brothers and  
sisters of mine, you did for me.”*

MATTHEW 25:40 NIV



*And when they went away, leaving  
comfort behind, I think there were not  
in all the city four merrier people  
than the hungry little girls who gave  
away their breakfasts and contented  
themselves with bread and milk on  
Christmas morning.*

[CHAPTER 2]

Jo finds “a little crimson-covered book” under her pillow on Christmas morning—a copy of “that beautiful old story of the best life ever lived.” It’s described as a “true guidebook for any pilgrim going on a long journey.”<sup>1</sup> Meg’s copy is green, Beth’s is dove, and Amy’s is blue, each with “the same picture inside, and a few words written by their mother.” Meg suggests that they “read a little every morning,” a habit they’ve “neglected” since their lives were “unsettled” when Father went away. And they all settle down to read quietly for a half hour.

At breakfast their faith is quickly put to the test. As they prepare to eat the beautiful breakfast Hannah cooked and give their gifts to Marmee, Mrs. March comes in from visiting a “poor woman with a little newborn baby” and six hungry children “huddled into one bed to keep from freezing.” She asks if they will give the Hummel family their breakfast as a Christmas present, and