

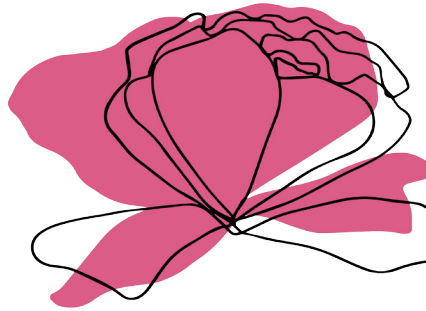
GOOD NEWS

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WINTER/SPRING 2022

WON WITHOUT WORDS

“Let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”
1 Peter 3:4



“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives.”

1 Peter 3:1

1 PETER 3:1-4

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”

1 Peter 3:8-9

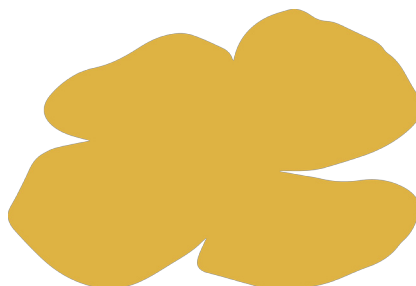
The Woman Who Won Her Husband

IN OTHER NEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER



PARTLY SUNNY
Warmer today with partly cloudy skies.



BEAUTY TIPS

Apostle encourages women to focus on incorruptible beauty. Local wrinkle cream company worries their bottom line may be impacted by his advice.

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THE WOMAN WHO WON HER HUSBAND

1 PETER 3:1-4

Buzzie and the Bird

Do you ever feel as though you are living with an entirely different species than yourself? I know as men and women we have our differences, and our minds don't always track in the same way. Often, we marry our opposite in personality. It is both comical and frustrating sometimes as we navigate a daily relationship called marriage. For those Christians living with an unsaved spouse, it is like living with another species. We are citizens of two entirely different places. We have different goals and perspectives. We handle our problems differently. It is painful to watch unsaved loved ones fly blindly, become injured by obstacles, and have their minds clouded by the enemy's distracting and destructive narrative. How can we minister to them and live lovingly with them without a word to the missed opportunities and side-tracks they make away from Christ?

I was thinking about this one day as I watched our dog, Buzzie, interact with a stunned bird who hit our glass door. This dog is not the brightest bulb in the pack, but he is the most expressive and compassionate of all the eight golden retrievers we have lived with over the last 40 years. He notices our emotions and seeks a way to comfort us. He is never judgmental of a stranger but excitedly and vocally greets every stranger with too much love. He notices the pain of other dogs and animals. His best friend is a young woman with cerebral palsy who lives in a wheelchair. She laughs uncontrollably when he jumps in her chair and slobbers all over her. You say "gross", but she loves it!

Birds hit our windows often, and not one goes without Buzzie's notice. Sometimes the birds are dead immediately and he walks with me to the garbage can. Other times they are stunned. This day, he was outside across the yard when a bird hit

the window. Immediately he came. From a few feet away, he got down on his belly and slowly crawled closer and closer, until he was nose to beak with it. I watched him watch its frantic breathing. He never nudged it. He didn't bark at it, he just remained as close as he could get, just short of on top of it. I watched them for a long five minutes. His eyes never diverted from the bird until I came over.

Worried brows looked up at me as if to say, "What can we do? We must do it now!" I picked up the bird and placed it in the window box as I often do so a cat cannot get it. I said, "Buzzie, the only thing we can do is set it up high and let God decide what to do as we wait. He is the only One who can make him fly now." He put his paws up on the window box to be sure the bird was there and then sat under the box nearby and waited. I think he was there for a good 30 minutes. The bird eventually sputtered to life and flew off. Yes, Buzzie noticed. He came and got me to let him out again and we checked the box. "Well done, Buzzie," I told him. "You were a faithful and gentle friend."

I sometimes feel like I imagine Buzzie felt with the bird. I don't speak "bird." If I speak "my language", the tone is off, like barking at a bird. Yet I am grieved when I see my loved ones stunned by life and paralyzed by their wayward decisions. I enjoyed this event with Buzzie and the bird because it was a picture of unconditional love for the wounded and lost--ones I cannot fix. He became as small as he could get, as low as he could lie, in order to meet that bird where it lay. It reminded me that love for those hurting without Jesus can be as simple as humble, compassionate presence. It reminded me to wait WITH them gently and quietly. Though they seem unresponsive, I am reminded to lift them up high to Jesus and rejoice greatly when He sets them free.

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1 PETER 3:1-4

As much as we want to shape the unsaved into who we believe God wants them to be, we are not the experts we sometimes think we are. Although we may know them better than other humans, we do not have all the information on their past, their heartaches, their childhood, their fear, their logic or their dreams. After too many words, too often, I have had to confess that I don't have all the information nor the power to reach their heart. I have found God is able to take my "too many" sometimes poisonous words and transform them into pure reverent actions that represent His love instead the image I am trying to form.

Here is a hard fact that has come from my many mistakes in this area: Too many words, with the wrong tone, disrespects God's power and may even misrepresent His character. Keeping my heart in line with God's is the daily "work" of longsuffering in grief over my loved one's condition. Their life affects our every moment, so asking, "What does love look like in this situation or this conversation?" has proved to be a simple caution light that keeps me respectful and gentle. "Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2 NIV).

Read 1 Peter 3:1-6: "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2. when they see the chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 3. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—4. Rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being

submissive to their own husbands, 6. as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror."

As you may have noticed, the first word in our Scripture is "wives." Many times in scripture certain groups are addressed: slaves, men, little children, brothers, saints, etc. The principles in the scriptures that follow reveal the heart of Christ for His believers by giving direction, correction or encouragement. Even though Peter is addressing wives, he is also laying down principles of godly conduct for Christian women in general. We all have someone to whom we must submit, be it a boss, another family member, a teacher or a parent. Jesus submitted to his parents (Luke 2:51) and to His Father's will. Other scriptures ask us to submit to government authority (1 Peter 2:13), church leaders (1 Peter 5:5), and masters (1 Peter 2:18). The heart of submission is what we are after here, so that others are led to salvation. If you are unmarried, please know throughout this study that when you read the word "husband," we are also referring to any person to whom you are called to submit in scripture.

Let's begin this next section with prayer. Ask the Lord to speak to you and ask Him to soften your heart for learning and receiving truth. Tell Him the things that are on your mind right now and then in faith surrender those things to His care as you study His word for you now. Do this each day before you begin, then read aloud 1 Peter 3:1-6.

How many of you read the first sentence and got a little tense? Maybe it was hard to swallow the word submissive? If you went blank after that word, please read it again and emphasize the word **likewise**.

OBSERVATION: verses 1-2

Likewise? Like Who? Like what? In the same manner as Who?

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1 PETER 3:1-4

Read 1 Peter 2:21-25

1. Who are we to be submissive as?
2. In what ways did Jesus submit? Read Isaiah 53. You may also want to read one of the accounts of crucifixion. (Matthew 27: 27-50, Mark 15:16-37, Luke 23:26-46 or John 19:1-30)

3. Who did Jesus submit to?

4. What types of suffering did He endure as He voluntarily remained obedient to the Father?

5. Who are wives to submit to?

6. What do husbands observe in a wife who is submitted?

towards the Lord Himself.

This is not a “one and done” activity, girls. I have to do this every day! I get stinky daily. I have to wash frequently.

7. What does it mean to **submit**? In addition to Ephesians 5, look up the word in a Bible dictionary or concordance and record the definitions here:

8. Verses 1-2 of 1 Peter and Ephesians 5 make it clear that our lives are being observed. Our conduct, our actions, speak (often louder than our words). The Christian Standard Bible reads 1 Peter 3:2 this way: *“when they observe your pure, reverent lives.”*

9. What actions, or ways of living, “speak” pure reverence? See also, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

INTERPRETATION

Read Ephesians 5.

If you are in a marriage where your husband is NOT loving you as Christ loves the church, you may read Ephesians 5 with a little bitterness or ungodly longing, focusing on all that is due you from the man you live with. That is not how any woman is to read Ephesians 5. We read it and see the standard our Savior, our perfect groom, has set and has won for us. In that, we are complete with no room for resentment toward our own husbands. Before we go any further, please take a moment to talk with God about any resentment, anger, unforgiveness or disappointment you harbor towards your husband or

APPLICATION

Christ suffered for you and for all who misunderstood Him, cursed Him and did not believe. He suffered willingly for “pre-believers.” The benefit (grace and salvation) we receive from Jesus came because of His great love, but ultimately because of His pure submission and obedience to His Father’s will. He stayed on the cross until it was finished. We too are called to stay where God has put us, submitting willingly to our husbands as we lay our lives in Jesus’ hands. We do this so grace and salvation would come to them and those around us as God wills. A wife’s submission is a powerful expression of her trust in God.

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1 PETER 3:1-4

Note: In this Scripture, God is not asking you to put yourself or children or anyone else in danger of physical harm as the cost of submission. If you, dear one, are living in an unsafe situation, please seek godly counsel and a safe place. God is not asking you to submit to an abuser.

10. Is God worthy of our obedience to evangelize by submission?

11. In what ways are you submitting yourself to your husband or if you are not married, to the Lord?

12. In what ways are you not submitting? Where it is hard to willingly give over control, power or custody?

13. Ephesians 5:33 and 1 Peter 3:1-2 call us to respect our husbands, submit to them and live before them reverently. How do you show your husband respect?

- Body language?
- Tone of voice?
- Physical intimacy?
- Priorities?
- Do you think respectful thoughts?
- Are you allowing him to lead the “team”?

David Guzik in his commentary on this passage says, “Submission does not mean ‘as if your husband is God’... There are limits God sets as you submit to employers, parents, government and spouses. The

only submission without limits is to God Himself... Submission is not driven by action but by a heart that loves God and is devoted to glorifying Him.”

In other words, your trust in God frees you from withholding your submission until your husband earns it.

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, oh LORD my strength and my Redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

14. How does a change in the meditation of your heart change your words, the volume of your words or the tone of your words and your willingness to be submissive?

15. What can you do to purify the meditation of your heart?

As we finish verses 1-2, I think of a quote by Spurgeon: “Love stands in the presence of fault with a finger on her lip.”

We could add up all the reasons our husbands “don’t deserve” our reverence. We can store their faults in vaults. But the tone of *agape* love is quiet and tender in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Surrender to what brings peace to our hearts and spares words.

“He (She) who has knowledge spares his (her) words, and a man (woman) of understanding is of calm spirit” (Proverbs 10:19).

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1 PETER 3:1-4

May the Lord bring His peace to your home, purity to your thoughts, and calm to your spirit.

OBSERVATION: verses 3-4

“The same goes for you wives: Be good wives to your husbands, responsive to their needs. There are husbands who, indifferent as they are to any words about God, will be captivated by your life of holy beauty. What matters is not your outer appearance—the styling of your hair, the jewelry you wear, the cut of your clothes—but your inner disposition. Cultivate inner beauty, the gentle gracious kind that God delights in. The holy women of old were beautiful before God that way and were good, loyal wives to their husbands. Sarah, for instance, taking care of Abraham, would address him as “my dear husband.” You’ll be true daughters of Sarah if you do the same, un-anxious and un-intimidated.” MSG

ADORNMENT

Adorn: *kosmos*, ‘ordered universe’, from which we get the word **cosmetic**

Women in Bible times had some of the same concerns with beauty and adornment that we face today. Just for a connection to our sisters of old who were receiving this instruction, here are some interesting facts gathered from *Women at the Time of The Bible*, by Miriam Feinberg.

- Cosmetics were often just masks or mineral-based powder of white or pink.
- Eyelids were of (Kohl) blue.
- Toenails and fingernails were painted white.
- Oil was dressed into the hair and beeswax was used as a hairspray for hold.
- Hair styles were often so intricate that it was forbidden to take it down on the Sabbath as it was considered “building.”
- Crowns were often worn in the hair made of ‘Jerusalem Gold’, depicting the walls of the holy city.

- The yearly allowance for clothing averaged 50 dinars, the same as the yearly rental of a house or the yearly salary of a Roman soldier. If you look at the daily activity of these strong and very busy women, you can see why they had such a healthy clothing allowance! Weaving, threshing, grinding, milking, shepherding, planting, cooking, gathering water and spices, and fruits and nuts, not to mention all the activities of motherhood.
- Proverbs 31 describes the virtuous woman as having a worth far above rubies.
- According to William Barclay, in Peter’s day women often arranged and dyed their hair. They also wore wigs, especially blonde wigs made with imported German hair.

16. In addition to outward adornment, what is the other adornment God speaks of?

17. What is God’s opinion of this other adornment?

18. What warning did Jesus give to the Pharisees? What did He see in their hearts? (Matthew 23:25-28)

19. What are we to be clothed with as we learn submission to one another? (1 Peter 5:5)

INTERPRETATION

Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Romans 10:15, Romans 12:1-3, Ephesians 4:22-32, Colossians 3:9-18

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1 PETER 3:1-4

20. How does Scripture say we renew our inner person: become beautiful? (heart beauty)

The point is, we cannot fool God. Reflection at the end of each day and honestly looking into the mirror of the Word hurts sometimes, but it is part of purifying the heart. Followed by repentance and time in His embrace, we get to start fresh daily.

The New King James Version says this other beauty or adornment is incorruptible and of great worth. This beauty is not something you wear—it is someone you are. The older I get, the more thankful I am to have some sort of inexpensive beauty treatment that doesn't wash off and have to be put on again daily. Not to say that the heart does not need daily check-ups!

1 Corinthians 13:12 says we now see only in a mirror dimly but then (in heaven) face to face. I don't know about you, but if I'm going to be face to face with Jesus and His view of beauty is of the heart, I want to be that kind of beautiful. Physical beauty is easy to evaluate—we look in a mirror and make a judgment, or someone else gives us feedback. It's relative to "our" view or "their" view. Do the colors clash, is the hemline or neckline right for the occasion? Does it draw attention? Too much or too little? What accessories does it need or not need?

How do we reflect on our inner beauty and evaluate it with God's view? How do we dress our spirit with godly beauty? Only God knows our motives as to why we do what we do. Why we spend time and money on what we think is of value. When we are submitting to our husbands—blessing them, serving them, pleasing them, God knows why. He knows if it is manipulation to get what we want or an honest offering to Him.

He has the power to change us where we are hurt, stubborn, prideful and unwilling, and He is glad to do it. Philippians 3:20-21 encourages us, saying we are citizens of heaven and He will transform us to His likeness because He alone has the power to do so. This speaks hope to those around us: as they see us change, they can believe He will change and renew them as well.

APPLICATION

21. Has God used a person with a gentle and quiet spirit in your life? Describe what it was like, or what it may have shown you about the Lord.

22. What are the questions you will ask yourself, or will the Lord ask you at day's end, when you reflect on your inner beauty?

Be specific. For instance, Did I add all I could to make this a good day for my husband or those in my home or work? Did I say too much or too little? How was my tone? Why did I do what I did? Did I look like You, Jesus? Daily reflection is not for condemnation but for growth in obedience and character. We are asking the Holy Spirit to help us see what He sees. What do we do after we have dressed to go out? We look in the mirror, we will take off something that is too much, or add something that is lacking, then we (hopefully) forget about ourselves and go to the party or engagement or work, etc.

I often don't apply this Scripture and reflect specifically; it takes time, and I'm tired of thinking at day's end. When I do, though, I am able to place

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1 PETER 3:1-4

the successes and failures where they belong. In thanks or in confession, He takes them, and I get my “beauty sleep.”

1 Peter 3:1-6 AMP

1. *In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands [subordinate, not as inferior, but out of respect for the responsibilities entrusted to husbands and their accountability to God, and so partnering with them] so that even if some do not obey the word [of God], they may be won over [to Christ] without discussion by the godly lives of their wives, 2. when they see your modest and respectful behavior [together with your devotion and appreciation-love your husband, encourage him, and enjoy him as a blessing from God]. 3. Your adornment must be not merely external with interweaving and elaborate knotting of the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or [being superficially preoccupied with] dressing in expensive clothes; 4. but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality and unfading charm of a gentle and peaceful spirit, [one that is calm and self-controlled, not overanxious, but serene and spiritually mature] which is very precious in the sight of God. 5. For in this way in former times the holy women, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands and adapting themselves to them; 6. just as Sarah obeyed Abraham [following him and having regard for him as the head of their house], calling him lord. And you have become her daughters if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear [that is being respectful towards your husband but not giving in to intimidation nor allowing yourself to be led into sin, nor to be harmed].*

Living with an unbelieving spouse is hard and challenging and often lonely, but so is living with a spouse who has believed God at one time and has turned away or claims to believe but lives in a pattern of disobedience. I think the latter is even harder than the first. Our “mother” Sarah may have agreed with

that statement as she sought to please God when Abraham went off track occasionally.

The life of Sarah and Abraham is recorded in Genesis 12-22.

OBSERVATION

Refer to verse 5 in the Amplified version:

23. In what way did holy women of old adorn themselves?

24. In Whom did they hope?

25. Verse 6: Adapting... just as _____ obeyed _____.

26. What are the promises God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3, Genesis 17:15-16, and Genesis 22:17-18?

Twice Abraham asked Sarah to tell foreigners she was his sister to protect himself and it put her in a potentially dangerous and vulnerable position. See Genesis 12:11-13 and Genesis 20. In a very round-about way, she was Abraham’s half-sister (Genesis 20:12).

Even as this man of faith acted stupidly—not trusting God for protection—Sarah still called him lord. After these events, she continued to travel with Abraham, continued to press forward to the promise God had given to bless them, to multiply, to make her a mother. Did she have to cry out to God to keep her eyes from rolling and her tone loving? Scripture doesn’t say, but I bet so. I might have turned back. I

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1 PETER 3:1-4

might have called him something other than “lord.” I might have told him he lost the right to lead us further. Thank you, Sarah, you had your faults too, but you have left us a good example and you were blessed for sure.

27. Who protected Sarah when she was taken into Pharaoh’s harem? See Genesis 12:17-19.

INTERPRETATION

28. How does hoping in God and believing His promises lead to submissive and adaptive behavior toward a wayward spouse or a faithless leader?

29. How does this story of Abraham and Sarah point to the power of God’s protection and faithfulness in the face of fear?

30. Other than her example, how are we blessed by Sarah’s obedience? See Genesis 17:15-16

APPLICATION

31. The Scripture says in verse 6, to “*do what is right without fear.*” What are the aspects of doing what is right (submission, obedience) that cause you fear?

32. What will you do with the fear? Will it stop you?

“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:6-7

33. Do you enjoy your husband? Would the Lord help you with that? How can you show him that you enjoy him?

34. In what ways can you “adapt” or express your regard for your spouse or someone you live with or work closely with? Read 1 Corinthians 9:19 for inspiration.

35. When that person is disobeying God and taking the team in a direction you find wrong, what will you do?

36. How will your obedience in this area affect others? What kind of a blessing might come to them?

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1 PETER 3:1-4

Titus 2:4-5 says that we women must encourage each other to love our husbands, our families, in a way that is self-controlled, pure, and in submission so that the Word of God is not slandered or dishonored. This is a trust that only the Holy Spirit can empower us to keep. If the passion is lacking, then our obedience can become just a religious behavior and not an act of love and worship. If you need encouragement or accountability, would you let someone know? Maybe a woman in your small group or an older lady who has traveled a bit ahead of you?

Perhaps you are praying your loved one would come to church; of course, we want them there, of course we pray for that, but without an honest encounter with Jesus and the realization that He loves them, sometimes it becomes a religious favor they do to please you or a religious activity that appeases their conscience.

Pray passionately that they would be WON. Pray authentic Christians in their workplace would represent Jesus well. Pray that all the arguments the enemy has posed to them would be struck down. Pray that God would empower you to find a new way to enjoy them, to honor them, to build them up, and that the Spirit would use those actions to touch their heart, that they would know the love of God. Even if they are going to dark places, pray the overwhelming light of God's love would draw them out or make them uncomfortable there.

And remember WHO IS SAVING THEM. Can you do more than Jesus has already done? Who does salvation belong to? Revelation 7:20 says salvation belongs to our God and to the Lamb.

So now Lord, we do pray these things for each of our unsaved loved ones and spouses. May the enemy be restrained from influencing their mind and heart. May you give them eyes to see and recognize your love, and would you prepare and soften their hearts for surrender. As we live with them, would you stir up the gifts you have given us and present the gospel to them—the good news that they are loved without condition—through our loving acts, gently and patiently offered as our worship of You. Amen.

GOOD NEWS

NO 2

WINTER/SPRING 2022

MY EVANGELISM JOURNAL

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:24-25
NLT

THE RETURN OF THE LORD IS DRAWING NEAR!

We spent our Fall semester writing letters to answer a “Dear Abigail” column, to help us understand how to share the GOOD NEWS! Now we are putting into action what we have practiced.

Answer the following questions each week and share in your group time that you may encourage one another!

1. Pray and ask the Lord to put someone on your heart that needs to know about the GOOD NEWS! (It may be a stranger that will cross your path.) Write their name here.

2. *Each* morning, pray that God will open your eyes to opportunities. Write any opportunities you had this week.

3. What have you learned about yourself this week as you shared the GOOD NEWS? Was it easier than you thought? More difficult? Did you miss an opportunity?

4. *Praise* the Lord for what He taught you about evangelism this week. Would you have changed your approach? *Continue* to pray for those you shared with, and *trust* the Holy Spirit to continue the work. *Confess* if you felt afraid or weak or if you avoided sharing altogether and then *start afresh* next week. He is FAITHFUL!

WORD SCRAMBLE

WOMAN WHO WON HER HUSBAND

IVWES

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TEHCSA

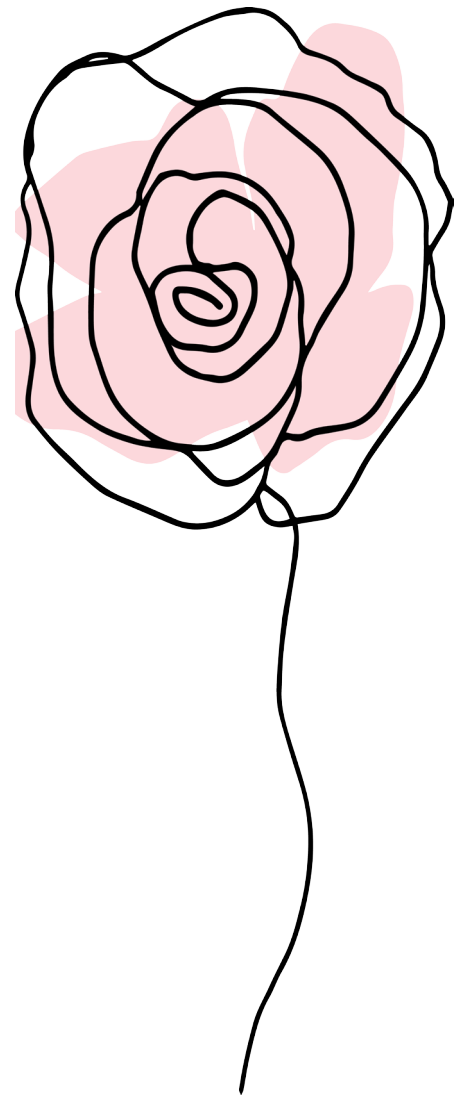
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Answers are on page 109

