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SHE Teen

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#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

St. James, Rebecca.

SHE teen: becoming a safe, healthy, and empowered woman—God's way / Rebecca St. James and Lynda Hunter Bjorklund.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references. ISBN-10: 1-4143-0028-X

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-0028-3

I. Teenage girls—Religious life. 2. Christian teenagers—Religious life. I. Bjorklund, Lynda Hunter. II. Title.

BV4551.3.S75 2005 248.8'33-dc22

2005005006

Printed in the United States of America

11 10 09 08 07 06 05 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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#### FROM THE EDITOR

## WELCOME TO THE SITE-LIFE!



s the editor of this magazine, it's my privilege to come alongside Rebecca and talk to you about things that are important to you. It's been a couple of years since I raised my own teenage girls and far longer since I was your age myself. But many things have not changed. Satan is still after you and your friends big time. I've watched girls who chose to follow God's rules reap his blessings, and I've watched those who didn't follow his rules live to regret it. A lot.

I know a woman, Mona, who grew up in a Christian home, but she made a decision in her teens to turn her back on God's rules. I remember when she made that choice, and I witnessed the results. I thought you might like to hear her story, so I contacted Mona and asked her to share her experience with you. This is what she wrote:

I think I accepted Jesus at age four, and at age six I was baptized in a little country creek. My mom still recalls hearing me go to bed every night saying "Good night, Jesus." I wanted his name to be the last word out of my mouth when I went to bed and the first out of my mouth when I awoke.

At age 14, I prayed and studied my Bible before school, and I attended church regularly. I also told my friends about Jesus whenever I could.

When I was 17, I began to desire the popularity my friends had. I wondered what I was missing by not going to parties and movies I had chosen to avoid because of their content. I wanted to have a boyfriend and to be thought of as pretty. I told God, "I want to be a normal teenager." I looked at the world around me, and everyone seemed to be perfectly content with the happiness their money, popularity, and possessions brought them. Why couldn't I be like that? It doesn't mean I have to be a bad person, I thought. Just one who lives for me and no one else.

By age 19, I was getting drunk at least every weekend. But people thought of me as pretty—so much so that I had one boyfriend after another. I began to smoke and have sex. Some days I would spend hours vomiting after a night bingeing on alcohol. Everyone seemed to like me, and my life was going just the way I thought I wanted it to. But why did I feel so empty? I know—I need to get married and have children.

At 21, I found myself married to a man who physically and verbally abused me and made me feel like I was nothing. One night he stumbled into the house drunk, and we fought. Our cat and dog hid under the nearest furniture for refuge. I couldn't bring a child into a relationship like that.

I was divorced by age 26, and I moved in with my brother. We had it all, and the wild life continued. But my drinking was under control—at least I thought it was, until my DUI. Handcuffs, Miranda rights, 24 hours in jail, and the near loss of my job resulted.

By the time I was 34, I realized I had wasted half my life searching for possessions and a good job, freedom and independence—and none of them had quenched my thirst. I rededicated my life to God on his terms, not mine. I quit drinking and began this journey with him.

I am now 37 years old, and in everything I do and say, I pray God becomes greater and greater and I become less and less, for his glory. I still sometimes struggle with unconditionally giving him my will—my rule.

It means I have to put my complete faith in someone I can't see and trust that he knows what's best for me. Once as I was lying on my face before God telling him how difficult this is, I began to think of where my rules had gotten me in the past—alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and a lack of respect from others and myself. My rules had given me nothing but heartache. So what was it I was afraid to give up again?

Someone once asked me if I could go back and change something in my life, what it would be. Without hesitation, I thought of that day I told God "I want to be a normal teenager." Now I know I am not normal. I am a child of the King. My biggest regret is that I missed out on 17 years of growth with him. Before I was born, he knew my name. He remained faithful, even when I wasn't. It's my turn to be faithful to him.

Now it's your turn. Your turn to make the deliberate choice to do your life God's way. Your turn to make the right decisions starting today so you won't have to try to undo some tough mistakes later on. Your turn to seek God's special blessings for you.

So what are you waiting for?

Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.

Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path.

Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil.

Proverbs 4:25-27

Love, Lynda





5



"When I look at models in magazines and on TV, I don't feel like I measure up."



"I want to be close to God, but I don't know how."



"I feel like a lot of people in my life have let me down, and I don't know who I can trust."



"It's sometimes hard to keep my mind and my actions pure."



"It's hard to forgive people who have hurt me."



"Why am I here on this earth?"

## DO YOU EVER FEEL BOMBARDED BY

Rules from your parents . . .

BE HOME BY 10:00 OR YOU'RE GROUNDED.

Rules from your teachers . . .

ONE MORE TARDY AND YOU'RE STAYING AFTER SCHOOL.

Rules of the road . . .

SLOW DOWN OR YOU'RE GETTING A TICKET.

But what about your rules?

I know, you're probably thinking,

Come on, I've got enough rules already.

Why would I make more for myself? Let's stop right there and toss your old definition of rules out the window. For SHEs, our brand of rules means taking charge of your life. Making decisions for yourself.

Choosing to go God's way, not the crowd's way. Believe it or not, these rules are the kind that will make you free.

As you grew up, so did the seriousness of your choices. Now you find yourself surrounded by a world offering you a menu of choices—anything you want to satisfy your appetite and any way you want to behave. The world says that you can choose your own truth, that what's right for you may not be right for me. But just so you know . . . each choice you make comes with its own consequences.



## GETS PERSONAL

Think about the following three choices you made yesterday and their possible consequences.

List everything you ate all day long. Next list possible consequences.

Describe something you said or did to a family member, a friend, or someone at school. Next list possible consequences.

Remember one thing you thought about, even if you didn't act on it. Next list possible consequences.

#### **GOD'S ROAD MAP**

God has provided the means for us to get to our destination. He has given us the road map—his instruction manual for life. It can help us avoid dangerous detours, dead ends, and paths that lead to places we don't want to go. Choosing the right path is based on having the right map to follow—and those choices will be guided by something solid, not on whatever feels right at the moment.

The Bible offers some rock-solid direction. Throughout the Old Testament, people had the rules God gave them for their protection. But Jesus came along and brought something more to the harsh Jewish law. He added love and mercy. Once

made for you, not you for the rules (Mark 2:27).

WHAT WAS HE SAYING? The mastermind who created us also created the road map to make our life work best! He loves us so much, and he wants our days on earth to go well. "Do forgive your enemies [I want you

some rulers asked Jesus why he'd broken

Jesus' answer was simple: The rules were

the rules and healed people on the Sabbath.

to have peace and not be eaten alive by anger]"; "Don't have sex with lots of people [I want to protect you from heartache and disease and save you for that husband I have in mind for you]." He left us the Bible,

which contains our life instructions



## GETS PERSONAL

One hundred years from now, only what you did for Christ will be remembered and celebrated. Everything else will be forgotten. What are you doing with your life that will be memorable for eternity?

Your life is made up of the choices you make-choice + choice + choice. Are you building the kind of life you want to live?

Your life will make a difference, either for good or bad. What kind of difference are you making?

One day Jesus will—or will not—say to

6. Rules mean different things to you, "Well done, my good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21). If you really took his words to heart, how would your life change right now?

#### THE **CHOICES** QUIZ

already follow God's way a whole lot better than most of my friends do. Isn't that good enough? Shouldn't God grade on a curve? Is that what you're thinking right about now? Guess what-God's standards don't quite work like our standards. Answer these questions—be honest!—and think about what exceptions you make to his quidelines.

- At a restaurant, the waiter gives you too much change. But he was rude and didn't do a very good job. What would you do?
- a) Keep the money.
- b) Take the money and give it to a homeless person.
- c) Politely inform the waiter of his error, then give it back.

- **9** You walk by a man begging on the street. You think of the dollar in your pocket, and then you think about how that man might be scamming you. What would you do?
- a) Give the man the dollar.
- b) Walk on by without helping the man.
- c) Lecture him about how he should be finding work.
- 3 You're with a guy you like. He kisses you and awakens feelings you've never felt before. What would you do?
- a) Keep doing what feels good.
- b) Take a step back and discuss with him the lines for purity you've drawn for yourself.
- c) Make excuses for your behavior and see where it goes.



#### Yeah, But . . .

- I. Rules are no fun.
- 2. God's rules keep me from enjoying
- 3. No one else follows all the rules.
- I'm sick of being told what to do.
- 5. Rules are too legalistic.
- different people.
- 7. If I follow all of God's instructions, my friends will think I'm weird.
- 8. I'll have time to worry about living God's way when I get older.

You might be surprised....

#### Those that seek me early shall find me.

Proverbs 8:17, KJV

This verse doesn't just mean to get up early and pray. It means that God reveals himself to people who dare to seek him early in their life. Before they mess up some big things. Before they do things that carry inevitable, inescapable consequences. Before they make lots of wrong choices.

Let's face it. The choices you make today will affect all your tomorrows. The choices you make today will set the pattern for your choices throughout the rest of your life.



## SHE OR

o doubt you have big plans for your life. You want to be a woman who has it all-beauty, brains, and blessings. You want to be happy, successful, and loved. We're on this journey with you, and we want to let you in on a secret: the key to having good things happen to you and becoming the woman God made you to be is to follow his instructions.

This book will dig into the biggest issues we face as young women. The truth is that the Bible gives us the guidelines we need to live by. These aren't just the "don'ts" of life—they are also the "dos," and they were true long before your parents and teachers and anyone else started telling you about them. When you don't live God's way, you get what you don't want, and you don't get what you do want. When you do live by God's rules, you become the woman God created you to be.

A "she" lives her life by spineless rules or no rules at all. SHE is God-ruled. SHE follows her Creator's plan. SHE gains control of her life by giving up the controls to God. As a result, SHE proudly and confidently celebrates her womanhood.

Wait a second, you may be thinking. I know people—good people, godly people who have kept God's instructions but have had bad things happen to them. They get sick or the people they love let them down or they don't get what they prayed for. How can God's promises about blessing the godly and cursing the ungodly be true when these kinds of things happen?

We understand where you're coming from. Every one of us will face hardships and disappointments, and at the time, it may seem like we aren't winning when these bad things happen. But we need to hold on to some things that are true:

Sometimes God's timing is not our

Sometimes he wants us to let go of the lesser prize for the bigger one coming.

Sometimes he wants to make something better inside us that couldn't happen in comfortable circumstances.

And sometimes he's looking for that girl he can shape for the highest of callings, and that can only happen with someone he can trust to trust him—someone who will follow his ways no matter what she's facing or how long it takes.

grew up in Sydney, Australia, in

₩HO

5

a wonderful Christian family. When I was eight years old, at a Girls' Brigade meeting at my church. I really felt God calling me into a living relationship with him. As well as giving my heart to him that night, I committed to living by his road map for the rest of my life. Though I haven't lived my life perfectly, I have experienced so much joy through following God's way. There is so much freedom in living the way our Creator designed us to live—as safe, healthy, and empowered young women.

The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living. Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the Lord are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them. Psalm 19:7-11

PAG П



Living the SHE life requires that we live with one eye on today and the other on forever. This gives us the ability to see life as God sees it and to HANG IN THERE FOR THE LONG HAUL.

#### QUIZ **ATTITUDE CHECK**



PUT A CHECK MARK BESIDE ANY OF THE STATEMENTS THAT DESCRIBE YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD RULES.

I go to church because my family expects me to.

I talk about my faith only with other Christians.

I haven't thought much about why I believe what I believe.

I mostly rely on a parent or youth leader for my spiritual growth.

My decisions (like dating boundaries, the movies I watch, and who I hang out with) are based on the standards my parent or another adult has set for me.

I don't go to church much.

I'm not comfortable talking about my faith.

I'm not really sure what I believe.

I don't have an adult in my life who gives me spiritual guidance.

My decisions (like dating boundaries, the movies I watch, and who I hang out with) are mostly based on what I'm thinking or feeling at that moment.

I used to go to church, but I feel like I've messed up too much to show my face there now.

After breaking so many of God's rules, I feel as if no one will listen to me if I share my faith.

I'm not sure if God can forgive me.

My spiritual life is kind of dead at the moment.

I've already made a lot of bad decisions (like dating boundaries, the movies I watch, and who I hang out with).

2

LOOK BACK OVER YOUR QUIZ. TOTAL UP THE CHECK MARKS FOR EACH COLUMN.

Column I

Column 2

FIND OUT WHERE YOU'VE BEEN.

#### WHOSE RULES?

So you've heard lots of rules as you've grown up. You may have an edge on life with family and pastors and other godly people to steer you in the right direction. That's a good start, but it's not enough. There comes a time when you need to make your own list of rules—the guidelines that will define your life. It's time to graduate, girl—make those rules your own!

#### NO RULES?

So you haven't had godly adults to teach you godly ways. Maybe the adults you know taught you things like how to solve math problems, how to write term papers, and how to dissect frogs—but not how to live your everyday life in a healthy way. But there's good news—you still have an exciting adventure ahead of you! You have the power to make your own decisions based on your life rules. And you have the power—and the assurance—to wait patiently, knowing that when you do live by the rules, things ultimately will turn out okay.

#### **BROKEN RULES?**

Column 3

So you've already messed up.
Maybe you were on the right path at one time, but you've slipped along the way. There's good news! All of us have broken the rules—even your pastor and your biggest Christian hero. The Bible calls it sin (see Romans 3:12). If you ask God to forgive you, he will. But he will also help you do it better next time. You don't have to keep breaking the same rule again and again.



#### EMMA (16)

I was raised in a Christian home and have attended church and youth group regularly. But in secret, I broke many of God's rules. I lost my sexual purity.
I hung out with the wrong people.
And just the other day, I did something I thought I'd never do: I shoplifted with a friend. Although we didn't get caught, it scared me and made me wonder what else I would do in the future. What can I do to make up for the rules I've broken?

#### 9 LOSER RULES OF LIFE

- I can't find anything to hold on to.

  I must live in fear.
- I can never get close to anyone in a healthy way.
- I've got to get all I can get, regardless of what it costs or who it hurts.
- I'll never be beautiful.
- I can't be pure and have fun.
- l've earned the right to hold on to baggage.
- · I've got to go it alone.
- · I can live my life out of control.
- · You live and die—that's it.

Do you want to stop believing in and living according to loser principles and start living the SHE life God has in store for you? Wanna start following God's instruction book for life? Wanna find forgiveness for the ways you've messed up and get wisdom and determination for doing it right from this point on?

Don't cheat yourself out of the good things that are waiting for you any longer. Don't cheat yourself out of the abundant life God promises you (see John 10:10). Now is the time to get into the game—to step into the role God designed for you to play in his eternal plan! So take the time to study God's road map, commit to doing life his way, and make choices that will honor him. In the process you'll find yourself becoming

a SAFE girl

a **HEALTHY** girl

an EMPOWERED girl



henever we've broken God's rules, we need to go to God, confess our sin, and ask his forgiveness to know we have been set free from our past. One thing we need to remember when it comes to God's rules is that they are given to us for our good—not to limit our fun. Living by God's road map makes us secure in his care.

I grew up in a large family, the oldest of seven kids. As a young girl, I remember my mum teaching me how to wrap my baby brothers tightly in a blanket and then hold them with strong arms so that they would feel safe. Within the boundaries of that blanket in my arms, they knew they were secure. I think this also applies to us.

When we are held within our Creator's loving arms and living according to his plan for us, we experience security, peace, and joy.





THE SAMARITAN WOMAN  STATUS:	Had lived with five different men			
RULE-BUSTING BEHAVIOR:			模式和	
	Sexual impurity  First, she was a Samaritan (a race looked down on by the Jews). Second, she was a	4年20年		
WHY SHE WASN'T PART OF THE IN CROWD:	woman, and women were not highly esteemed in those days—until Jesus came and changed all that. Third, well, let's just say she didn't have a squeaky-clean rep.			
A "CHANCE" ENCOUNTER:	She met Jesus unexpectedly one day by a well. She'd gone there to get some water as she always did, but this day was different. Jesus had gone out of his way to offer her the SHE life.			
EAVESDROPPING ON THEIR CONVERSATION:	S. W.: You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?			
	Jesus: If you only knew the gift God has for you and who I am, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.			
	S. W.: Where would you get this living water?  Jesus: People soon become thirsty again after drinking this water. But the water I give them takes away thirst altogether. It becomes a perpetual spring within them, giving them eternal life.			
	S. W.: Please, sir give me some of that water! Then I'll never be thirsty again.		OF THE STATE OF TH	
WHO IS THIS GUY?	Jesus asked about the rules she'd broken. Amazed that Jesus knew her life story, the Samaritan woman didn't feel angry or condemned by his words. Instead, she saw the love and mercy Jesus offered her that she'd never seen before and certainly didn't deserve.			
A NEW SET OF RULES:	The Bible says SHE left her water pot beside the well and went back to the village and told everyone what Jesus had done.			
WANT MORE DETAILS?	For the whole scoop, check out John 4:1-30.			



## REBECCA

#### WHAT IS SAFE?

I learned the meaning of safety from a little girl in Ecuador. It all started when my brother Joel and I went on a trip to meet the child he sponsors through Compassion International. We visited the smiling Compassion children in remote villages, serving food at one of the projects and singing worship songs with them. In one classroom, my attention was drawn to a little girl about eight years old. A large, blanketed lump covered almost half of her small body. With her permission, I looked under the blankets and discovered the tiny face of a baby who was only weeks old. At the intrusion into her safe little haven and the awakening by cold air and a strange face, the baby started to cry. The girl (whom I later found out was the infant's cousin) quickly took the child back to its mother. It hit me that I too long to be protected, cocooned in love, and tucked away from danger.

## REBECCA

#### WHAT IS HEALTHY?

When I think of healthy, I think of my goddaughter, Lexi Rivers. Her parents adopted her from China, and she is such a joy to them and everyone she meets. Now, at two years old, she toddles around with a healthy flush in her cheeks, full of life and energy, and I see the picture of what we can be when we're living according to God's plan for us as his young SHE women.





## REBECCA

#### WHAT IS EMPOWERED?

On a family vacation years ago, I learned to windsurf. We were staying on the lovely Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia. The weather was beautiful, the beach was just a few minutes' walk away, and the sparkling lake beckoned me. I was determined to conquer the Windsurfer and not let it conquer me. So after a few lessons from the instructor, I gave it a go. I lost my balance a few times, but eventually I found myself sailing solo across the water, feeling the exhilaration of being powered and propelled by the wind. The windsurfing thing required some serious concentration for a novice like me. But even an experienced windsurfer would say that to really go places, to be fully powered by the wind, you have to listen to instructions, apply strong concentration, and put consistent effort into it. Just as in the rest of life, you have to give it all you've got.

## 9 SECRETS WHOLE NEW SHE

#### **SAFE**



SHE is secure.

SHE is connected.

SHE is feminine.

#### **HEALTHY**



SHE is beautiful.



SHE is pure.

SHE is free.

#### **EMPOWERED**



SHE is guided

HE is boundaried.

SHE is purposef

on't just read this book. Let it change your life for good. Make it stick to your life where it applies. You may find that it's not your family or friend who is keeping you from changing, but you and only you. Take baby-change steps. They add up and make a huge difference. But we promise, once you make the change to be a God-ruled SHE, you won't want to go back. You won't want to return to the UNSAFE, UNHEALTHY, UNEMPOWERED—and not-pleasing-to-God—she you used to be.

### S()) WHATCHE GONNA DO?

You can't obey God's instructions on your own. Your SHE journey begins with an intimate relationship with Jesus. And as with the Samaritan woman, it means meeting Jesus right where you are:

- Ask him to forgive the sins you've committed and invite him to come and rule your heart.
- 2 Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you every day forward for every decision you make.
- With the Holy Spirit's help, stick to the guidelines you make for your life and don't turn back.
- Celebrate your safe, healthy, and empowered life to come. Then enjoy!

If you made this decision to walk with Jesus for the first time, congratulations! This is a day to celebrate! Sign and date below so you will always remember the anniversary of your relationship with Jesus.

If you've been taking a bad detour and you decided to recommit to walking with Christ today, congratulations! Sign and date below so you'll always remember this important day of your spiritual journey.

Name

Dat

