

IMMOVABLE

REFLECTIONS TO BUILD YOUR LIFE
AND LEADERSHIP ON SOLID
GROUND

MEREDITH KING

Immovable

Copyright © Meredith King
All rights reserved.

Interior design:
www.doodles.blue

Published by:
NyreePress Literary Group
Fort Worth, TX 76161
1-800-972-3864
www.nyreepress.com

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping or by any information storage retrieval system without the written permission of the publisher. Copying this book is both illegal and unethical.

ISBN print: 978-1-945304-52-1

Library of Congress Control Number: pending
Categories: Non-Fiction / Memoir / Self-Help / Christian
Printed in the United States of America





**To the amazing men and women who
comprise the True to Life Ministries Team.**

You consistently pour out your lives so people can find hope. Your dedication to excellence and commitment to create such a special sense of family inspires me every day. We are part of something special because we are part of God's story - today and forever more.



Forward

There are a number of experts readily available to tell you what to do and how to lead, and sometimes we need someone to just tell us what to do. I appreciate nitty-gritty how-to advice as much as the next gal, but that's not what this book is. I'm not coming to you as an expert, I'm coming as a friend, as someone in the trenches right alongside you.

The following pages reflect a life-long journey of messes. This is not a list of twenty things I've mastered - these are the topics you'll find on repeat in the tear-stained pages of my journals. I'm still learning and re-learning these truths, clinging to them for dear life. When life and leadership remind me I don't know what I'm doing, it's my cue to grow, to dig in, and most of all, to hit my knees.

As I think back on this wild journey so far, some of my most treasured moments have been at coffee shop tables or on living room couches with friends who really understand - who've walked this same beautiful and brutal road. Their nodding and understanding were pure refreshment to my soul. I hope you feel I'm with you as you read, just a friend sitting across the table, nodding and understanding.

Whether you are leading your family or a company, a ministry or a team, a few people or the masses, you belong here. I've prayed so much for you. That you would feel the Holy Spirit stirring your heart as you read, pray, and reflect. That His voice would speak to you, and that you'd find a fresh and steady confidence that comes from belonging to Christ. That you will find exactly what you need for the next step in your leadership journey, not in these pages, but in Him.

Honored to share this journey with you,

Meredith



How to Use This Book

Immovable: Reflections to build your life and leadership on solid ground includes twenty stand-alone chapters, unpacking foundational perspectives for leading well. They were designed to be daily readings, and are perfect for individual study or small group discussion.

1. Main Readings.

Short topical readings that set up the main topic and unpack a few central ideas.

2. Scripture.

Suggested reading to connect the theme directly to scripture.

3. Reflection.

Simple questions to capture your ideas and thoughts.

4. Today's Prayer.

Use these lines as a starting place to pray through the key ideas and applications of the day's topic. Incorporating scripture into prayer is a valuable, life-changing practice, and each day's scriptures were selected with this in mind. If this idea is new for you, please visit the online resource for Praying Scripture.

5. Practice.

Thoughtful exercises and applications to propel you into action.



Resources & Tips

Free Bonus Online Resources

In addition to all this little book contains, please register to receive access to free bonus chapters and other resources at:

www.immoveablebook.com

Share Online

I believe your stories and experiences can help others grow and learn. I think God intended for us to share our journeys, even though we may be hundreds of miles apart. So, as you read and engage in the reflection and practice exercises, share your experiences with us on your social media platforms. And of course, I would love to connect with you. (You can most easily find me on Facebook and Instagram!)

**Use the Hashtag:
#IMMOVABLEBOOK**



Therefore, my beloved brothers,
be steadfast, immovable, always
abounding in the work of the
Lord, knowing that in the Lord
your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (HCSB)



Chapter List

Forward // A Note from Meredith	7
How to Use this Book	9
Introduction	17
1. Identity	23
2. Our Calling	29
3. Your Calling	35
4. Comparison	43
5. Balance	49
6. Prayer	55
7. Humility	63
8. Faith	71
9. Wisdom	79
10. Bravery	85
11. Multiplication	91
12. Failure	97
13. Words	103
14. Friendship	111
15. Celebration	117
16. Margin	125
17. Conflict	131
18. Criticism	139
19. Hospitality	145
20. Stewardship	153
Final Thoughts	161
Acknowledgements	163
About the Author	165
Endnotes	167



Introduction

Let's start with the basic reality of leadership. Leading is incredibly hard and completely awesome, and no one has fully mastered it. Why? Because just about the time you think you've figured it out, the table turns. Seasons change. People come, and people go. You succeed, and then you fail. You win big and lose bigger. Opportunities knock and tragedies strike.

Sometimes we respond with grace and dignity, and sometimes we turn into a big mess.

To complicate matters more, the world's messages are loud and compelling:

Do more.

Be more.

Fight for the top.

Figure it out.

Work harder.

We see the world holding up its own version of greatness, shining with notoriety, hustle, and outcomes, and it pulls on us because we were indeed made for greatness. But, the world's way is empty and exhausting, a poor imitation of the true greatness we were created for. There's nothing substantial there. Nothing to hold

on to. And if we build our lives on a foundation of our own merits, accomplishments, and worthiness, when the storms of life come (and they always come), we will crumble. Fortunately, there's a better, higher way.

Have you ever driven through the mountains? I'm not talking about the tall hills so many fellow Texans point to and call "mountains." I'm talking about twisting and turning around enormous, rugged rocks abruptly bursting through the level earth in all sorts of majesty and glory, where around every bend is another breathtaking view of terrifying drop-offs, rushing streams, and lush valleys. I fell in love with the mountains of British Columbia as a young child, but what I feel toward them is far more than fascination. My heart yearns for those mountains and my soul craves them. The crystal blue sky, giant fir trees, and miles of beauty are unlike anything I've seen anywhere else.

Some of our dear friends live on the side of a mountain just outside my favorite postcard-worthy town. From their back porch, I can see mountains that start at the banks of a glistening lake and soar to over ten thousand feet in some places. My favorite sites aren't easy to get to. In fact, the travel is exhausting, but I keep going back whether I'm thirsty for adventure or desperate for rest.

My last trip marked the close of one of the most difficult seasons of my adult life. Grief, criticism, and betrayal knocked the wind out of me. Everything was changing, nothing was familiar or certain, and I felt

like I was losing my way. I needed to feel solid ground under my feet. I needed to catch my breath. So, my husband did what any great husband would do; he bought us plane tickets and told me to pack my bags.

It wasn't enough for me to just look at the mountains from the valley, there was an urgency to get to the top, where I could sit in the silence of nature and look out over the earth. I knew from there all the buildings and houses and people that felt so big from the bottom would appear tiny. My whole perspective changed looking out from eight thousand feet. Surrounded by the enormity and strength of those majestic peaks, I felt appropriately small. I think one of the reasons I love the mountains so much is, they stand as bold beacons of God's character:

Steadfast.

Immovable.

Certain.

Resolute.

I returned home to find life very much the same. I knew I would. There was still plenty of chaos and trouble, but my heart was in a different place because I remembered that my world falling apart didn't mean I had to. I felt God holding me; His strength running through me. I knew even though everything was moving around me, He was holding on to me, and I was holding on to Him.

Our distracted, shaky, fight-for-the-top generation is

frantically trying to find what's lasting and real. It's as if we live in a perpetual identity crisis, trying out every possible answer to, "Who am I?" and "What's my purpose?" When one answer proves insufficient, we trade it in for another and another and another. When our eyes are fixed on our outward lives, success and value are measured by circumstances, but God is far more interested in the posture of our hearts. "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7 NIV).

Leading well isn't determined by title, credentials, office size, relationship status, or your number of social media followers. It's not about perfection or achievement or applause. Whether you are leading from a boardroom or a playroom, whether your morning routine calls for a business suit or ball cap, God has positioned you to influence others and to lead people to Christ. He has given you gifts and talents to use for His glory and for His purposes. Maybe this is why leading feels like such a weighty responsibility. It feels bigger than we are, because it is.

The world may be in an identity crisis, but we are not. Our identity is settled. Our purpose is not a mystery. Because of Jesus and what He's done to rescue us, redeem us, and make us new, we are free from striving, free from chasing, free from our identities being tossed and shoved by circumstances and life. Friends, we aren't just living our story, we are part of God's story, and to fully lean into something greater, something eternal, our hearts and attention cannot be divided.

Our desire for greatness, for more than status quo,

isn't an accident or a mere product of our fast-paced society. God placed a deep-seated desire for greatness in our hearts, but it is only truly fulfilled by making Him great. Jesus tells us, "But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown" (Matthew 13:23 NIV). We are made to produce fruit, to have an impact that multiplies, not just here and now, but for eternity.

God's stirring of that desire can help you plant a church, start a nonprofit, or launch a business. Or prompt you to sell all your possessions and move across the world. It may move you to invite friends and strangers to your table or to foster a child. But when the nonprofit seed money runs out, when plans completely fall apart, or when you feel exhausted from sleepless nights, you're going to need roots that go down deep. When your greatest fan becomes your loudest critic, when the rejection letter comes, or when the overwhelming need far outweighs the resources, your feet need solid ground. When everything shifts and moves, when life props you up and then let's you fall, you better be tied to something that's firmly established and unchanging.

So here we are. At the beginning. Starting this journey together. I wish I was on the other side, telling you how to lead and serve and follow Jesus from an expert's perspective. However, I know what I'm after. It's found at the end of 1 Corinthians 15.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58, ESV).

Such powerful words: Steadfast. Immovable. Abounding.

When your well-planned life or career doesn't work out, when criticism goes public, or when betrayal hits really close to home, I want you to know who you really are. When grief moves in like an unwanted roommate or finances are stretched thin, I want you to remember who you belong to. When the world applauds and props you up, I want you to be certain your identity isn't found there. Quiet confidence comes when you understand this world is not our home. So, I want your eyes and your life to be completely fixed on Jesus, firm in purpose, and unswayed by feelings and opinions.

I want your life to overflow with the work of the Lord, because it's all that lasts.

I want you to fully lean into your part in God's story of reconciliation and redemption, because our world is absolutely desperate for it.

I want your life and your faith and your purpose to be immovable.

I want all of that for me too.

We really like to measure things, but we are part of building an eternal glory that cannot be measured. It doesn't always make sense, and it may make us uncomfortable. (Okay, it WILL make us uncomfortable.) But, we were meant for this.

Identity

“You find peace not by rearranging the circumstances of your life, but by realizing who you are at the deepest level.”

- Thomas Merton

Our culture is in a perpetual identity crisis. Every time we've got identity, purpose, and belonging in our sights, trends change, opportunities end, people leave, or something unexpectedly falls apart, and we are left struggling to catch up. Are we our titles, our achievements, or our relationship status? Are we named by opinions, labels, or failures? What are we holding out in front of us as our trophy of worth? And how many trophies have been exchanged for bigger and better ones?

For about as long as I can remember, there's been a voice in my head saying, “*I'm not enough.*” Picked last for kickball in kindergarten: *I'm not enough.* Not invited to the birthday party: *I'm not enough.* Overlooked for homecoming and prom dates: *I'm not enough.* I didn't know how to turn the volume down, so I tried to drown it out with achievement and hard work. I made perfect grades, grabbed every leadership position and internship I could, and planned a seamless transition into college as everyone cheered me on toward certain

success. Two months into my freshman year, I got incredibly sick. While doctors spent months figuring out what was wrong, I spent months in bed, accumulating C's, D's, and F's in my classes. Christmas break was a nightmare. All my friends bragged about Dean's List recognition while I avoided eye contact, finding every imaginable reason to excuse myself before my turn to answer the GPA question. Because I'd failed pretty much everything, I was forced to change my major, and I lost every scholarship I'd worked so hard for. The message on repeat in my heart and mind? *I'm not enough.*

All the time spent in bed turned out to be the best thing that could've happened to me, because I was forced to sit alone with God and wrestle this whole thing out. I was completely aware of my inability to bring anything of value to the table, and I finally learned I didn't have to. With distractions of pride and accomplishment out of the way, He picked me up from my puddles of tears and shame, confirming this simple truth through prayer and scripture: I cannot earn His love, and I didn't need to try.

I'd love to say my identity struggle was settled in that dorm room amongst all the text books, pastel bedding, and plastic cutlery, but it wasn't. At least, not completely.

The broken part of us believes satisfaction comes when we are enough and when we have enough; so, we chase all kinds of things hoping to satisfy our thirsty souls. Those tiny sips of water work for a minute, but then they dry up, leaving us thirsty all over again. We might feel confused about why this keeps happening, but God isn't. He lays it out pretty clearly in Jeremiah:

*My people have committed two sins:
They have forsaken me, the spring of living water,
and have dug their own cisterns,
broken cisterns that cannot hold water.¹*

Tired of being thirsty? There's only one well that never runs dry: Jesus.

In His words,² "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." As our creator, Jesus is the only qualified source to satisfy our cravings. Nothing else is strong enough or big enough or lasting enough to bear the weight of our identity. He doesn't just quench our thirst; His never-ending supply fills us up and overflows into our parched and desperate world.

Friend, our identity has already been settled. Our identity isn't named by our achievements or what we lack; it's named by how God created us. How He sees us. He calls us:

A Masterpiece
Children of God
Friends
Accepted
Beloved

When our identity is in Christ, it's steadfast, secure, and unchanging. Nothing can alter it. Nothing else determines it. Not even you.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:1-10; Psalm 139:1-18

REFLECTION

1. When you look back on your life, what have you pursued to satisfy your soul's cravings?

2. How is Jesus better? (If you aren't sure that He is, be honest about that.)

3. Look at Ephesians 2:10. Write or doodle it here.

TODAY'S PRAYER

PRACTICE

Draw an arrow pointing to the right. To the left of the arrow, list the areas of your life where you are believing, "I'm not enough." On the right side of the arrow, write in big, bold, letters: JESUS IS ENOUGH.



Our Calling

"All of God's people are ordinary people who have been made extraordinary by the purpose He has given them."
- *Oswald Chambers*

I grew up in a family with six Southern Baptist pastors. Just let your imagination run wild with that for a second. Six pastors in one family is a lot by anyone's standard, and as you can imagine, the whole dynamic produced some pretty entertaining conversations around the Thanksgiving table, but it also built an incredible legacy. Some had a history of missions and church planting before my lifetime, a few became missionaries during my childhood years, and others are still serving in pastoral roles now. Needless to say, from the time I was born, I was immersed in hymns, sermons, and Christian vernacular. When my little childhood friends and I played wedding, I was almost always the preacher, because I could perform an entire wedding ceremony from memory by the time I was six. Sometimes I was the bride and the preacher, because you can do that when you are playing pretend.

With all the daily Jesus-talk and countless hours sitting in the front row listening to my Daddy preach,

it didn't take long for me to catch on to the idea that God has this super serious thing known as "a calling" for my life. However, major confusion lead me to two big misunderstandings: 1) God's calling was directly linked to a specific life-long vocation, and 2) I needed to have it figured out by age twenty (at the latest). Why age twenty? Who knows. It was some self-imposed deadline that sounded reasonable at the time. My twentieth birthday came and went, and I felt like my calling was doomed to remain a mystery forever—or worse, perhaps I was skipped when God passed them out.

Maybe you can relate.

We've made this idea of a calling mystical and complicated, almost as if our value hinges on finding it. We aren't exactly sure what we are looking for, but we're pretty sure it's unique and very impressive. We want to be significant. We want to be obedient. We want to do the right thing. And heaven forbid we make a wrong turn along the way.

I've met a lot of friends, both young and old, suffocating from the angst and pressure of figuring it all out. Does God have specific work for us to do? Yes (and we will talk more about that soon), but if we aren't careful, trying to figure out the right decisions, the right relationships, the right move to make, and the right career can so consume our attention, we miss the bigger picture. It's easy to focus on what hasn't been revealed yet when there's actually plenty that has. So, while we wait for specific instructions for our daily lives and futures, let's work on mastering what God has clearly revealed.

Here's the truth: Scripture presents a pretty simple framework for our calling as Christ-followers, and it has nothing to do with a job title. In fact, there's no finding "it" because it has everything to do with God finding us. You want to know your calling? You are called to belong to Christ through salvation, you are called to love God and people, and you are called to make disciples. If you survey the New Testament, you'll find a variety of terminology and analogies related to calling, but they all lead back to these three central themes.¹ My favorite analogy comes from Jesus in John 15, where He explains we've been chosen and appointed to bear an abundance of fruit; not just any fruit, fruit that lasts, that never spoils or decays.² God wants to make us increasingly effective in producing bountiful harvests of enduring fruit. He longs to enable us to do what we cannot do on our own - to love in ways we couldn't otherwise, to say yes to what's seemingly impossible, to shine God's light in a dark and hurting world in ways that point many to Jesus.

SCRIPTURE

John 15:1-17; Matthew 28:18-20;
2 Corinthians 5:16-21

REFLECTION

1. How do you think being a good steward of your life and bearing an abundance of fruit are connected?

2. When you read Jesus' command to "go, therefore, and make disciples," what do you think that looks like in your life?

3. Look up John 15:8 and write it below.

TODAY'S PRAYER

PRACTICE

List the names of one or two people who invested time in teaching you about Jesus. How did you feel when you were with them? Write them a note, text, or email to express what they mean to you.
