



teens:

Empowered for Impact

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)



Removed from her home and placed in a Russian orphanage, Tatiana and her three brothers found themselves without basic necessities like clean toothbrushes, proper clothing, nutritious food, or even a toy to play with. At the age of six, Tatiana was adopted by a couple in the USA, with her little brother joining her soon after.

Knowing only Russian, living in a new country, and separated from two brothers who still lived in a Russian orphanage, Tatiana managed her pain and her anger with persistent prayer and drawing. Tatiana prayed every night that she would be reunited with her two brothers; during the day she would draw pictures of family members, as a way of feeling close to them. Eventually Tatiana created cards, artistic expressions of things she had remembered from Russia.

The Lord answered Tatiana's prayers: all three of her brothers were adopted by her new parents. Tatiana began selling her Russian cards and used the money to buy clothes and toys that were shipped to the Russian orphanage where she once lived. She wanted the children still living there to have things she didn't have as an orphan.

Today, Tatiana is involved with her church, LWML, and school activities. She enjoys gymnastics and one day hopes to study medicine. Tatiana's life is a testimony of God's grace and provision: with God, all things are possible (Mark 10:27).

Drama Queen

devotion

Relationships are a very important part of your life, and friends are at the center of it. But every now and then, circumstances between friends turn into ugly "drama." Do you stand back and watch or jump in the middle of it? Whether the "drama" is big or little, it is usually painful. What do you do? How do you respond?

Like you, a young girl named Esther faced a very difficult situation. How did she respond? At first she chose to do nothing, making excuses. At the center of her decision to do nothing was fear. Esther's Uncle Mordecai offered her these challenging words: ***And who knows but that you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this and for this very occasion?*** (Esther 4:14b Amplified Bible)

After hearing her uncle, Esther prayed to God, drew on His strength, and responded bravely, obediently, and decisively to the situation at hand. Esther accepted that she was placed in that very circumstance for God's purpose and, with the help of a trusted adult and prayerful guidance, Esther made a difference in the lives of many people.

The story of Esther is in the Old Testament book named after her. Take time to read the story with friends. Share a time with your group when "drama" threatened relationships that were important to you. How did you feel? How did you respond? After reading Esther, would you approach the situation differently? Share those thoughts.

God is not surprised by the "drama" in your life. You have choices about how you will handle the situation, but you will not be handling them alone. The Savior is waiting for you. Through the Holy Spirit, prayer, and His Word, our Loving Lord will be with you. Just like Esther, you will not be alone. So knowing this guidance is yours, will you respond with fear or trust?

Pray together: Dear Lord, when I'm faced with all the drama of life, and fear prevents me from seeking Your will, please help me to respond like Esther by trusting in You and seeking Your guidance, wisdom, and courage. Thank You, Jesus, for always being there for me. Amen.