

Callie's Contest of Courage Review and Giveaway

BY Tracey Masters

I had the opportunity to review the brand new paperback children's book titled, **Callie's Contest of Courage** written by **Jan May** as part of her book launch. Jan May is the Christian author of several other published books written for The **New Millennium Girls Series** including the Creative Writing Made Easy, Isabel's Closet, and the first book in the series, Isabel's Secret. Callie's Contest of Courage is the second book in the series. My daughter and I are always looking for a good book to read. Alyssa is an avid reader, but we decided to read this engaging 161-page Christian chapter book aloud. The book consists of 12 chapters.



Who are the Millennium Girls?

The website states that, "They are the girls who are growing up in this generation who believe their God is bigger than all the giants in the land; girls with the faith of Joshua and Caleb; girls with a different spirit."

Book Description (Taken from the Website)

Eleven-year-old Callie Fleming is a passionate animal lover! She's been waiting all year to enter photos in the I Love Nature Photo Contest. Her dad, who is the coolest dad in the world, is an award winning photographer and Marine Corps Reserves Sergeant. She is leaning on his help to win. But when her father is untimely deployed overseas and becomes strangely silent to her emails, she finds her whole world crashing down on her. Can she muster up the courage to step out on a journey that whisks her away from all the things she loves? Join Callie on a journey of hope, trust, and power of prayer!

Is it possible for New Millennium Girls to host a Children's I Love Nature Photo Contest?

My Thoughts



Alyssa thoroughly enjoyed reading this book with me. The well-written book captured the interest and attention of my six-year-old daughter who is developing her own relationship with God. It nurtured her faith in Christ. It is a wonderful book about family, friendship, adventure, joy, faith, hope, love, and honesty.

I truly appreciated the fact that spiritual content and Biblical truths were scattered throughout the book. The faith-based book mentions scripture verses and emphasizes prayer. Callie's thoughts, dreams, and prayers were italicized helping the reader understand that she was thinking to herself or "talking" to God. I loved that Callie knew to seek God's help

and guidance through prayer when she struggled with life's circumstances. Callie is also reminded that she must let Jesus' golden rule be her guide as indicated in the Luke 6:31 "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Psalm 91 is the family prayer recited numerous times as they place their trust in the faithful Lord to protect and keep their father safe while he is fighting overseas. Callie used her strength and faith muscles to pray for her father when she felt he needed it most.



As we read the book, the teacher in me couldn't resist creating extension activities related to the topics found in the book which is why it took us a little longer to read it than expected.

We also created copywork pages for the relevant and meaningful scripture verses mentioned using Notebookingpages.com. I was impressed with the character development, descriptive word play, and Christian values addressed in the book. The author's use of descriptive language will help you visualize, imagine, and feel the story events come alive.

I believe readers will be able to relate to the main character especially if they have siblings. The Sweetwater, Illinois road trip games, adventures, and conversations reminded me of my own childhood family trips. The author modernized the book by adding in Skype calls, e-mail, phone texting, and Callie's Critter Connection website. This will help older girls with access to these technological avenues relate even more with the character. Callie posts animal facts and stories on her website. The reader can build vocabulary and develop research skills while learning more about the world that God created through the words and facts stated in the book. For example, my daughter learned the meaning of the word symbiotic when Callie said, "It means that in a relationship, each animal helps the other survive."



Callie is a great role model for tween girls or those around her age. Her character qualities and traits paint a picture of a realistic character who sins and makes mistakes. Readers will see that they can learn from their mistakes and about the importance of forgiveness. Her actions and words teach others to trust in God's plan and his timing for answered prayers.

We thoroughly enjoyed the fun hands-on activities included at the back of the book. The activities will help create long-lasting memories for

my daughter. Alyssa made a banana cream pie using the book's simple recipe as a special surprise for her father. I enjoyed spending quality time in the kitchen baking with my daughter



as she practiced life skills. This was her first time making and eating a banana cream pie. I am not sure why I haven't tried making one with her before, but I am glad that Jan suggested it. It was a perfect tie-in to the pie eating contest and fun fair events.

We even gathered a few items for our military package to help support the troops fighting overseas. Many items can be gathered at an extremely reasonable price using coupons. We are still putting our package together. My daughter plans to write a letter and wants to add baked goods to the package. Jan May provides the reader with a bulleted list of ways to support the troops. She also lists several military support organization links for further service learning research. Additionally, there is a bulleted list of categorized things that would brighten a soldier's day.



We hope to create a frog habitat as a spring or summer bucket list activity or during our amphibian nature study. The frog habitat project includes a material list, detailed instructions, and frog facts.

Alyssa's Thoughts (Age 6 1/2)

I like the book, because it tells about Callie's life and her fun adventures. I love how it adds little prayers. My favorite part was when they prayed about Psalm 91. I REALLY liked the ending. A funny part was when the cousin twins set-up water balloons to bomb Callie, but she moved them over their beds. They had a huge water balloon fight when they woke up. The book had

interesting animal facts and Bible verses too. I think my friends Gracie and Valerie would enjoy reading this book. Other girls would enjoy it too. I LOVED this book!!!

Recommendations

I highly recommend this book for girls who are nature lovers, animal lovers, or photographers. The book description states that it is suitable for tween girls between the ages of 8-12 in approximately 3rd-6th grade. I believe girls as young as 6 will eagerly read the book with someone. The book can be read aloud or independently read by fluent readers. Christian homeschool educators, children's literature book clubs, co-op groups, and Christian school literature circle classes can safely add this book to their reading lists. The book does not contain any inappropriate material. The content is age-appropriate. I highly recommend this book as a gift for any tween girl in a military family whose father has been deployed. Furthermore, this book would make a wonderful birthday or holiday gift. I look forward to hearing more about the next book in the New Millennium Girls series titled, Isabel's Fun Fair Fiasco.