



100 DAYS OF
Joy *and*
Strength

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100 Days of Joy and Strength
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INTRODUCTION

A governor of ancient Israel once encouraged his disheartened people with these words: “Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). Have you ever claimed those words as your own: “The joy of the Lord is my strength”?

On days when the Pacific breezes are cooling my patio and my work is humming along and the entire family is gathered around the dinner table, laughing, I easily relate to the joy part of that verse. It’s very real to me.

But many times I’ve needed the strength of the Lord. When I went on live television each morning to cohost *The View*, when I’ve faced criticism on social media, and when I left acting to become a full-time mom—and then again, ten years later, as I prayerfully decided how and when to return to work.

The help of heaven has been constantly available in my day-to-day juggling act as a woman, a wife, a mom, a working mom, and most importantly, as someone who longs to point people to God in whatever I do or say. Yet as a doer and dreamer with lots of plans, I haven’t always taken time to access those resources. The older I get, though, the easier it is for me to admit: I need all the joy and strength God will give me! Especially His joy and strength!

For the next one hundred days, let’s take this journey as sisters, praying for each other and exploring the various ways the Lord can be both our joy and our strength. Whether we’re having an ocean-breezy day, a lacking-courage day, a messy-house day, or an I’m-overwhelmed-and-can’t-do-another-thing kinda day, God can remain the center and the focus of it all. And we and those we love will be better for it.

In this together,

Candace

WITH YOU IN MIND

DAY

1 God has a plan for how He'd like each of us to spend the next twenty-four hours. He has prepared this day ahead of time (literally), like a mom packing an amazing lunch for each member of her family, complete with energizing superfoods, a love note, and some of each person's favorite snacks. Yet if we aren't running our plans by Him first, we're prone to either jam-pack our schedules with junk or, at the very least, with things that may not be bad for us . . . but that aren't necessarily the best for us either.

Don't be discouraged—just be aware of it. Before you commit to today's "places to be" and "things to do," ask God what He has prepared for you. After all, He made the day with you in mind. You can trust what He has awaiting you.

PROVERBS 3:5-6 NKJV

*Trust in the LORD with all
your heart, and lean not on
your own understanding; in
all your ways acknowledge
Him, and He shall direct
your paths.*

PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, that You take such great care of
my daily life. Because You are trustworthy, I give
You full access to my schedule today.

A HEALTHY DOSE OF GRATITUDE

DAY

2

Are you needing a boost of joy and strength for your day? Try adding a healthy dose of gratitude to your routine. Include a time of praise and worship as you exercise; post five things you're thankful for on social media, your

bathroom mirror, or your household whiteboard; or share what you most appreciate from your day over dinner with someone you love. The method doesn't matter as much as establishing the habit—a habit of praise.

God's gifts don't need fancy packaging to qualify for gratitude. Most of life happens in the small surprises and simple pleasures. That means anything counts! From an extra-long hug from your child, to another driver letting you in front of them during a rough commute, to trying on a beautiful new shade of lipstick or enjoying a taste of chocolate after a good meal, God's goodness is all around. We just need to be watching for it.

A thankful heart can't help but mine deeper and deeper for the gems that are within each new day. Likewise, a grateful mind keeps looking higher and higher, above life's difficulties or frustrations, to the One who is above it all. Even on our worst days, we can thank God because we trust that He sees the bigger picture and He has good plans for us. There's really nothing like a healthy dose of gratitude. Don't do a day without it!

JAMES 1:17 NASB

*Every good thing given and
every perfect gift is from
above, coming down from
the Father of lights, with
whom there is no variation
or shifting shadow.*

PRAYER

Lord, I choose to be mindful of the blessings
You've built into my day. From the greatest
miracle to what seems ordinary, I know these
blessings come from You.

SECRET TO SUCCESS

DAY

3

I think I've found it—one of the Bible's secrets to success! From the leading men and women of Israel, to the Old Testament prophets serving as God's spokesmen, to the New Testament apostles on their missionary journeys, they were able to go out and do big things for God because they never went on assignment without Him.

God specifically appointed Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and to the promised land. Though the Lord had made His choice crystal clear with a voice speaking from a burning bush, Moses was nevertheless feeling overwhelmed by the task ahead.

I hear his exasperation when he said (I'm paraphrasing Exodus 33:12–15): "Lord, You've been telling me, 'Lead these people on this mission.' You've assured me that You know me by name and I've found favor with You. Yet I still don't know who You're sending with me to help me. Unless it's You, we shouldn't be going at all."

God responded by pledging Himself to His servant: "I will be the One. I will go with you."

Are you needing to hear those words today as much as I am? We know upfront that not every undertaking from God will go without a hitch. Remember Israel's forty years in the desert? My version of that is the twenty years or so I've spent advocating as needed for more wholesome scripts with the writers and directors I work with. For every script change I do get, there may be three or four that stay in as written. Even so, every little difference gains more ground toward the goal. Every little difference honors and pleases God.

As you resume your divine assignment this day, press on in the presence and power of the Lord, taking to heart what God commanded Moses' successor, Joshua: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). The Mighty Warrior of heaven knows you by name, and He will be at your side every step of the way. Don't leave home without Him!

ZEPHANIAH 3:16-17

*On that day they will
say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear;
Zion; do not let your hands
hang limp. The LORD your
God is with you, the Mighty
Warrior who saves."*

PRAYER

You promise to go before me and behind me, Lord.
I'm counting on You. Stay right here with me.

BACK TO THE BASICS

DAY

4

As you're reading this, is someone in your life (other than God) trying to tell you who you should be or what you should be doing? Are you getting tripped up by what somebody else wants of you? Or maybe

what they think of you?

Then go back to the basics. Take it to God in prayer first. Next, affirm who you are in His eyes. Restate your purpose—or define it if you haven't already. Clarify your priorities and values. Discuss them with people you trust. And use those foundational truths to set up boundaries: "These are my goals. This is who I am. Here are the nonnegotiables that I will not compromise."

When you have convictions and standards you want to uphold, it's easier to stand strong and say no. Not easy, but easier. Those basics are also the keys that open the doors to the dreams and plans God wants you going after.

1 JOHN 3:1 NLT

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him.

PRAYER

Sometimes I feel myself being drawn to perform based on what others think of me or need from me. Lord, direct my focus to being the person You know me to be, the person You created me to be.