

A 52-WEEK DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY

DEEPEN  
*your*  
FRIENDSHIP  
*with*  
GOD



Faith Eury Cho



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To my extraordinary husband,  
Dave, with whom I've laughed  
through both mountaintops  
and valleys.





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# INTRODUCTION

You reveal the path of life to me;  
in your presence is abundant joy;  
at your right hand are eternal pleasures.

PSALM 16:11

Joy is one of the most universally sought-after experiences of our existence. Some people spend their entire lives in pursuit of it, pay a high price to feel it, and often settle for imitations of it. The word *joy*—or the renditions of *joy* such as *joyous*, *joyful*, or *rejoice*—is mentioned more than four hundred times in the Bible. The majority of these mentions relate to experiencing friendship with God.<sup>1</sup> Whether joy comes through adoring who He is or celebrating the work of His hands, the Bible makes clear that we were never meant to be fulfilled on earth without our creator. If you long to have this kind of joy in life, then enjoying friendship with God is worthy of exploration. This fifty-two-week devotional journey is a start toward that intention.

**Because to know Jesus is to enjoy Him.**

This is possible because a transcendent and omnipresent God chooses to be immanent and accessible. This is what I refer to as “the Presence of God.” God is everywhere, but He made a way to be spiritually and relationally present with you. God Himself is unconditionally present, thanks to the sacrifice of Christ. We can interact with the Holy Spirit like a friend, and He loyally remains with us no matter the circumstance. Although He is infinite, He is knowable, and our knowledge of Him can grow forever. Our enjoyment of Him can grow forever as well.



Now, friend of God, by the word *enjoy*, I do not mean a transient kind of gratification, like the indulgent pleasures we often pine for. Although abandoning yourself to gluttony, luxurious spending, and carnal cravings may offer moments of what can feel like happiness, I speak of a more reliable force. By *enjoy*, I also do not speak of adrenaline or hype, such as what you might feel when achieving your life goals or getting swept up in romantic chemistry. Instead, I mean the supernatural kind of enjoyment—a deep and vitalizing fulfillment. It is the kind that your body craves and your soul draws life from. To enjoy the Presence of God does not mean that your days will be immune to burdensome sighs and sorrowful tears. Until heaven, we will always be missing something while on earth. But even so, enjoying friendship with God keeps your fire of faith ablaze, regardless of the storm that howls around you. It keeps you standing upright in a fallen world and loving brightly in the thick of darkness.

Before we begin, I would love to offer guidance on how to use this journal. The goal of each week's devotional is to guide you directly to Scripture and in communing with the Holy Spirit yourself. We will explore biblical revelation through three sections: Enjoying Salvation, Enjoying His Presence, and Enjoying His Friendship in Prisons, Storms, and Everything Mundane. The first purpose of these sections is to fortify the foundation of our friendship with the Holy Spirit by enriching our understanding of our salvation in Christ. From there, we will explore the endless wealth of His Presence, deepening our satisfaction in Him. Last, we will continue to exercise our spiritual awareness of His goodness no matter the season we are in today.

Don't be pressured to perform. If anything, I encourage you to do these devotionals wherever you feel most at ease. Whether in the quiet of your room with scented candles or in the hustle and bustle of a café, the Holy Spirit is wherever you are. There is room to write on the pages, but do not allow the lines to limit you. Just let the questions and the space spur you on to open yourself to Him. The only requirement is to show up with your honesty as you approach the words that follow. Scribble, doodle, or wash the pages with tears if you must.

Each devotional will guide you to the following interactions with Jesus.

## THE THOUGHT OF THE DAY

As we approach Him, it is not always easy to turn off the noise around us and within us. The Thought of the Day helps us take hold of our minds for Jesus. It is a means to turn down life's volume so that you can allow your soul to be present with Him. It also primes you for the Scripture of the week. Consider this a warm-up for your soul.

## ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS

Before you engage with anyone on a personal level, it makes sense to first greet them or acknowledge their presence. Take a deep breath here and clear your mind. Sometimes, that's the hardest part—clearing our minds. It may feel uncomfortable at first if you are used to constantly worrying, planning, or keeping an eye on your phone for notifications. But here, you can shift your attention to Him. Consider every good gift He's given in your life. Spend time thanking Him. After you consider what He's done, ponder who He is. Allow your soul to gaze at His goodness and spend time in adoration. This is a personal letter to your friend Jesus, so you do not need to sound extra spiritual or poetic. Feel free to speak plainly to Him through these pages. Allow your mind to be engulfed by who He is and His nearness to you.

## POUR OUT YOUR HEART

What was at the forefront of your heart as you greeted Jesus? Take a moment of silence and stillness here. Notice what bubbles up from within you. What are you carrying? What concerns you? What are you tied down with? What pokes and prods at you? Pour this out to God. Be as candid as possible, and take your time. If you feel yourself struggling here, you can even say this portion out loud. Don't worry about having this part make sense. You're not writing an essay. This is not a test. You are just expressing your heart to your Father, and you are safe.

## MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE

Each week will be assigned a passage of Scripture, so always try to keep your Bible handy! As you read the passage of the week, what parts stick out to you? Writing down the words and verses that draw your attention can awaken your soul because you are acting on what you are reading. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you here. Don't try to investigate the context and meaning quite yet. We'll do that soon after. In my book *Experiencing Friendship with God*, I mention, "Meditating on the Bible allows you to acknowledge God, consider Him, and make room for Him to minister to your heart. You may not always feel it, but it is nourishing your soul. It is a violent disruption and eradication of toxic ways of thinking."<sup>2</sup> Just allow the truth to sit in your mind and seep into your heart. Dwell and marinate here. Be ready to highlight, copy verses to your phone, and save what really spoke to you. You can even meditate on the passage of the week after your devotional is over. Take a picture of it. Keep your Bible open to it as a reminder.

## REFLECT

This is the part where we step into a brief investigation and study. An accurate understanding of God's Word helps us better hear Him and understand His will. May this portion deepen your knowledge of God's heart and character. Psalm 1:1–2 says,

How happy is the one who does not  
walk in the advice of the wicked  
or stand in the pathway with sinners  
or sit in the company of mockers!  
Instead, his delight is in the LORD's instruction,  
and he meditates on it day and night.

Joy and life are produced when you hold fast to His truth, which is why it is worth our while to understand it in depth. If you feel led to, you can even take a pause after reading this portion to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you again. How does the Scripture for the week reveal your heart? How does it offer wisdom to your current situation? What are your takeaways and applications from it?

## PRAY

Respond to God here. Don't be too caught up with proprieties; instead, use your own words to respond to Him in your most authentic way. In addition, this is also the space to make your petitions. Ask for help where you need it. Bring up your needs and concerns. You can petition on behalf of others as well. What's wonderful about this part is that you can always look back later to reflect on how God answered your prayers. This further enriches our enjoyment of His friendship!

Now, let us begin.

