

365 DEVOTIONS

# MOMENTS WITH YOU



DENNIS & BARBARA  
RAINEY

WITH LAWRENCE KIMBROUGH



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*This book is dedicated to Randy and Kay Creech.*

*Thanks for your friendship,  
for caring about godly families  
and for “giving God all the glory!”*

BOOKS BY DENNIS AND BARBARA RAINEY

*Moments with You: Daily Connections for Couples*

*Moments Together for Couples*

*Moments Together for Growing Closer to God*

*Moments Together for Intimacy*

*Moments Together for Living What You Believe*

*Moments Together for Parents*

*Moments Together for a Peaceful Home*

*Preparing for Marriage\**

*Preparing for Marriage Leader's Guide\**

*Preparing for Marriage Devotions for Couples*

\*Dennis Rainey, General Editor

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## INTRODUCTION

The longer we are married, the more we realize that a marriage needs constant nourishment—we need to spend time together working on our relationship. That’s why we’ve created this new devotional—to encourage you to draw closer together. We promise you that as you spend “moments” reading, thinking, talking, and praying together, you *will* grow closer to God and one another.

You can expect that *Moments with You* will prompt a lot of conversation between you and your spouse over the things that *really* matter—the real issues of life, marriage and family. One of you could read the opening Scripture aloud, and then pass the book to the other to read the primary text. The discussion question gives you the opportunity to grapple and interact together with the biblical truths in each devotion—and you can’t answer them with a grunt, or a yes or no! We’ve designed them to help you truly connect with one another—heart to heart.

Each devotion ends with a closing prayer, and we hope this simple exercise will turn into a regular part of your marriage. We believe if couples faithfully prayed together on a daily basis, they could decrease their chances of ever divorcing by 99.9 percent. Why? Because God intends for marriage to be a spiritual relationship consisting of *three*—not just a man and a woman, but the two of them and their God relating spiritually and remaining committed to each other for a lifetime. Wouldn’t it be natural for God, the One who initiated the relationship, to want a couple to bring their troubles, worries, and praises to Him on a regular, daily basis?

We suggest that you find a consistent time to complete these daily devotions—a time when you won’t be interrupted by the phone, the television, or the needs of family or friends. This may be early in the morning . . . or just before you go to sleep at night. If you will commit to doing this consistently, we’re confident you will be pleased with what it does to your relationship.

One final feature of each devotional is the “Connect” link at the bottom. Each Internet link will lead you to additional resources—suggested articles, books, radio programs, and more—on that day’s topic. We’ve selected some of the finest resources from leading marriage and family experts to give you greater understanding and help.

As we wrote in our first devotional, *Moments Together for Couples*, spending this time together “will be the best investment you could make.” We guarantee it!

DENNIS & BARBARA RAINEY



# MOMENTS WITH YOU

## FAMILY

*God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

GENESIS 1:27

I believe there is nothing more powerful on Earth than family. It is the single most influential force for good (or for evil) in all human existence.

From birth, it marks you. Your family crafts your conscience and shapes your soul. At home you learn life's lessons and begin the art of practicing them. At home you learn to love and to do what's right. More than merely giving you a street address, your home and family imprint you with a spiritual and sexual identity shaped by the two people who gave you life. Truly, nothing compares to the strength of being tightly wrapped in the protective fiber of family. It's who you are. It's where you belong.

And if all goes well—as it should—it is your family that surrounds you when you start life's journey, when you face life's hardest trials, when you go through the valleys and when you die. More than anyone else, the members of your family are the ones who are there for you, caring for you and mourning the loss of you when you're gone.

This should come as no surprise, because God created the family. At the very dawn of time, "God created man in His own image, . . . male and female He created them." Of all the ways He could have chosen to inaugurate His creation, He chose to start with family. In fact, the Bible begins with a marriage in Genesis and ends with a marriage in Revelation. Marriage and family have always been central to what God is doing on planet Earth.

I believe family is still of utmost importance to our heavenly Father. It holds the key to our health, our success as a society, and our future. And I believe it is worth whatever effort is required to nurture, encourage and support it.

Why not celebrate the family God has given you today?

### DISCUSS

In what ways past and present has God blessed your life through your family?

### PRAY

Thank God for the gift of your family, regardless of its inadequacies and failures.



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## I NEED YOU

*The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you."*

1 CORINTHIANS 12:21

I still remember the first time I told my mom and dad, "I love you." Being a typically ungrateful, unexpressive teenager, I found looking my parents in the eye and saying those three little words excruciating.

I also remember the first time I told Barbara I loved her. My heart was jumping wildly. Adrenaline was the only thing flowing faster than the beads of sweat on my forehead. I wasn't sure either one of us would survive the experience!

Those are hard words to say to someone for the first time, aren't they? Telling another person "I love you" represents risk and vulnerability. Yet there are three other words that are often even harder to express: "I need you."

*"I need you."*

Oh, at one time they flowed fairly easily from your lips. Think back to those early days of romance and intrigue. She made you laugh. He made you feel secure and stable. She brought warmth into a room. His sensitivity made you feel valued and important.

Yes, saying "I need you" came effortlessly at first. But sometime after your wedding day, the thief of familiarity can steal that sense of need. You go your own way. You think you know best. You figure you can do fine by yourself.

Isn't it interesting that in Genesis 2:18-25, Adam had to be *told* he had a need? God said, "It is not good for man to be alone" (verse 18). And even after that authoritative statement, Adam still had to name a few million creatures before he realized that none of them were what he needed. His need was for *someone*. He needed *her*.

Don't wait to be told what you already know to be true. You need her. You need him. Say it frequently and specifically.

### DISCUSS

What keeps you from easily and openly admitting how much you need your spouse? Turn to your spouse and say, "I need you." Then share why and how you need him or her.

### PRAY

Ask God to give you a true perspective on your own limitations—your own dependence on Him and on each other.



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## NEED BY EXAMPLE

*Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.*

ECCLESIASTES 4:9

I shared with you yesterday about three little words that aren't always so easy to say: "I need you." But sometimes, all it takes to get those words flowing again is just a reminder of how many ways you truly do depend upon each other.

You need your spouse for:

- *Honesty*—Who else knows you so well and can give you such an honest perspective on things when you need it most?
- *Variety*—How black-and-white and one-dimensional would your life be without someone to add color and texture to it?
- *Encouragement*—Who still believes in you when others don't—including yourself? Who helps you remember your uniqueness and significance?
- *Togetherness*—Who else can multiply your joys, divide your sorrows and add to your experience with God by sharing it together?
- *Counterbalance*—When you're going too fast, who helps you put on the brakes? When you're afraid to take a risk, who encourages you to go for it?
- *Understanding*—When you don't want to talk, who can draw you out? Who else can force you to be real and authentic with your emotions?
- *Parenting*—How could you raise your children without someone to temper your weaknesses, complement your blind spots and help reinforce your positions?
- *Romance*—Who else can share your most intimate secrets, see you at your most vulnerable, yet allow you to express yourself without shame, with pure joy in return?
- *Companionship*—Who is the difference between doing things single-handedly and doing them together, as a couple?

You really do need each other. And God knew what He was doing when He gave you to one another.

### DISCUSS

Make your own list of the ways you need each other, or prioritize the top five from the list above. Then be sure to share your list with each other.

### PRAY

Thank God for giving you someone to experience life with—someone you need probably more than you know.



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## TAMING THE DRAGON

*Therefore encourage one another and build up one another,  
just as you also are doing.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

It can lie. It can gossip. It can slander. It can also murmur and complain. It can manipulate and flatter. It can tear down. It can paint itself in nice words, even while cutting someone to ribbons.

My friend Joe Stowell calls it “the dragon in our dentures.” Our tongue. It can truly be deadly.

On the other hand, when that “dragon” is under the power of the Holy Spirit, when we are daily training it to be submitted to Christ’s control and available for His use and purposes, He can transform it into an instrument that delivers encouragement.

I remember being in church one Sunday morning when I spotted a prominent local oncologist walking by. I’d been hearing about some special things he’d been doing with his cancer patients—some unique ways he was allowing God to minister through him in the course of practicing his profession. So I caught his attention and said, “Hey, I just wanted you to know I really appreciate what you’re doing. Do you realize what an incredible minister for Christ you are? You’re making quite a difference in our community.”

It was like I’d hit him with a stun gun. A dazed expression flashed across his face. And after a moment’s pause, he looked at me and said, “Really?”

I said, almost laughing now, “Well, yeah. The things I’ve been hearing about the work you do are really inspiring. We could use a lot more Christ followers like you.”

He shook my hand and smiled. “You don’t know how much I needed to hear that this morning. Thank you.”

I was reminded again how often people just need a nod of encouragement in their journey, no matter how confident he or she may appear to be.

Shared a good word with someone lately?

### DISCUSS

Think about some things you’ve been noticing in others that are really worth praising. Slay the dragon and encourage them.

### PRAY

Ask God to make you and your words build up, not tear down.



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