



You
Can Rest

100 DEVOTIONS
TO CALM YOUR HEART AND MIND

BY KATY BOATMAN





You Can Rest

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TO CALM YOUR HEART AND MIND



BY KATY BOATMAN



Nashville, Tennessee

For my nieces, Shelby and Ellie.
May you always know that Jesus is with you,
and because of who He is, you can rest.

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Introduction

I know you have plenty of things to worry about.

How many times have you laid down in your bed at night only to have your mind take over your plans to fall asleep? Your brain tries to make you remember all the things that went wrong that day, the things you are nervous about for tomorrow, and everything you're scared of as it gets dark! Before you know it, you are wide awake—worrying that you will be awake all night—and the worry wheel is spinning out of control.

God knows and understands this worry. He's there to help you fight it. God sees and hears all those worries that are distracting you at school, making you anxious, and keeping you awake at night.

This book contains one hundred different devotions to read before bed (or anytime!). They'll help you realize what God can do with your worry, remind you that He's with you, and help you go to sleep thinking about how much He loves you.

After every ten days of devotions, there is a question for you to answer and some lines where you can journal. Consider those pages your chance to write out your honest thoughts and feelings. You can answer the question given and continue to write out what is on your heart. These pages are for you! Don't worry about making everything sound nice—just write out what you're thinking. This is your safe space to process, reflect, and be still. You can even write your prayers to God if that's helpful to you. He wants to hear what is on your mind.

There's also a full index in the back of the book where you can look up different things you might be worrying about and see if there is a devotion on that topic. If you climb in bed one night and you're worried about school, or your family, or making friends, you can head to the index, look up those topics, and find out which pages to turn to for help. My prayer is that whether you go through the book from Day 1 to 100 or skip around to find the topics that relate to you the most, you'll encounter the God who will never leave you—the God who cares about your feelings.

I wrote this devotional not because I no longer struggle with worry, but because I know now what to do with my worry when it comes. I run to God. My prayer is that you would

walk away from reading this with a sense of peace—because you, too, know that God is with you.

God is not scared.

God can help you.

God will take care of tomorrow.

God can give you peace.

And God is with you.

Rest in that. Rest in Him.

A Note About Asking for Professional Help

As we talk about things that worry us, I want you to know it's okay to seek professional help! Some worries and problems are too big to handle alone. Some of the topics we're going to talk about in this book may be an overwhelming issue for you and something that reading a short devotion can't help solve. If you're battling those things or dealing with a diagnosis of anxiety or depression, it is absolutely okay (and necessary) to reach out to doctors, counselors, pastors, teachers, and parents for extra help and support. No one is supposed to carry these anxieties alone. You are so loved.

DAY 1

You Can Rest

God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.—ROMANS 5:8

There are so many things that worry our minds, and we'll talk about a lot of those throughout this book. There's one thing, however, that I want to make sure you know before anything else.

Jesus died for you, so you can rest.

Let me tell you more about what that means. We are all born broken people. You, me, your parents, your friends. So if you're worried that you've messed up too much or you don't feel like you're enough, the truth is—none of us is enough.

God created people to be with Him, but because of our sinful and broken nature, we are separated from God. There is nothing we can do on our own to fix that. Trying to be nice enough, read the Bible enough, or be respectful enough won't fill the separation gap between us and God. Plus, all the trying so hard is just exhausting.

But here's where the good news comes in: God sent His Son, Jesus, to live on earth and to die in our place so we can be forgiven for all our mistakes. When we trust in Jesus and begin a relationship with Him, we get to spend forever with God. And that starts immediately.

This is why you can rest. When you have a relationship with Jesus, you are forgiven. You don't have to worry about not being enough, because Jesus is. You don't have to stress over being perfect at everything, because Jesus is. And you don't have to live without God, ever, because He lives in you.

Rest in that.

God, I know I need You in my life. I want to know You more and trust You. Will You come into my life and come into my heart? Thank You for giving me the chance to be with You forever.

DAY 2

When You're Scared

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, and the flame will not burn you.”—ISAIAH 43:2

Did anything make you scared today?

There is something about nighttime that can bring up all our fears, no matter how old we are. But God tells us over and over again in the Bible to not fear. It's a reminder that He is in control and we are not—and this is such a relief!

If you read chapter 43 of Isaiah, you see just how many things God was prepared to rescue His people from. And that's still true today.

You may not be passing through water or fire, but you no doubt have lots of scary things going on around you because this world is broken!

Now, you may read this verse and think that God's people never get hurt or that He always makes life easy. But we have to remember to look at the Bible as a whole and not just at

one verse. There are plenty of times in Scripture when God's people were hurt or suffering (like in the book of Job). The people in the Bible were scared a lot too, and God did not promise to take the scary things away. Instead, He promised us *Himself*. That's the gift!

When we are scared, He is our safe place (Psalm 46:1). He is our shelter from the storm (Isaiah 4:6). We can trust in Him (Psalm 145:19).

Whatever you named at the start of today's reading does not have to be the last thing on your mind as you fall asleep. God has called you by name. He is whispering, "Hey, I know you're scared, and that's okay because You are mine. I've got this."

Rest in that.

God, would You take away my fear? Will You remind me that You are in control? Thank You for being my safe place.

DAY 3

When You Want to Do It All Yourself

Therefore, we may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”—HEBREWS 13:6

Have you ever watched a baby learn to walk? Those wobbly legs fight to keep their balance, yet gravity wins, and the baby plops right back down to the floor! So, what do they do next?

When they can't quite get the momentum they need, babies know how to get moving faster. Finding the closest piece of furniture to grab onto or a hand to hold, they pull themselves up and start going on their merry way, with the help of something to steady them. Babies are smart!

As humans, sometimes our desire to do everything on our own means we fall down a lot. As we get older, we want to prove that we can do a lot more than walk—we can handle all the homework without taking notes, we can remember the words to the play without practicing much, and we can navigate friendships without involving adults.

And you know what? Sometimes you can do all of that. But it won't take long until you can't fall asleep because you're trying to remember your lines; you're stressing about grades; you're anxious about the drama. Bottom line, you become overwhelmed.

But guess what? You have help! Not only can God help you, but He provides other people to be a steady hand to hold.

Being independent and “walking on your own” means also making smart choices—and that includes using help when you have access to it. You will be able to handle the worry when you use the resources around you. Rehearse your lines with a friend. Take notes in class and make to-do lists. Ask a teacher, parent, or mentor for wisdom when you're having trouble with friends.

And ask God for strength. He is strong, which means you can lean on Him to help you through it all.

Rest in that.

I want to do things on my own, but I know I can't do everything! God, thank You for helping me. Thank You for friends and family who love me and help me too.

DAY 4

When You're Afraid of the Dark

Even the darkness is not dark to you. The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to you.—PSALM 139:12

Have you ever played hide-and-seek in the dark? As you crouch down in your spot, the suspense of waiting for someone to find you is so scary! In the pitch-black darkness, you listen closely for the person searching for you, and sometimes all you can hear is the sound of your own breath.

I don't like the dark in general, so I hate playing games in the dark. If I were hiding, I'd choose a room near a window so some light could still get in. When I am trying to sleep at night, I leave a small light on so I can still distinguish everything in my room. I don't like the dark because I can't see in it.

Our minds sometimes come up with crazy ideas in the darkness. Whatever we can't see, we imagine to be something scary. When we can't see, we often react to what we think is there. What if we could shine some light in the darkness?

Whether you're playing hide-and-seek in the dark, it's time to fall asleep, or the darkness is something you're feeling inside, let me tell you the truth about darkness: God can see in the dark, and He is not afraid of it.

The Bible tells us that darkness is just as light as daytime to Him. That means God knows where you should step when walking in the dark, *and* He knows what's coming your way in the future, which you can't see.

Whatever kind of darkness is scaring you, ask God to shine some light on it. Ask God to make it brighter. And remember that even if you still can't see in the dark, He can.

Rest in that.

*God, thank You for being my light in the darkness.
Help me trust You with what I cannot see.*

DAY 5

When It Storms

He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Silence! Be still!” The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. Then he said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” And they were terrified and asked one another, “Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!” —MARK 4:39–41

There’s something magical (but also nerve-wracking!) about a storm, when the lightning and thunder team up to light up the sky and sound off at the same time. It is so startling!

Storms are loud, and they can be scary. It’s okay if they make you nervous!

Have you ever wondered what Jesus thought of storms? Mark 4 gives us a glimpse of Jesus’ interaction with a storm. He was out in a boat with the disciples, who were acting like we’d expect people caught in a storm to act: they were freaking out! Jesus, on the other hand, was fast asleep.

The disciples woke Jesus up, asking if He didn’t care if they all died in the storm. Jesus then commanded the sea and storm to be still. Both came to a stop.

How was Jesus able to sleep during a storm that was so crazy the disciples thought they would die? He had such peace because He is the Son of God. This Jesus, the One who sleeps through storms, is with us when the storms of life are happening around us.

Life's storms might be a fight you're in with your friends. It might be dealing with your parents' disapproval or divorce.

Now, I won't tell you that Jesus will calm every storm you are in, because I can't predict that. But I will tell you that He will sit with you in it. Comfort is found not just when the storm goes away. Comfort in the middle of a storm is being with Jesus Himself. He is capable of settling it, but He's also capable of calming your mind and heart. He will not leave you. He will not let you go. His peaceful presence changes everything.

Rest in that.

God, I don't like storms (of any kind), and this is really hard. Will You calm my heart and mind through them? Thank You for being right here with me. I know I am safe in Your arms.

DAY 6

When You're Worried About Tomorrow

“Don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”—MATTHEW 6:34

Have you heard of the Sunday Scaries? It's the term we use to describe our feelings when the weekend is coming to an end and the responsibilities of Monday are on our minds. The truth is, sometimes we get the Monday Scaries, the Tuesday Scaries, or the No-Matter-What-Day-It-Is Scaries. I know this is true for me!

In the book of Matthew, Jesus reminds us not to be anxious. He says, “Consider the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they?” (Matthew 6:26).

Jesus talks about the flowers too. They aren't spinning out of control in worry as they bloom and grow. They aren't worried about tomorrow because God provides for the birds and the flowers every single day. And He'll provide for you too.

Our worry can often translate into a need to control what happens tomorrow. We worry about our family's health, our to-do list, or if our friends will still like us. But can you imagine the birds doing that? Do you think they fly around worried they won't find a tree branch to rest on? Do you think they fall asleep wondering if they will find worms to feed their babies in the morning? God created the birds and everything they need—and He created you too. Do you think God's worried about what will happen tomorrow?

As you fall asleep tonight, think about God's creation. The trees aren't worried about blossoming tomorrow. The grass isn't worried about growing tomorrow. The sun isn't worried about rising tomorrow. God's creation continues to work to the sound of His voice, and He will care for you both today *and* tomorrow.

Rest in that.

God, thank You for reminding me You're in control when I'm worried about what might happen tomorrow. Thank You for making the sun rise and the world spin every day. Will You continue to remind me that tomorrow is in Your hands?