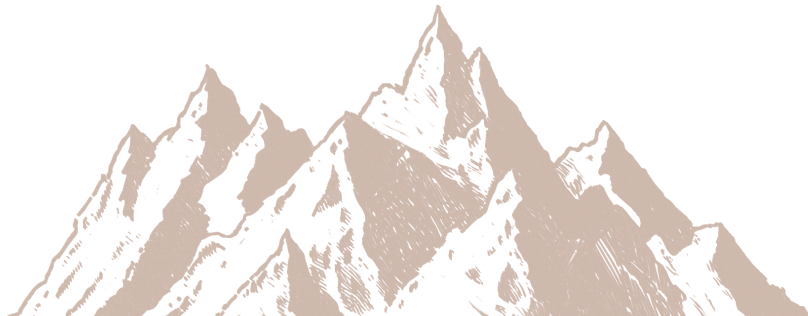


# YOU CAN COUNT ON GOD

365 Devotions

MAX LUCADO





*You Can Count on God*

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Portions of this book have been previously published in the following: *You Are Never Alone, How Happiness Happens, Anxious for Nothing, Because of Bethlehem, Praying the Promises, and Unshakable Hope*, all by Max Lucado.

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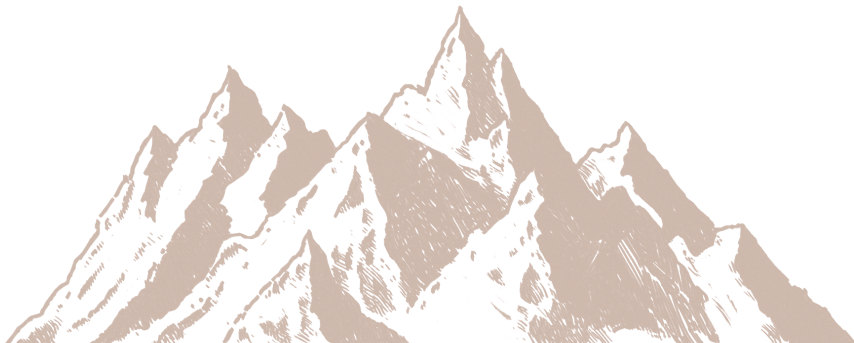
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# JANUARY

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JANUARY 1

# UNDER HIS WINGS

*He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection.*

PSALM 91:4 NLT

To read today's scripture is to read the words of a man who, in the innermost part of his being, believed in the steady hand of a good God. He was protected by God's strength, preserved by God's love. He lived beneath the shadow of God's wings.

Do you?

Stabilize your soul with the sovereignty of God. He reigns supreme over every detail of the universe. "There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD" (Proverbs 21:30). "[God] does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35). He "sustains all things" (Hebrews 1:3 NRSV). He can "whistle for the fly that is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt" (Isaiah 7:18 NKJV). He names the stars and knows the sparrows. Great and small, from the army of a great country to the army of ants in my backyard, everything is under his control.

*Anxious for Nothing*



JANUARY 2

# JESUS STILL RESCUES

*“My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all;  
and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”*

JOHN 10:29 NKJV

With Christ’s resurrection, he poleaxed the devil and turned every grave into short-term housing. Holding confetti and lining up for a Pearly Gate victory parade, heaven’s angels were ready to celebrate. But the party would have to wait.

Jesus wanted to cook fish tacos for his friends. He wanted to restore the heart and the ministry of Peter. He perceived the layers of guilt and shame on the heart of his friend. As if with a cotton swab of grace, he began to wipe them away.

So Christ restored Peter with three personal commissions: “Feed My lambs” (John 21:15 NKJV). “Tend My sheep” (v. 16 NKJV). “Feed My sheep” (v. 17 NKJV).

Jesus had work for Peter to do, flocks for Peter to pastor. The apostle was discouraged but not disqualified.

And you? Have your fumbles and stumbles left you questioning your place in God’s plan? If so, let this story remind you that Christ is not finished with you either. Jesus went on a search-and-rescue mission for Peter. He will do the same for you.

*You Are Never Alone*



JANUARY 3

# HOME IN JESUS

*“Abide in Me, and I in you.”*

JOHN 15:4 NKJV

Come, live in me!” Jesus invites. “Make my home your home.” Odds are that you know what it means to be at home somewhere. To be at home is to feel safe. The residence is a place of refuge and security.

To be at home is to be comfortable. You can pad around wearing slippers and a robe.

To be at home is to be familiar. When you enter the door, you needn’t consult the blueprint to find the kitchen.

Our aim—our only aim—is to be at home in Christ. He is not a roadside park or hotel room. He is our permanent mailing address. Christ is our home. He is our place of refuge and security. We are comfortable in his presence, free to be our authentic selves. We know our way around in him. We know his heart and his ways.

We rest in him, find our nourishment in him. His roof of grace protects us from storms of guilt. His walls of providence secure us from destructive winds. His fireplace warms us during the lonely winters of life. He is our home.

*Anxious for Nothing*



JANUARY 4

## CHOOSE YOUR INHERITANCE

*“I will give you every place where you set  
your foot, as I promised Moses.”*

JOSHUA 1:3

**W**e typically think of Joshua as taking the promised land. It’s more precise to think of Joshua as taking God at his word. The great accomplishment of Joshua and the Hebrew people was this: they lived out of their inheritance. In fact, the story ends with this declaration: “Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to their own inheritance” (Joshua 24:28).

Is that to say they had no challenges? The book of Joshua makes it clear that wasn’t the case. The Jordan River was wide. The Jericho walls were high. The evil inhabitants of Canaan were not giving up without a fight. Still, Joshua led the Hebrews to cross the Jordan, bring down the walls of Jericho, and defeat the thirty-one enemy kings. Every time he faced a challenge, he did so with faith, because he trusted his inheritance.

What if you did the same? Standing before you is a Jericho wall of fear. Brick upon brick of anxiety and dread. It’s a stronghold that keeps you out of Canaan. Circumstances say, *Cower to your fears*. Your inheritance says otherwise: *You are a child of the King. His perfect love casts out fear. Move forward.* Choose your inheritance.

*Unshakable Hope*



JANUARY 5

## A GUIDE FOR THE WAY

*“When He, the Spirit of truth, has come,  
He will guide you into all truth.”*

JOHN 16:13 NKJV

*Guide me today, Holy Spirit. Show me where you want me to go, whom you want me to talk to, what decision you want me to make. Help me discern your voice over my own and others'. Walk closely with me and whisper truth to me. Forgive me when I listen to my own desires and ignore what you are telling me.*

*God, I'm so grateful you sent your Spirit to empower me. Thank you for speaking to me and working in me. Stay near to me and help me hear your voice.*

*Father, you are good—so good that you did not leave us alone on this earth. You left us your Spirit to guide us. Because of your Spirit, I never have to feel alone or afraid. You are with me always. Amen.*

*Praying the Promises*



JANUARY 6

## WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

*He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

2 CORINTHIANS 1:21–22

Ask a believer to answer the question, “Who is God the Father?” He has a reply. Or, “Describe God the Son.” She will not hesitate. But if you want to see believers hem, haw, and search for words, ask, “Who is the Holy Spirit?”

The Bible makes more than a hundred references to the Holy Spirit. Jesus said more about the Holy Spirit than he did about the church or marriage.

The Holy Spirit is central to the life of the Christian. Everything from Acts to Revelation is a result of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came alongside the disciples, indwelt them, and gave the early church the push they needed to face the challenges ahead.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit became the primary agent of the Trinity on earth. He will complete what was begun by the Father and the Son.

Do you want his power? Direction? Strength? Then “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). He directs and leads; you must obey and follow.

*Praying the Promises*



JANUARY 7

# AN OUTLINE OF GRACE

*“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

JOHN 14:6

Paul entered the pages of Scripture as Saul, the self-professed Pharisee of all Pharisees and the most religious man in town. But all his scruples and law keeping hadn't made him a better person. He was bloodthirsty and angry, determined to extinguish anything and everyone Christian.

His attitude began to change on the road to Damascus. That's when Jesus appeared, knocked him off his high horse, and left him sightless for three days. Paul could see only one direction: inward. And what he saw he did not like.

We aren't told when Paul realized the meaning of grace. Was it immediately on the Damascus road? Or gradually during the three-day darkness? Or after Ananias restored his sight? We aren't told. But we know that Paul got grace. Or grace got Paul. Either way, he embraced the improbable offer that God would make us right with him through Jesus Christ. Paul's logic followed a simple outline:

Our debt is enough to sink us.  
God loves us too much to leave us.  
So God has found a way to save us.

*Unshakable Hope*



JANUARY 8

# CAST YOUR CARES

*Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you.*

PSALM 55:22

Casting is an intentional act to relocate an object. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the crowd removed the garments off their backs and spread them in the path of Christ. Let this “throwing” be your first response to bad news. Cast your anxiety in the direction of Christ. Do so specifically and immediately.

I did a good job of “casting my problems” in a high school algebra class. My brain scans reveal a missing region marked by the sign “Intended for Algebra.” Fortunately I had a wonderful, patient teacher. He issued this invitation and stuck to it: “If you cannot solve a problem, come to me and I will help you.”

I wore a trail into the floor between his desk and mine. Each time I had a question, I would approach his desk and remind him, “Remember how you promised you would help?” When he said yes, instant gratitude and relief kicked in. I still had the problem, but I had entrusted it to one who knew how to solve it.

Do the same. Take your problem to Christ and tell him, “You said you would help me. Would you?”

*Anxious for Nothing*



JANUARY 9

# JESUS DOES

*Our high priest is able to understand our weaknesses.*

HEBREWS 4:15 NCV

**Y**ou think the moon affects the tides? It does. But Christ runs the moon. You think the United States is a superpower? The United States has only the power Christ gives and nothing more. He has authority over everything. And he has had it forever.

Yet, Jesus was willing to forgo the privileges of divinity and enter humanity.

He was born just as all babies are born. His childhood was a common one. There is no evidence or suggestion that he was spared the inconveniences of adolescence. As an adult he was weary enough to sit down at a well (John 4:6) and sleepy enough to doze off in a rocking boat (Mark 4:35–38). He became hungry in the wilderness and thirsty on the cross. When the soldiers pounded the nails through his skin, a thousand nerve endings cried for relief.

The Word became flesh.

If you ever wonder if God understands you, he does. If you ever wonder if God listens, he does. If you ever wonder if the Uncreated Creator can comprehend the challenges you face, he does.

*Unshakable Hope*

