

Daily  
Strength  
for Couples

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A 365-DAY DEVOTIONAL

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## *Daily Strength for Couples*

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*Love each other deeply,*

*as much as I have loved you."*

JOHN 15:12 TPT



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# Introduction



With your lives moving in fast forward and no known chance of slowing down, finding time to devote to your marriage can seem nearly impossible. Quality time is incredibly important for maintaining a healthy marriage in this quick-paced society where you run (sometimes literally) from errands to appointments to activities and back again.

One of the best ways to strengthen your relationship is to spend time with God—together.

This daily devotional offers inspiring reflections on relationships, encouraging Scriptures, and thought-provoking questions to help you intentionally engage with God and each other. When you prioritize spending a few moments to grow together in your relationship with God, you will quickly learn that it is the best way to begin or end your day.



# January

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A man shall leave his father and mother  
and hold fast to his wife,  
and they shall become one flesh.

GENESIS 2:24 ESV

## Resolutions

I will give heed to the blameless way.

When will you come to me?

I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart.

I will set no worthless thing before my eyes;

I hate the work of those who fall away;

It shall not fasten its grip on me.

PSALM 101:2-3 NASB

Many of us make annual New Year's resolutions, only to abandon them while the year is still young. The resolutions are usually great goals, but we lack the willpower to keep them. In Psalm 101, King David speaks boldly about his resolve to govern his kingdom and his home with integrity and righteousness.

Have you considered making the same declarations for your home and your marriage? Would your behavior, attitudes, words, and choice of movies and entertainment change? Would you be more mindful of keeping your word and be less influenced by the world? We know that determination alone cannot carry us, but David knew that too. He could make these bold statements because he knew that God was loving, kind, fair, and dependable. God is the real power behind resolutions.

*Are the two of you willing to make David's resolutions your own?*

*How can you walk with integrity in every area of your life?*

## *Life Adventures*

How blessed is the man whose strength is in You,  
In whose heart are the highways to Zion!

PSALM 84:5 NASB

*M*arriage is an adventure. Adventures take us into unknown territories, and so do our relationships. Part of the fun in any adventure is having a companion along for the journey, and nothing could be better than experiencing joyful moments with a sweetheart.

However, adventures come with hazards and unexpected moments that threaten to wreck our trips. Life adventures deal with unexpected heartache, health problems, and financial difficulties.

Where do we turn when life's trip takes a bad turn? Tour guides lead and advise travelers on their adventures, and we have the ultimate guide in God. When troubles disrupt the adventure, he sees clearly our path, and he will provide the necessary tools for the journey.

*What are some adventures that we can do together for God?*

*What have we learned from life adventure disruptions, and how can we use those moments to draw closer to each other?*

## Thinking of You

God is my witness, how I long for you all  
with the affection of Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 1:8 NASB

**B**uilt into each of us is a craving for love and affection, and that longing is important in our relationships. God set the standard for perfect love, inspiring us with his example. But it's easy to get busy or preoccupied as responsibilities claim our attention. Forgetting to express affection creates a void in our marriages.

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Marriage needs all kinds of affection. Physical touch is vital; hugs and kisses say, "You are the most special person on earth to me."

And it's important to hear the words *I love you* each day. Try writing a quick note to leave by your spouse's morning coffee cup. Send flowers just because, or a text that says, "Thinking of you." As God beautifully shares his love with us, we can become extensions of his loving hands and heart and share that love with the partner he's given us.

*How do you feel when your sweetheart is affectionate toward you? What can you do to be more loving to your spouse?*

## *Eternal Authority*

Even from eternity I am He,  
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;  
I act and who can reverse it?

ISAIAH 43:13 NASB

*H*ow glorious it is to belong to the King! What an honor to be counted among his children, to be held secure in his hand, to be the recipients of his love and affection. We are finite beings, but the Lord Almighty is infinite. Our presence here is fixed, but he is eternal. We were created by him and for him; he is the Author and Creator of all that we know. What he has decided to do, none can dismantle. Whom he decides to save, none can sway.

The Lord extends his hand and delivers us from our adversary, and all the enemy's schemes cannot crush his limitless power. He is from eternity, possessing all form of love and wisdom. His plan is perfect, and we are part of it. For all of time—past, present, and future—the Lord reigns with justice and mercy. We are blessed beyond measure to know and be known by him.

*Knowing that God holds you and keeps you safe,  
what could you and your spouse endeavor to do with boldness?*

JANUARY 5

## Foresight

I know that You can do all things,  
And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.

JOB 42:2 NASB

Sitting in agony, covered in dust, boils, and tears, Job declared his faith in God. Although it seemed like his whole world had fallen apart, Job still believed that God was able to do anything. He believed in God's ability to remove his sufferings, yet he received something far greater than relief: God met Job in his pain and showed him his great mysteries. Rather than ease his suffering, he used it to open Job's eyes and grew his relationship with him even deeper! Job's faith multiplied, as did his wisdom.

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When we suffer, rather than immediately seeking an escape, we should look for how the Lord might be using the situation to richly bless our lives. Instead of making our anguish end, he may meet us in it and share the burden with us. Far more desirable than a life of ease is the experience of a true friendship with the Creator. His plans will be established across the globe because his purposes cannot be stopped. His friends are invited to participate in his mission, but it will be accompanied by many hardships and trials. But he is with us through it all.

*In the midst of suffering, does your mind go first  
to easing your pain or seeking God?*

*How can you encourage your spouse in moments of suffering?*

JANUARY 6

## Best Friends

A friend is always loyal,  
and a brother is born to help in time of need.

PROVERBS 17:17 NLT

True friendships are often revealed through adversity. When the excitement wears off and the trials hit, loyal friends will remain to help fight the battles. Their love is constant and not dependent on what they receive from the relationship. Friendship does not ask what is fair; it exhibits true love regardless of the cost.

Marriages will experience conflict, but a healthy marriage will rise above the argument and spouses will support each other through the best and worst of life. Christ is the perfect example of a devout lover, a brother, and a true friend. His love is constant, never wavering and eternal. He came to earth to help those in need, not to be served, and he gave his own life to serve those he loved. In Christ, we are family. We may be friends as well, but first we are brothers and sisters in Christ, loyal to the Lord and to each other.

*Beyond partnership, do you and your spouse  
enjoy a friendship together?*

## *What You Bring*

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 PETER 2:9 NRSV

*We* were chosen as God's people, and the purpose for that is not our own self-preservation or glorification, but so we may proclaim his goodness and explain all the incredible wonders he has done on our behalf. Remembering where we came from helps us keep perspective on who we are; we were once lost in darkness, but God called us out of it and flooded us with his marvelous light. Now we are members of his holy family.

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Anyone willing to leave their dark pasts behind and submit themselves to Christ's calling becomes a member of his holy nation—a nation which will endure forever and not be swept away with temporal things. Regardless of where we come from or what we look like, we become one spiritual race since we share the same Father. Peter made it clear that this was not an invitation to the Israelites alone but to anyone who stumbled out of darkness and embraced living in God's light.

*What opportunities do you have to proclaim  
the mighty acts of God?*

JANUARY 8

## Stormy Waters

We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

ROMANS 5:3-5 NIV

Wouldn't it be nice if every marriage came equipped with a plan for smooth sailing? Instead, we encounter severe storms and rough waters as we face financial difficulties, health crisis situations, and relationship struggles. These moments can strengthen us or destroy us, and our attitudes influence the outcome as we face those challenges.

By asking God what he wants us to learn from those situations, we build perseverance and character to help us in future storms. As we see God's hand in our lives and marriages, we have confidence in his will for the years ahead. And when we ride out those challenges together as a couple, our love grows.

*How do you react to challenges?*

*How can you work together  
as a couple when stormy times arrive?*

## Precious

Let it be the hidden person of the heart,  
with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit,  
which is precious in the sight of God.

1 PETER 3:4 NASB

Turning his attention specifically to Christian wives, Peter explained that a woman's true beauty is found in her unseen character rather than her outward appearance. Women are inundated with messages about what the world deems attractive, and they are plagued with insurmountable physical standards. Instead of striving to achieve some form of impossible physique, their focus should be on cultivating a humble and quiet heart. Like so many of the Bible's lessons which were directed at a certain group of people in that time, there are spiritual insights associated with them that are applicable to anyone.

To possess a "quiet spirit" does not mean women should stay silent, but that they ought to strive to maintain a level of inner peace and contentment which is only possible through relying on the Lord. In a world which applauds impenetrable toughness and caters to the loudest voices, Christians are to follow Christ's example by remaining caring and calm. Hardening your heart does not demonstrate a tenderness before the Lord, nor does anxiety and strife reveal a person who rests in God's peace. It is your hidden godly qualities that are precious to God.

*How can you be calm when others around you are not?  
How can you encourage your spouse to have a quiet spirit?*

## Understanding

As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways,  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

ISAIAH 55:9 NKJV

Have you and your spouse ever enjoyed God's handiwork in the sky? Blue skies and puffy white clouds are gorgeous. And there's something almost magical about a full moon and thousands of bright stars spread across the dark canopy of the sky. Those are the moments that make us understand what a big God we have.

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Times like those are reminders that we shouldn't limit God when it comes to the dreams on our hearts. His dreams for us are always bigger than ours. If we'll listen to and understand his sweet whispers to us and follow through on those, we can achieve things as a couple that will be beyond our wildest expectations. He's equipped us with unique skills and life experiences, and it's such a joy to see the Lord use our spouse's life in a big way for God's glory.

*Have you ever thought about what a big God we have?*

*How do we limit him by looking at our resources instead of his?*

## *Hope Overflowing*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 15:13 NIV

Daily life is difficult, and we are easily ensnared by evils which attempt to tear us apart and distract us from what Yahweh has called us to do. He alone can offer us true hope, peace, and joy, so we must continue to trust him and block out contradictory voices. If we truly want to be upheld by his mighty hand, to be led by his Holy Spirit, and to be filled with his confident hope, then we need to put our trust solely in him.

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We will see God work through our lives for the purpose of his pleasure if we are willing to use our God-given gifts to encourage and strengthen each other. In our relationships with our spouses, we ought to strive to put them before ourselves and to always put the Lord first. He is faithful to guide us and keep us, to give us strength when we have none, and to provide us with hope and peace. His Holy Spirit fills us so we can live to the full extent of the purposes he has set in place for us.

*How does trust lead to joy and peace?*

## *Living Sacrifice*

I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

ROMANS 12:1 NLT

*T*he mercies of God surround us! Every moment of our lives is a gift we do not deserve. When we were worthy of death, he gave us forgiveness and life. He no longer demands animal sacrifices as an atonement for our sins but asks that we be fully committed to him in mind and body. Rather than the blood of goats, which served as a tangible example of the gravity and penalty of sin, he wants our full submission to him: our entire bodies, hearts, minds, and strength.

The Lord desires that we live for him in all that we say, think, and do. It is an unfathomable, undeserved gift that we no longer need to atone for our sins with sacrifices and offerings since he already settled that account for us by offering himself as the ultimate sacrifice. Since he bought and paid for us, we are fully his. Even more incredible is the fact that we are what he desires! He does not want sacrifices or servanthood but mutual love and devotion. May our lives be an act of worship to him because of all he has done for us.

*What does it mean to be a living and holy sacrifice  
to the Lord in your daily life?  
How about in your marriage?*

## Good Gifts

*Who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.*

1 TIMOTHY 4:3-5 ESV

Gnosticism teaches that all forms of physical pleasure are inherently evil, including music and entertainment, delicious foods, and sexual enjoyment. This sort of belief was trending at the time Paul wrote to Timothy especially in Ephesus. He warned him against such notions and reminded him that everything God created was good.

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We are not supposed to reject the gifts of God but thank him for them and enjoy them. He created so many things for our enjoyment because he is a good and loving God. The popular practice of Asceticism was also on the rise, which taught that by rejecting pleasures of the flesh, people could avoid corruption and somehow obtain a higher level of spirituality. Although nothing should come before God in our lives, true holy living can only be attained through spending time with God and in his Word because holiness comes from him alone. Pride and self-reliance will corrupt us far faster than enjoying God's blessings. Marriage is a gift from our Maker to be treasured and enjoyed.

*What sort of pleasures has God given you to enjoy?*

JANUARY 14

## *The Great Need*

I am a friend to anyone who fears you—  
anyone who obeys your commandments.

PSALM 119:63 NLT

*M*utual interest is bonding. We share a connection with those who strive for the same things we do. The fear of the Lord leads us to wisdom, and a wise person will surround themselves with other wise people. Those who fear the Lord will do their utmost to obey his commandments and their lives will reflect a desire to honor God.

When we meet people like this and our desire is also to obey his Word, our decisions will complement each other's, and a friendship will be natural. As we strive to serve the Lord, it will become evident that this is better accomplished in the company of other brothers and sisters with the same heart and mind. Camaraderie is born out of sharing a common goal—especially when that goal ties us together as family under Christ.

*How do you feel when you meet someone new  
and discover they love the Lord like you do?*