



STRENGTH
FOR TODAY

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for
Women

365
DEVOTIONS

BroadStreet
P U B L I S H I N G

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Strength for Today for Women

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Intro

You can walk in confidence when you rely on God to be your strength. Be encouraged with truth as you spend time with God, reflecting on these devotions, Scriptures, and prayers. As you spend time with him, he will fill you with peace and hope for each day.

Let your heavenly Father show you that, through him, even in your weakest moments, you are radiant and you are strong. Take courage in God's love for you and be ready to conquer each day!

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JANUARY 1

Book of Life

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.

PSALM 139:16 NRSV

*I*t's the day of new beginnings and you might be feeling a mixture of emotions. There is bound to be excitement about the possibilities that are waiting just around the corner, but there also might be overwhelming thoughts about the trials that could lie ahead or fear of the unknown.

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Whatever your thoughts and feelings are about this day, remember that you have the spirit of Christ in your heart and mind, ready to help you in all of your decisions and strengthening you through any challenges. Head into this day with the confidence that he created you and already knows who you are, and who you are going to become!

*What do you need courage to take on this year with grace and skill,
knowing that God is right there with you?*

JANUARY 2

Feeling Stuck

The Sovereign LORD is my strength!
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,
able to tread upon the heights.

HABAKKUK 3:19 NLT

Local authorities are reporting blizzard conditions on the Interstate...” Did your pulse just quicken, your muscles tense? No one likes to feel stuck, and blinding snow and unmoving vehicles on every side can cause even the most rational, laid-back woman to imagine leaping from her car and running over rooftops and across hoods, action hero style. What a fun way to test out the traction on your new winter boots. Or not. Anyway, stuck is stuck, right?

Maybe we feel stuck in our everyday lives. A job that doesn't utilize our gifts, a relationship that's more take than give, a habit that's edging toward addiction. Unlike that snow-covered freeway-turned-parking-lot, there is a direction to turn when circumstances have you feeling boxed in. Turn your face toward the Lord; let him fill you with the strength to move.

*Where are you stuck right now? Professionally, personally,
or perhaps in your prayer life, is there an area
where you've simply stopped moving?*

JANUARY 3

Body Parts

Just as each of us has one body with many members,
and these members do not all have the same function,
so in Christ we, though many, form one body,
and each member belongs to all the others.

ROMANS 12:4-5 NIV

A tooth is such a small part of the body, but when it begins to ache, it can be debilitating! The human body is fascinating in this way. God has created all of our parts to be distinct yet interdependent.

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As a Christian, you are part of the body of Christ. More important than trying to distinguish which part you are is the recognition of just how important your unique gifts are to the health of the whole body. You were created to belong to something that is greater than yourself. The Bible acknowledges that God has given us different gifts that are not for our individual gain. God designed our gifts to be used in harmony with others' gifts.

Will you allow God to speak to you today about how you can use your gifts for the good of the entire body of Christ?

JANUARY 4

Comfort and Strength

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father,
who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope,
comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17 NLT

After being confused about when the Lord Jesus would return, and after facing extreme persecution, the Thessalonians needed the Lord's refreshing hope, comfort, and strength. By God's grace, they were able to face every obstacle with confidence and strength. In every action and every word, they were able to choose to do good. Nothing was too much for them because God had demonstrated his love to them.

We also can face all things and cling to what is good. Whenever we feel hopeless, tired, weak, or confused, we can find all the refreshment we need in Christ Jesus. He is our hope and our strength, our eternal comfort, and perfect lover.

How can you find comfort in uncomfortable times?

JANUARY 5

Just Ask Him

I call to you, God, and you answer me.
Listen to me now, and hear what I say.

PSALM 17:6 NCV

Ah, the first crush. “Does he like me?” we wondered aloud to our friends. “Just ask him,” they answered. “You may never know if you don’t ask,” they counseled. A note was written, folded, and passed. We waited nervously for the reply. The whole thing was simple, but also scary.

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If only answers to prayer came so simply or quickly: “Should I take this job? Marry this man? Try to have a baby now, or in a year? Check yes or no.” God’s Word encourages us again and again to come to him with our questions, concerns, and deepest longings. He does promise a reply, though not necessarily in the form of a check in a box.

What are you longing to know? Just ask him. He’s waiting expectantly for your prayers, and he will answer you. It may not be today, or even for a long time, but keep asking.

JANUARY 6

Pressing In

When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD;
he brought me into a spacious place.
The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid.
What can mere mortals do to me?

PSALM 118:5-6 NIV

*A*lthough the world's powers can appear indomitable, all the nations of the earth cannot stand against God. When we feel as if our backs are against the wall, or the pressures of the world are laying heavy upon us, we can call on God and he will answer us. He will deliver us out of our narrow confinement, the prison of our minds, or our earthly bonds, and release us into a spacious place where we can run free.

Even if God does not remove us from the trials we are facing, we can rest assured knowing that he uses everything for his glory and we will triumph in the end. The Lord is with us, and he answers when we call out to him. Nobody can steal the freedom and the joy that God gladly gives.

What are you afraid of?

JANUARY 7

Timely Words

A person finds joy in giving an apt reply—
and how good is a timely word!

PROVERBS 15:23 NIV

An appropriate word given at the right time is very beneficial both for the giver and the receiver. To obtain the sort of wisdom this requires does not come in a sudden burst of insight, but rather from quietly listening to God.

We do not suddenly become the answer during the situation, God has the answers, and we can only give them to others by learning from him. In meekness, we should hold back our own words and ask God what he would like to tell others through us.

Have you ever received a word that was so fitting at such an opportune moment that you knew it had to be wisdom from God that inspired it? How did that make you feel?

JANUARY 8

Firm Foundation

This is what the Sovereign LORD says:
“Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem,
a firm and tested stone.
It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on.
Whoever believes need never be shaken.”

ISAIAH 28:16 NLT

*A*rchitects know that for a building to stand it must first have a good foundation. This means digging down to the bedrock and supporting the weight by laying strong footings. Only then can a successful structure be built. Your Christian life is like that tower. God laid the foundation when you gave your life to him. Since that time, each bit of knowledge, every prayer, every verse has laid down the walls. When you obeyed him and showed his love to others the walls took shape. Slowly they rose, strong on the cornerstone of your faith and held together by God. Those walls keep the enemy away; they cannot be broken down or shaken.

You can take a brave stand in your relationships with others. Share what you know about the Lord and what he has done in your life. Don't be afraid of standing strong when the world mocks you. He is the firm foundation.

Do you feel God's strength when you are afraid? Do you remember a time when his power was working through you?

JANUARY 9

Repentance

The wages of sin is death,
but the free gift of God is eternal life
through Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 6:23 NLT

As humans, we sometimes wrongly judge sin on a scale. God does not view iniquity this way, however, since any imperfection separates us from a perfect God. We should refrain from comparing sin, judging others, or devaluing the grace that has been shown to us.

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There is nobody who God's grace cannot extend to, if they would just be willing to receive it. As Christians, we should adamantly admit our need for God's grace and be willing to extend grace to others, regardless of how we weigh and measure their sin.

How did God's grace lead you to repentance?

JANUARY 10

Your Destiny

These things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day.

HABAKKUK 2:3 TLB

*A*s we listen to a talented singer, or watch a brilliant athlete, these people, so apparently effortless in their pursuits, seem born for just those things. This is their destiny, we think. What is my destiny? we may then wonder. What was I born to do?

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Whether or not you believe you have a specific purpose, God knows you do. And he knows just what it is, and how long—how many false starts and poor decisions—it will take you to fulfill it. He is deeply interested in the destinies of those who call him Father, just as he is in the ultimate fate of the whole world.

Are you waiting on God to fulfill—or reveal—your destiny? Take comfort in the passage above, and thank him for his perfect timing. If the waiting is hard, ask for his help.

JANUARY 11

Awesome Name

He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.

PSALM 111:9 NIV

*A*s you wake to another morning, do you feel free from burdens or worn down by them? You might be experiencing some mountaintop moments and mornings are a joy, but if you are in a valley, mornings can be difficult.

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Whatever your experience is right now, remember that God has redeemed you. He didn't just set the Israelites free, he set all of humanity free and made his promise of grace last forever. Let this covenant remind you of how awesome he is today so you are able to experience the light of this new life.

*How can you share the good news of God's redemption
with those around you?*

JANUARY 12

On the Calendar

Oh, that I had wings like a dove;
then I would fly away and rest!

PSALM 55:6 NLT

*B*ack in our grandparents' era, life didn't seem as fast-paced as today. They actually used their front porches, visited with neighbors, family, and friends, and went on Sunday afternoon drives to enjoy the scenery. And that was despite not having all the labor-saving devices that we have today which actually don't seem to be helping a lot to give us restful lives.

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Our calendars are crammed with commitments. We race from one place to another, annoyed that it took more than a minute at the fast food window or that the red light didn't change as quickly as anticipated. Halfway through the day, we're so tired we don't think we'll make it to the end of the day. We have to plan for rest just like we do everything else in our lives, because it won't just happen. Be intentional about setting time aside to spend with God. That's where real refreshment and strength come from, and those moments will make the remainder of your day so much better.

Do you feel guilty about taking a nap or resting?

Why or why not?

JANUARY 13

Give Me Joy

“Until now you have asked nothing in my name.
Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

JOHN 16:24 ESV

Birthday parties are so much fun. Imagine all the hoopla of games, party hats, songs, and cake. Oh, and the most exciting part: the presents! The highlight of every birthday party is when it is time to open the presents. The look of sheer joy on the birthday girl as she receives each gift is memorable. Who doesn't love getting gifts?

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The definition of a gift is something given without the expectation of return. God wants to give you a wonderful gift—joy. The catch? He doesn't want you to strike a bargain. He doesn't want you to sacrifice anything. He just wants you to ask for it. It is so simple. When you don't feel you are worthy of joy, be brave and ask God for it anyway.

*Are there things in your life you don't dare ask God for?
Can you take a step of faith and ask him for joy?*

JANUARY 14

Slap Happy

Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart,
for God has already approved what you do.

ECCLESIASTES 9:7 NIV

Catherine was always a lot of fun. She lit up a room when she walked into it, and she had one of those personalities that made everyone around her feel good. She was sunshine to all who knew her. But there was a particular moment that all of her friends loved. They didn't come often, but when they did, they were something to behold. You see, when Catherine got really tired, she didn't become grouchy, she became slap happy. She would laugh until tears streamed down her face and she couldn't catch her breath. Everyone laughed with her. They couldn't help themselves. Her laughter was contagious.

The Bible says that a merry heart is like medicine to us. Maybe you can also help share that cheer and joy with others who need a hefty dose. Visit a shut-in or an elderly couple. Encourage someone who's going through a difficult time. Bring some sunshine into the life of a single mom. Those moments together will provide rest for their hearts and souls—and it will do the same for you.

*Why does laughter help you sleep better?
How can a joyful spirit be contagious to others?*

JANUARY 15

Successful Efforts

May the favor of the LORD our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.

PSALM 90:17 NIV

Chances are that you will have to work in some shape or form today. You might be heading out to your job, volunteering for a community project, or just cleaning up around the home. Sometimes our list of jobs and chores seems endless and we wonder why we are stuck in this routine of maintenance.

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Be encouraged to ask God the same thing this writer asks of him—to turn your work into something meaningful. Don't ever feel like your work isn't for a purpose. In some way, working is either benefiting you, or those you love. Try to approach your work with joy today.

*How can God establish the work of your hands today?
How can he give you a good attitude and a resilient mind
and body to get through the day?*

JANUARY 16

Love One Another

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another:
just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”

JOHN 13:34 ESV

Christ came not only to free us from death, but also to save us from our destructive ways. He demonstrated for us the way to live and then asked that we follow his example. He taught us the perfect paradoxes between his kingdom and our selfish natures and invited us to live for others rather than ourselves. He loved us with an unrelenting love and told us to love others the same way.

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To love one another is the trademark of the Christian life. We cannot claim to have known the love of Christ or to have heard his teachings if we fail to love each other because that is the basis of the Bible. God is love, and his followers will walk as he does.

Do you think the Scriptures would repeat the importance of loving people if it were easy? Who do you find difficult to love?

JANUARY 17

External Confidence

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence,
so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

HEBREWS 4:16 NIV

*C*onfidence can be defined in two ways. One is from within—we feel self-assured by our ability. The other is external—we believe we can rely on someone to do what they said they would. We cannot be brave without confidence, but the confidence we need does not come from the first definition. It is not wise to conjure up feelings of bravery through self-assurance of our own abilities, for they inevitably will fail us.

To succeed in life, our confidence must come from a firm trust in Jesus Christ, what he did for us on the cross, and how he continues to intercede for us. Our confidence does not come from our own power, but from Christ-given power. Walk into every situation today knowing that you have immediate, VIP access to throne of God, and there is an abundant warehouse of grace and mercy waiting for you.

*What self-assurance do you need to trade
for God's assurance today?*