

DETOX FOR THE SOIL

A 365-day
Devotional

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DETOX FOR THE SOUL

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Devotional entries composed by Sara Perry.


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Fix your thoughts on what
is true, and honorable, and
right, and pure, and lovely,
and admirable. Think about
things that are excellent and
worthy of praise.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8 NLT

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INTRODUCTION

It is all too easy to dwell on the negative aspects of life. We can talk for hours about conflict, worries, and disappointment, creating feelings of hopelessness, discouragement, and a lack of trust in our Heavenly Father who is faithful, good, and just. Jesus said out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. What we focus on affects how we live.

This daily devotional will help you battle against toxic thinking. Renew your mind as you reflect on the Scriptures, devotional entries, and prayers written in this book. Identify your negative thoughts and compare them with truth. What does the Bible say? Are your thoughts honoring of yourself and others? Are they holy, excellent, or worthy of praise? Stop the downward spiral of doubt, comparison, and criticism, and choose instead to dwell on true, pure, noble, and lovely things. Enhance your mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing as you spend time in God's presence.

Detox your soul and experience the refreshing nature of a positive outlook.

JANUARY

Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

ROMANS 12:2 CSB

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TRUE AND UNCHANGING

God, you are near me always, so close to me;
every one of your commands reveals truth.
I've known all along how true and unchanging
is every word you speak, established forever!

PSALM 119:151-152 TPT

Fix your thoughts on the nearness of God today. Make it a priority to bring your attention back to his presence throughout your day. As you do, reflect on the fruit of his presence in your life. Where is there love, joy, peace, kindness, and graciousness? Where is there room to both rest and grow in who you are?

The commands of the Lord are not meant to burden us but to liberate us. There is wisdom in the Word of the Lord. There is encouragement, direction, and acceptance. There is belonging, challenges, and an invitation to experience the steadfast mercy of God at every turn. Practice slowing down your responses when you feel yourself getting caught up in worry, irritation, or fear. Turn your attention to the nearness of your God and meditate on his faithfulness. He is forever good, and he is a ready help in every season of the soul.

Faithful One, thank you for being ever so near at all times. I lean on your faithfulness today. As I bring my attention and focus back to your presence throughout the day, release your peace, wisdom, and truth into my heart.

DELIGHTED IN

The LORD your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.

ZEPHANIAH 3:17 ESV

If we are not proactive in our relationship with God, drawing near to his heart, we may miss out on the freedom of his love. God does not love us because he has to, but because he is compelled to. He delights over us with gladness. He rejoices over us with singing.

God's heart is tender toward us. It is to our detriment when we resist the graciousness of his affection. When we focus on the parts of us that feel "not enough" we allow the voice of shame to drown out the Father's delight. We are not accepted because of what we do, but because the Lord loves us as we are. His liberating mercy allows us to bloom in the light of his love. As we readily receive his delight as children of a good and attentive Father, we are free to live, move, and love others well.

Lord God, there is no one like you in love. You are pure hearted and true. I won't close my heart off from your love, especially the areas that need your mercy. Thank you, Father!

COMPLETELY LOVED

“The Father himself loves you.”

JOHN 16:27 NIV

If we were to spend every day of our lives meditating on the truth that Jesus revealed in this verse, we would never reach the end of its impact. Love is the basis of the kingdom of God. It is who God is.

Instead of letting the idea of God's love become trite, let's press in to know God and his heart in a deeper way. The Holy Spirit reveals the wisdom of God, and we can trust him to show us new aspects of his love and how it plays out in our lives. As we are loved, so can we also love others. There isn't a part of us that is not reached or covered by the love of Christ. We are fully immersed in the mercy of God, and that is no small thing. It is the foundation of our faith, of our relationships, and of our identity.

Good Father, I admit that I need a fresh revelation of your love today. As I focus on your love, reveal what I could not perceive before. I want to know the power, the length, and the breadth of your mercy-kindness. Open my eyes even as I feel your love expand my heart.

HIGHER PERSPECTIVE

Raise your eyes on high
and see who has created these stars,
the One who brings out their multitude by number,
he calls them all by name;
because of the greatness of his might
and the strength of his power,
not one of them is missing.

ISAIAH 40:26 NASB

When life is overwhelming, it can feel as if the walls of this world are closing in on us. This is the perfect time to expand our perspective, and there are practical ways we can ground our bodies, minds, and hearts in this way.

Take today's verse, for instance. When we physically stand in a space that reminds us of our smallness, it can bring great comfort to know that God is much larger than we can imagine, and so is his wisdom. Whether you go to the ocean and stare over the great waters, stand under the dark sky and look up into the heavens and see the twinkling of stars, or hike a mountain to gain higher perspective, take some time to physically get into a space that reminds you of the Creator and his vast power. As you do, remind yourself that even the great trials of your life do not overwhelm your God.

Creator, thank you for the cues of your greatness in creation. As I step outside and consider your handiwork, bring rest, peace, and perspective to my heart and life.

SUREFOOTED AND STRONG

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

HABAKKUK 3:19 NLT

When we are overtired and worn-down, it can be difficult to focus on anything else. Yet, the Scriptures say over and over again that the Lord is our strength. In our weakness, he makes us strong. When we run out of our own vigor, we lean on him, and he carries us. He steadies our feet in troubled times.

It is good to recognize our limits. When we are weary, we should rest. When we are hungry, we should eat. God does not want us to neglect ourselves so that we burnout. Rest is holy. Still, there are things that we cannot rest ourselves out of. In times and seasons when life keeps going and we have little to give on our own, the Lord offers us his own grace-strength. Let's look to him in our times of need, for he is faithful to offer all that he has and is to us. What a glorious hope!

Lord, make my feet sure and my resolve strong. When I have nothing more of my own to give, you always have an abundance of what I need: peace, joy, strength, hope, and love. Fill me afresh today.

GOOD NEWS

“The LORD, the LORD is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth.”

EXODUS 34:6 CSB

Where we can be quick to judge, God is thoughtful and gracious. He sees what we cannot—the full picture, as well as the intentions of every heart. The Lord is not quick to silence us when we assert our needs. He is kind, merciful, and abounding in faithfulness.

When you feel yourself jumping to conclusions about others and their motives today, bring it under the canopy of God's grace. It is not your job to judge others, but to love them. And what does God's love look like? It is slow to anger, abounding in grace and kindness. May you find yourself enveloped in the mercy of God today, and from that place give out of the abundance of his pure love to others.

Gracious God, you see my heart in all of its stages. You are so much better than this world that pins people down with judgment. You are so merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love. I want to reflect you in the way I move in this world. Help me, Lord.

SO MUCH MORE

With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.

EPHESIANS 3:20 NCV

If we put our minds to something, it is very likely that we can accomplish it. There is value in hard work and focus. Even so, there are limits to our abilities, and we cannot account for unforeseen obstacles in life. We cannot control what the world will do, accidents that will happen, or how loss will affect us. When our plans go off-track, we are not without hope. God is faithful, and his mercy will hold us together in ways we could never have anticipated.

God is able to do immeasurably more than anything we can imagine or ask him to do. His power is fueled by love, it doesn't miss a detail, and it can resurrect and redeem what we could not on our own. His ways are better, his thoughts are better, and his intentions are better for us than we have for ourselves. Let's trust him to do what only he can do, even as we ask him to intervene in our lives.

Almighty God, I know that you are able to do more than I can even venture to imagine. Even so, I will stretch my imagination to partner with your love and power. Have your way in my life. I trust you.

GIVE THANKS

Oh, give thanks to the LORD!
 Call upon His name;
 Make known His deeds among the peoples!

1 CHRONICLES 16:8 NKJV

The practice of gratitude is a powerful tool in directing our attention to the good things of this life—the good gifts God has given us. We don't have to ignore our needs or the very real pressures we are under. We can bring those to God in prayer, knowing he hears us. But let's not stop there.

Today, take the time to make a gratitude list. What are the things you are thankful for? Who are the people in your life that you are grateful for? Nothing is too small if it brings you comfort and joy. As you go about your day, make note of the things that offer peace, joy, hope, and love. Thank God for every one and consider sharing some of the practical acts of his goodness in your life with others.

Lord, thank you for this day—for another opportunity to be known, to create, to live, move, and have my being. I am so grateful for the gifts of this life. Be honored as I pour out my gratitude to you every time I recognize your blessing in my life.

A COMPELLING FOCUS

I don't depend on my own strength to accomplish this; however I do have one compelling focus: I forget all of the past as I fasten my heart to the future instead.

PHILIPPIANS 3:13 TPT

Ruminating on the past can make us feel stuck in the present. When shame comes knocking on the doors of our hearts as we see things we could have done differently, it is important that we invite Christ's perspective over us. We have to let go of what was in order to move ahead. We cannot hold ourselves in the prison of perfectionism and expect to thrive.

Instead of dwelling on things that we cannot change in the past, we can shift our focus to who God is, who he says we are, and what he has for us in the future. As we ground ourselves in the overwhelming love of Christ that meets us in the right here and now, we can move forward with confidence. Christ is our compelling focus.

Lord Jesus, I let go of the shame that made me feel stuck and receive your love that lifts me out of that pit. I choose to follow you, eyes fixed on who you are. Thank you for loving me, redeeming me and calling me yours.

NO SHAME

Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

ROMANS 5:5 ESV

Hope does not put us to shame. What a powerful statement. The Holy Spirit does not work within our hearts to produce shame, but to shower us in love. We come alive in the truth of Love's light. We have been given grace upon grace.

Even in times of trouble, as Paul says in Romans 5:3, we have a joyful confidence in Christ. As we endure, our character is strengthened and refined, and that leads us back to our shame-free hope. If you are struggling against condemnation because you are going through a tough time, be sure of this: that is not from God. He who calls you his own reaches out in tender mercy, gracious strength, and astounding peace. Rise up in the confidence of who Christ says you are and throw off the shackles of shame. You don't have to live under condemnation's abuse any longer. You are free in Christ, and he is your living hope.

Holy Spirit, flood my senses with the power of your love until I am filled with the sense of expansive belonging, empowered determination, and peaceful resolution. You are my hope.

UNDER LOVE'S BANNER

He has brought me to his banquet hall,
and his banner over me is love.

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:4 NASB

When we live under the banner of God's love, no arrows of accusation can rip us apart. When we become aware of areas in our lives that aren't in alignment with the good news of Christ, we have the opportunity to repent and repair. Love doesn't excuse our mistakes, but it also doesn't hold them against us.

The Scriptures declare that the mercies of God are new every morning. There is a fresh portion of compassionate mercy in every moment. When we turn to God, we find ourselves enveloped in his love, completely covered by the banner of his affection. It is greater than any fear, shame, or regret. What an invitation we have today: to rejoice in the faithfulness of God's great love that covers us.

Merciful God, thank you for the power of your persistent love. I yield to your mercy, for it is my strength, my joy, and my peace. Wherever I am out of alignment with your heart, bring me into position today. I am yours, and I surrender to your ways.

TRANSFORMED MINDSETS

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

ROMANS 12:2 NLT

The way we think informs the way we live. If we are full of fear, skepticism, and anger, then the paths we choose will show it. The fruit of our lives reflects what we take in. Our motivations matter, but so do the wells we draw from.

Take some time with the Lord in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal mindsets that don't reflect his kingdom. Don't copy the behavior of others around you simply because they are customary. Let God speak his higher perspective, his life-giving wisdom, and allow yourself to be transformed as you do what he shows you to do. Where there is love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, along with all the fruit of God's Spirit, there is a trustworthy source to draw from.

Spirit, transform my thoughts, down to the way I think about things, in your gracious presence. I don't want to fall in line with tradition and others' expectations; I want to reflect you from the inside out in every part of my life.

CREATIVELY PUT TOGETHER

You created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made,
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
PSALM 139:13-14 NIV

When we find our worth in what others think of us, it is as if we are trying to hit a moving target. Beauty standards change all the time, as do fashions. What once was sought becomes yesterday's news as trends move.

What would it look like for you to accept yourself for who God created you to be? You don't have to change a single thing to find yourself fully loved and accepted by your Father in heaven. The things you see as quirks are creative inputs of an attentive Creator. You are fearfully and wonderfully made—you. Just as you are. When you are tempted to cover your perceived flaws, offer loving acceptance. Make it a practice and see how it changes the way you see yourself. You are worthy of love, you fearfully and wonderfully made image of the divine.

Creator, I want to love myself the way that you love me—completely. Help me to grow in compassion toward myself, as well as grounded identity in who you have wonderfully created me to be.

WHAT A SAVIOR

“Let us praise the LORD, the God of Israel,
because he has come to help his people
and has given them freedom.
He has given us a powerful Savior.”

LUKE 1:68-69 NCV

God did not leave us without help in this world. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to help us and to liberate us. No matter what hard times we go through, we are free from the curse of sin, fear, and death. We are liberated in Christ here and now, not only in the kingdom to come.

This is extraordinarily good news. No one can take away the power of love that saves us. We can turn our attention to the very near presence of God and to the hope of our hearts, Jesus Christ. Even when pressure rises, God's peace is ever so near. Let's lean into it, fixing our eyes on our wonderful Savior. As we do, we will know the freedom of his love, peace, and joy in even greater measures.

Savior, thank you for the freedom I find in you. Continue to peel back the layers of my heart as I put all my trust in you.