

# JANUARY

You are so intimately  
aware of me, Lord.

You read my heart like an open  
book and you know all the  
words I'm about to speak  
before I even start a sentence!

You know every step I will  
take before my journey  
even begins!

PSALM 139:3-4 TPT

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JANUARY 1

## SOMETHING NEW

*"I am about to do something new.  
See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?  
I will make a pathway through the wilderness.  
I will create rivers in the dry wasteland."*

ISAIAH 43:19 NLT

Whether you have generated a color-coded list of goals, dreams, and an execution plan for the next 365 days or you've banned resolutions and vowed to make this just another day on the calendar, the clean slate represented by the first day of a new year is filled with an undeniable air of expectation. The excitement of a new bauble or gadget pales in comparison to the promise of a new beginning. Deep down inside, there is a part of us which thinks, "This could be my year!"

Guess what? It is your year. This day, and every one that follows, is yours. It is yours to choose who and how to love, to serve, and even to be. And the choice you made in reading this page represents the choice to take this journey in the company of your heavenly Father. That is a beautiful place to start.

**What new thing would you like to do this year? What pathways do you need God to clear?**

JANUARY 2

## ABOUT YOU

*Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant.  
May everything you have said about me come true."  
And then the angel left her."*

LUKE 1:38 NLT

In a memorable scene from a movie about teenage girls, a teacher asks a gymnasium full of young women to close their eyes and raise their hands if they've ever said anything bad about another girl. Virtually every hand is raised. The reason this scene rings true is that it *is* true. And sadly, we are often even harder on ourselves.

In addition to the amazing news that Mary would bear God's son, the angel who visits her in Luke 1 also tells Mary of her goodness, of her favor in God's eyes. Mary was a teenage girl. Chances are, she'd heard—and thought—something less than kind about herself on more than one occasion. Consider her brave, beautiful response.

**Are you self-critical? If asked to describe yourself, what would you say? Now think of someone who loves you. What do they say about you? Decide today to let their words, and God's words, be the truth. Join Mary in saying to God, "May everything you have said about me come true."**

JANUARY 3

## 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? Ask God for surefooted strength, and then go where he leads you.

JANUARY 4

## THE FATHER'S LOVE

*"If a man has a hundred sheep but one of the sheep gets lost, he will leave the other ninety-nine on the hill and go to look for the lost sheep. I tell you the truth, if he finds it he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that were never lost."*

MATTHEW 18:12-13 NCV

Regardless of how beautifully or how imperfectly your earthly father showed his love, your heavenly Father's love is utterly boundless. Rest in that thought a moment. There is nothing you can do to change how he feels about you. Nothing.

We spend so much time trying to make ourselves more lovable, from beauty regimens to gourmet baking, to being there for pretty much everyone. It's easy to forget we are already perfectly loved. Our Father loves us more than we can imagine. And he would do anything for us. Anything.

Who do you love most fiercely, most protectively, most desperately here on earth? What would you do for them? Know that it's a mere fraction, nearly immeasurable, of what God would do for you. Spend some time thanking him for his great love.

JANUARY 5

# PROCRASTINATION

*Those who wait for perfect weather  
will never plant seeds;  
those who look at every cloud  
will never harvest crops.*

ECCLESIASTES 11:4 NCV

*I don't want to walk in late; I think I'll just go tomorrow.  
I'm feeling a little tired; I probably wouldn't do my best  
today, anyway.*

*I don't feel very creative right now. I'll do it in the morning.*

How often are circumstances ideal? How often do we think we need to wait until they are?

Right now, today, let's choose together to follow the advice of Scripture and decide that a few minutes late is better than absent. Let's acknowledge our collective fatigue, and then do today's version of our best in spite of it. Let's stop waiting for a burst of creativity, attack our projects, and see what happens. Let's honor God—and surprise ourselves at the same time.

**What are you waiting for?**