

RENAE BRUMBAUGH GREEN



ENCOURAGING DEVOTIONS
FOR A WOMAN OF GOD


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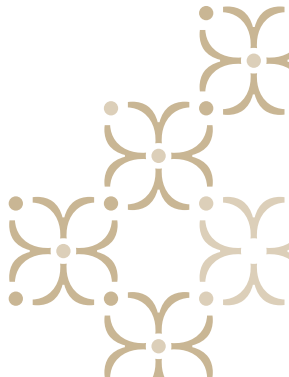


Introduction



It's fun to wear a new outfit. When we get dressed up in clothes that fit well and are fashionable and appropriate, we hold our heads a little higher. Our clothes can lift our mood and make us feel like our best selves. If a bit of cloth and thread can do that, imagine what can happen when we clothe ourselves in God's best for us?

Prayer is a wardrobe essential for every Christian. The more time we spend with our Father, the higher we hold our heads. Our shoulders press back, and we're able to face our lives with the confidence of knowing we're daughters of the King. We are royalty! He adores us, and He wants nothing more than to walk through life with us, guiding each step and showering us with wisdom and strength, blessings and love along the way.





He Wants You

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–18 NIV



Have you ever wondered what God's will is for your life? If so, you're not alone. He created each of us with unique skills and purposes, but it all boils down to this: He made you because He wants a relationship with you. He adores you, and He wants to hang out with you all the time. He is completely *for* you. . . He's your biggest cheerleader and advocate. He wants to hear your thoughts, your dreams, and even your frustrations. One of the beautiful things about constant prayer is that it changes us. The more we talk to our Father, the more like Him we become. He gives us joy and gratitude for the lives He's blessed us with. Dive into His presence and talk to Him about everything. He will never be bored or annoyed or too busy for you.

THANK YOU FOR WANTING MY COMPANY,
LORD. I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR LOVE.



Promise Keeper

But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”

GENESIS 15:2–3 NIV



God had promised that Abram’s descendants would be as numerous as the stars. God always keeps His promises, but He doesn’t always do it on our timeline. Since humans aren’t always patient creatures, we can lose hope when prayers aren’t answered immediately. We think He’s forgotten, or we think we misunderstood Him.

That’s how Abram felt. As time passed and Abram and his wife grew too old (by our standards) to have a child, Abram second-guessed God. He wondered if he should leave his stuff to a servant. But if we skip forward to chapter 21, we see that God meant exactly what He said. Sarah conceived and gave birth to Isaac. God will keep His promises to you as well.

**REMEMBER YOUR PROMISES TO ME,
LORD. I TRUST YOU, AND I BELIEVE.**

Trust His Timing

*And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael
might live under your blessing!"*

GENESIS 17:18 NIV



As time passed and Abram's patience waned, he kept talking to God. He kept the lines of communication open. But he and Sarah tried to manipulate God's plan when Abram, later called Abraham, slept with Sarah's servant, who gave birth to Ishmael. We do that too, don't we? When our prayers aren't answered as quickly as we want, or the answer isn't to our satisfaction, we try to help things along.

God doesn't force us to trust Him, but when we don't, we create more problems for ourselves. God didn't answer Abraham's prayer to make Ishmael his heir, because that wasn't God's will. He doesn't alter His promises to please us. But His plans are always far greater than anything we can come up with. Trust Him. His plans for you are good, and they're always worth the wait.

**WAITING IS HARD, LORD. BUT I KNOW
YOUR PLANS FOR ME ARE ALWAYS
BEST, AND I TRUST YOUR TIMING.**



An Overwhelming Task

Then he prayed, “LORD, God of my master Abraham, make me successful today, and show kindness to my master Abraham.”

GENESIS 24:12 NIV



When Abraham’s son Isaac was a young man, his father realized there wasn’t a suitable wife for him where they lived. Abraham sent his servant Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac among their relatives in their former land. That was quite a task! Eliezer must have felt overwhelmed. How was he to know the right woman? What if he failed?

Rather than panic, Eliezer asked God to show him what to do. He trusted God for success. When we feel overwhelmed, like there’s no possible way we can accomplish what needs to be done, we can do what Eliezer did. We can say, “God, I can’t do this on my own. I trust You for success.”

I FEEL LIKE I’M BEING SET UP FOR
FAILURE, LORD. I KNOW THE TASKS
AHEAD ARE TOO DIFFICULT FOR
ME. BUT NOTHING IS TOO DIFFICULT
FOR YOU! GUIDE ME, AND HELP ME
ACCOMPLISH WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

A Difficult Relationship

Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper.’ . . . Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children.”

GENESIS 32:9, 11 NIV



Years before, Jacob had fled his home after cheating his brother, Esau, out of his birthright and blessing. Now he wanted to return home—at God’s bidding—but he was afraid Esau would take revenge on him and his family. He couldn’t control Esau’s attitude or actions, so he asked God to prepare the way. God gave Jacob wisdom and softened Esau’s heart. Ask God to heal your relationships, to give you wisdom and soften others’ hearts.

YOU KNOW THE HISTORY OF MY
RELATIONSHIPS, LORD. I WANT THERE
TO BE PEACE. GIVE ME WISDOM FOR
HOW TO TREAT THOSE PEOPLE, AND
SOFTEN THEIR HEARTS TOWARD ME.



When God Says No

Moses again pleaded, “Lord, please! Send anyone else.”

EXODUS 4:13 NLT



It’s encouraging to read about people whose prayers were answered the way they wanted. But when Moses asked God to choose someone else to face Pharaoh and lead the Israelites to freedom, He said no. He did, however, give Moses a helper in his brother, Aaron.

God chose Moses for this. As an infant, Moses was supposed to die. Instead, he was found and adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and brought up in the palace as a prince. He was highly educated and was used to dealing with important people. God knew Moses had what it took—He had created Moses, after all! If God doesn’t answer your prayer the way you want, He will provide you with the skills and resources to do what you’ve been called to do.

I KNOW YOU’VE CALLED ME TO
DO THIS THING, LORD, BUT I DON’T
FEEL CAPABLE, AND IT’S OUT OF MY
COMFORT ZONE. I TRUST YOU TO EQUIP
ME TO DO WHAT YOU’VE CALLED ME TO.

What Lies Ahead

One day Moses said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Take these people up to the Promised Land.’ But you haven’t told me whom you will send with me. You have told me, ‘I know you by name, and I look favorably on you.’ If it is true that you look favorably on me, let me know your ways. . . .”

The LORD replied, “I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you.”

EXODUS 33:12–14 NLT



Sometimes we have a general idea of what God wants us to do, but we don’t know the specifics. That can be frustrating. It’s okay to share those frustrations with God. Moses asked God to let him know His plans. God’s response was an assurance: “I’ll be with you. It will be okay.”

I TRUST YOU, LORD. BUT IT’S HARD
WHEN I DON’T KNOW WHERE I’M
GOING. THANK YOU FOR THE PROMISE
OF YOUR PRESENCE. I KNOW IT
WILL ALL WORK OUT FOR MY GOOD,
BECAUSE I KNOW YOU LOVE ME.



Prayers for Blessings

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.”

NUMBERS 6:24–26 ESV



Aaron, Moses’ brother, prayed this blessing over the Israelites. He loved his nation, and he wanted God’s goodness to follow them. This is a beautiful prayer to pray for all those we love, whether it’s our family, our friends, or our country. God did bless the Israelite people, because He loved them even more than Aaron did. When we pray in agreement with God—when we ask Him to do something He’s already promised to do—we can know He will answer. And we’ll receive even greater blessings, because our prayers allow us to participate in God’s great plan.

FATHER, I KNOW YOU LOVE THE PEOPLE
IN MY HEART EVEN MORE THAN I DO.
I PRAY YOUR BLESSINGS ON THEM. THANK
YOU FOR LETTING ME TAKE PART IN THOSE
BLESSINGS THROUGH THE ACT OF PRAYER.



In His Presence

*And whenever the ark set out, Moses said,
“Arise, O LORD, and let your enemies be scattered,
and let those who hate you flee before you.”
And when it rested, he said, “Return, O LORD,
to the ten thousand thousands of Israel.”*

NUMBERS 10:35–36 ESV



As the Israelites traveled toward the Promised Land, the ark of the covenant was the physical representation of God’s presence and protection. Moses prayed for God to scatter their enemies and keep them safe. God did protect them during the times the Israelites’ hearts were devoted to God. But when Israel strayed and chose to live in sin, they moved away from God’s protection. Remember, God never changes. If you don’t feel His presence, take a look at your own life to see if you’re the one who pulled away.

I KNOW YOU ARE GOOD, FATHER. I KNOW
YOU ARE UNCHANGING. YOU PROMISED
TO NEVER LEAVE ME, BUT SOMETIMES,
WITHOUT REALIZING IT, I LEAVE YOU.
SHOW ME WHAT I MAY BE DOING TO PULL
AWAY FROM YOU. I NEED YOUR PRESENCE.



Accepting Help

Moses heard the people weeping throughout their clans, everyone at the door of his tent. And the anger of the LORD blazed hotly, and Moses was displeased. Moses said to the LORD, “Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me?”

NUMBERS 11:10–11 ESV



God put Moses in charge of the Israelites. Moses did what many of us do—he tried to do everything himself. But leadership only works if you *lead*. No one is supposed to do everything on their own. God answered Moses’ prayer by appointing some of the elders to help. When the task ahead is too large for you, ask God to send helpers.

I OFTEN FALL INTO THE TRAP OF DOING EVERYTHING ON MY OWN. IT SEEMS EASIER THAN TRAINING SOMEONE ELSE OR TRUSTING THEM TO DO WHAT’S NEEDED. FORGIVE ME FOR MY PRIDE. PLEASE SEND HELPERS, AND GIVE ME HUMILITY TO ACCEPT HELP.

Remind God of His Promises

But Moses said, “The people among whom I am number six hundred thousand on foot, and you have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat a whole month!’ Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, and be enough for them?”

NUMBERS 11:21–22 ESV



The Israelites were hungry. Moses was beside himself, wondering how he was supposed to feed over six hundred thousand people. He reminded God of His promise to feed them and wondered how such a thing could happen. God always keeps His promises, and He loves it when we remind Him of them. That shows we were paying attention! God provided the Israelites with manna to eat, and they were never hungry for the rest of their journey through the desert.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PROMISES,
FATHER. I KNOW YOU ARE FAITHFUL.
RIGHT NOW, I CLAIM YOUR
SPECIFIC PROMISE TO _____.
I TRUST YOU WITH THE OUTCOME.





*God's patience
is long and
His mercy is quick.*

Admitting When We're Wrong

The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

NUMBERS 21:7 NIV



Once the people were out of Egypt and no longer in danger of being captured, they quickly forgot all God had done for them. They began to complain about how tired and hungry they were. Their complaints angered God, and He sent poisonous snakes! At that point, they repented and asked Moses to intercede for them. God's patience is long and His mercy is quick. He provided a way for the Israelites to survive the snake bites. He doesn't take pleasure in punishment. . .He longs for our repentance.

I KNOW THE TROUBLES I FACE ARE OFTEN
THE RESULT OF MY OWN POOR CHOICES.
I'M SORRY FOR DISOBEYING YOU, LORD.
I KNOW I WAS WRONG. I NEED YOUR
MERCY. PLEASE RESCUE ME FROM
THE CONSEQUENCES, OR CARRY ME
THROUGH THEM WITH YOUR GRACE.



Consequences of Sin

“Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.”

NUMBERS 27:16–17 ESV



Moses was a good, godly leader. But he wasn't perfect! Once, he tried to take credit for bringing water from a rock instead of doing as God had asked him. Because of Moses' disobedience, God decided that Moses would never enter the Promised Land. He would see it from a distance, but he'd die before entering. Moses accepted this consequence of his own poor choice and prayed that God would provide a new leader for His people. God provided the right man—Joshua. Sin has consequences, but God's love never changes.

I KNOW MY POOR CHOICES HAVE
AFFECTED MY LIFE AND THE LIVES
OF OTHERS. I'M THANKFUL FOR YOUR
FORGIVENESS. PLEASE PROVIDE HEALING
AND PROSPERITY FOR THE PEOPLE I'VE
HURT. I TRUST YOUR GOODNESS.

Another Chance

“And I prayed to the LORD, ‘O Lord GOD, do not destroy your people and your heritage, whom you have redeemed through your greatness, whom you have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand.’”

DEUTERONOMY 9:26 ESV



God worked so many miracles for the Israelites, you'd think they'd never forget. But our memories can be short. While Moses was on Mount Sinai communing with God, the people created a golden calf and began to worship it. God was so angry and hurt that He was going to destroy them.

But Moses reminded God of all He'd done and begged God to give them another chance. God heard, and He relented. When we see those we love turning away from God, we can pray! Prayer is a powerful tool. We can change God's heart with our earnest, sincere pleas.

IT BREAKS MY HEART TO SEE
THOSE I LOVE TURN AGAINST YOU.
I KNOW IT BREAKS YOUR HEART EVEN
MORE. PLEASE DON'T GIVE UP ON
THEM. BRING THEM BACK TO YOU.



Agreeing with God

On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: “Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.”

JOSHUA 10:12 NIV



Several kings united to destroy Joshua’s allies in Gibeon because they wanted to weaken Israel’s chances of success. Joshua and his forces rushed to the Gibeonites’ aid, but he knew he needed God’s help. He prayed that God would cause time to be on their side—to stand still—so they could defeat the enemy. God had already determined that Israel would defeat its enemies, so He answered Joshua’s unusual prayer. God will always answer prayers when they align with His predetermined will.

FATHER, I KNOW I HAVE NO
RIGHT TO ORDER YOU AROUND OR
DEMAND ANYTHING FROM YOU.
BUT I PRAY NOW, AGREEING WITH
YOUR DESIRES. I KNOW THAT NOTHING
IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU, AND I TRUST
YOU COMPLETELY. PAVE THE WAY FOR
YOUR WILL TO PLAY OUT IN MY LIFE.



Facing Change

*After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the LORD,
“Who of us is to go up first to fight against the Canaanites?”*

JUDGES 1:1 NIV



From the time we're born, we go through a steady stream of changes, one after another. But even though we've all experienced it, most of us don't like change. The Israelites were no different. When Joshua died, they felt some anxiety and confusion over who would lead them into battle. Instead of arguing about it, they asked God. He answered quickly, telling them that the tribe of Judah would take the lead and that they would win. When we face change, we can trust God for guidance. He may only show us the next step, but we can take it in faith, knowing He'll lead us each step of the way.

I'M FACING SOME CHANGES IN MY
LIFE, LORD, AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT
TO DO NEXT. WILL YOU SHOW ME?
MAKE YOUR WAY CLEAR SO I DON'T
MESS UP. I TRUST YOU COMPLETELY.



When God Calls

*“Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied,
“but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest
in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”*

JUDGES 6:15 NIV



The Israelites were stubborn and rebellious. God handed them over to their enemies, the Midianites, to let them see what life without Him would be like. When they finally repented and asked God to rescue them, He spoke to a humble farmer named Gideon and told him he'd save the Israelites. Understandably, Gideon questioned this calling: “I’m nobody important. How can I save Israel?”

God’s answer was simple. “I will be with you.”

Has God called you to do something you don’t feel qualified for? That’s okay. If He’s called you to something, He will equip you. And He will never leave you to do it alone.

FATHER, I FEEL OUT OF MY DEPTH.
BUT IF I FELT QUALIFIED, I MIGHT NOT LEAN
ON YOU LIKE I SHOULD. SHOW ME WHAT
TO DO, LORD. I WILL FOLLOW YOUR LEAD.



When We Make a Mess

*But the Israelites said to the LORD, “We have sinned.
Do with us whatever you think best, but please rescue us now.”*

JUDGES 10:15 NIV



Time and again, the Israelites found themselves in trouble because of their own rebellion. They'd sin, moving away from God. The consequences of their sin would become unbearable, and they'd beg God to save them. God would come to their rescue, and they'd live in obedience for a little while before the cycle continued.

We may shake our heads at the Israelites, but they're not so different from us. We're human, and humans have a sin nature. We often choose to disobey God and ignore the consequences. But God loves His children. He is patient, kind, and merciful. He won't always remove the natural consequences of our sin, but He will always be there when we call for Him. He will always welcome us home.

I'VE MESSED UP AGAIN, LORD.
I'M SO SORRY. PLEASE RESCUE ME
FROM THIS MESS I'VE MADE.



A Foolish Promise

And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: “If you give the Ammonites into my hands, whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the LORD’s, and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering.”

JUDGES 11:30–31 NIV



God granted Jephthah’s request to defeat the Ammonites, because that was part of His plan. When Jephthah made his bargain with God, he probably thought a servant or pet would be the first he’d see. But the first to greet Jephthah was his daughter, his only child.

Scholars agree that the Hebrew conjunction for *and* is also used as *or*. He’d have sacrificed (killed) an animal, but instead, he dedicated his daughter to God’s service. This meant she’d remain a virgin and he’d have no grandchildren. Many feel this was a foolish bargain to make. When you pray, be careful not to promise things you’re not willing to follow through with.

I KNOW YOU ALWAYS KEEP YOUR WORD,
LORD. HELP ME KEEP MY WORD TOO.

Humble Prayers

Then Samson prayed to the LORD, “Sovereign LORD, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes.”

JUDGES 16:28 NIV



Samson addressed God only once before in his written story. The first time, he killed a bunch of Philistines with a donkey’s jawbone. He credited God, but he was also a little prideful. In this verse, Samson had been captured and blinded. He approached God from a place of total humility. Samson knew that God was his only hope. God answered Samson’s prayer because it was His plan to defeat the Philistines.

God longs for humility in our prayers. He wants us to pray, knowing He’s our only help. If we pray as a last resort or as a backup plan, we’re really saying, “I think I’ve got this, but just in case, would You be on standby?” God is all-powerful, and He wants all the credit for what He does.

**HELP ME, GOD. YOU’RE THE
ONLY ONE WHO CAN.**

