



encouragement and wisdom
for the journey : a devotional

“Let me know Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; For You [and only You] I wait [expectantly] all the day long.”

Psalm 25:4-5 [AMP]

CONFIDENCE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

The lead song in the playlist included at the back of this devotional is titled "Promises". The artists I AM THEY sing, *"No more holding back and no more hesitating because I know you keep all your promises to me. Standing in a future victory all my hope in You, Lord. I trust the plan of a God who loves me, who is for me, who is good. Every word You're speaking my heart is believing."* In these uncertain times, it's a challenge to choose what or whom to believe. It's hard to stand in victory and we may be tempted to hold back in fear and confusion. BUT GOD is certain, and His promises are trustworthy because He is a promise keeper. The Bible is full of God's promises. In fact, it is written that there are 7,487 promises in Scripture made by God to humankind! For example, just before the Israelites cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land, **Deuteronomy 31:6** records God's assurance to the people: ***"Do not fear or be in dread...for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."*** This promise remains true today, which means these lyrics can be sung with confidence. Place all hope in God. No holding back or hesitating. God keeps every promise. Which of the 7,487 promises will you stand upon and claim today? Write it down and carry it with you as a sign of confidence in these uncertain times.

GOD'S PROMISES NEVER FAIL

Are you waiting on God to keep a particular promise in your life? Waiting is not fun, not easy, and not what we would choose, but one thing we can know—God is a promise keeper. He will keep his promises to us just as he has kept them to his people since the beginning of time. He promised Adam that he would be fruitful and multiply and rule the earth [Genesis 1:26]. He promised Abraham that he would be a father of nations [Genesis 17:4]. And **Jeremiah** records this in chapter **29:10b-13**: ***“I will come to you and fulfill my good promise... for I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”***

He promised, so we wait to see his answers unfold. So, how do we wait well? We trust, call on God, pray, and seek God with all our hearts. Do this, and watch as God fulfills his promises to you one by one! He has a plan for you. Hope in that truth!



LISTEN. GOD STILL SPEAKS.

In the book of Matthew, we read the story of Peter walking on water in the midst of a terrible storm. When he moves his eyes from Jesus and focuses on the angry waters, he begins to sink. Life can be like that. We focus on our problems and fears, rather than focusing on Jesus, and we become overwhelmed and begin to sink beneath our anxiety. In their song titled “Walk on Water”, ELEVATION WORSHIP sings, *“Say the word and I’m walking on water. Never gonna let you go under. Just put one foot in front of the other.”* In addition to focusing on Jesus, have you ever noticed that faith requires action? We are made to move, and putting one foot in front of the other is a great first step of faith. Peter was called to step out of the boat and walk on water, not to simply stand there. His faith required action and so does ours. Read Peter’s story in **Matthew 14:22-33** and be reminded that God still speaks– even as the Lord said to Peter, *“Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid. Come.”* Listen closely. What step is God calling you to take today?





GOD SPEAKS TRUTH

*“God has said **“Never will I leave you. Never will I forsake you.”** This is recorded in the letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 13 verse 5b. God spoke these words to the Hebrew people, and he still speaks these words to us today. No matter what we are going through, He is with us. No matter what disappointments and frustrations we face, He is here and we can talk to him about it. No matter what sorrow and sadness we experience, He will hold us close to him and whisper the truth of his love to us. No matter what obstacles we face, He will be our strength and give us Holy Spirit power to tackle them. B-SHOC proclaims his belief that God is with us and speaks to us in his song “You Said It” where he sings: *“I believe your Word is living. I am strong. I belong. You are here in this hour. I am yours. I am more. I can call on your power. You said it; I believe it.”* Whatever you face today, call on God’s power, listen for him to speak to you, believe in what he says to you— he will never leave you or forsake you! That is the truth.*

BRING IT TO THE ONE

“Bring the pain... your scars... your shame... every failure, every secret... your dreams... your worries... every hope... every hurt... to the One... who overcomes.” (“To the One”, by I AM THEY)

These lyrics tell of God’s amazing invitation to bring everything to Him. Not just some things. Not just happy things. Bring everything. We have the great privilege of bringing anything and everything to Him without condemnation or fear. Anything that we believe should be held back from our loving Father has the potential to enslave us. What needs to be brought into His light? What are you tempted to keep in darkness? Bring it to light, because what is kept in secret may bind us. God is our Rescuer– our Chain-breaker. **John 1:5** assures us, ***“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”*** What do you have to bring? Do not be afraid. Our God overcomes.



GOD-

CHAIN-BREAKER AND WALL-CRUSHER

What walls need to come down in your life to break your chains and give you freedom? Are you trying to tear the walls down yourself or are you waiting for something to happen, wondering what to do? When you know a wall needs to come down to set you free, follow Joshua's lead and trust God to do the work. With God's guidance, Joshua and his army marched around the city of Jericho for 6 days, waiting, blowing trumpets, but staying silent. Then on the seventh day they marched around the city seven times and when the time was right they shouted a great war cry. It was then that the walls fell down. God did it, not Joshua and his men (see **Joshua 6**). So, stand up, start marching, do your part, and wait. Sing along with Andrew Ripp in the song "Jericho": *"All of my fears, like Jericho walls gotta come down, come down. Oh Lord, my prison turns to ruin when your love moves in."* As you trust God to give you freedom, he will guide you to the right moment and the right method which will make your personal walls fall down and give you freedom. It may take some days of marching and waiting, but know that God will be with you, guiding you to freedom, as you trust in him.

VICTORY IN THE STORM

Whether you find yourself sailing on quiet waters in this season or feel like you're hanging on for dear life in a dark and violent storm, you can be sure of this: God is the tamer of storms. **Psalm 107:29** tells us that: ***"He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed."*** In contrast, the devil creates storms. When we dig down into our most tumultuous life events– the ones that bring tears of frustration and keep us lying awake at night– we can often see the devil's hand in it. These storms bring with them fear and anxiety, and that's just what he's hoping for. BUT GOD is bigger than the storm and more powerful than the devil. We have no reason to fear the storms of life. Matty Mullins declares these truths in his song, "No Hold on Me": *"The devil's got no hold on me. I find victory when I let go. This is the sound of freedom. The enemy has been defeated."* Hallelujah! Our great God tames the storm and we win when we let go instead of hanging on for dear life.

GOD IS A STORM-TAMER AND A FIRE-QUENCHER.

When the waves and flames of life try to consume us, we must wake up, look up, and remember that God is in control. He is the Almighty, Sovereign, Most High God. He is El Shaddai, El Elyon, Jehovah, and Adonai. His many names reflect the many facets of his character. Beckah Shae shares some words of encouragement in her song "Awake" where she sings: *"Arise— can you feel the fire rising up higher? Awake! Open your eyes. It's time to rise and shine. And when we hear the trumpet sound and the four winds blow we will be the ones found looking up and ready to go. And in a twinkling of an eye we will be raised high. Every heart beating in time with Adonai!"* Now that is a truth that powers us up! And it is a truth found in God's Holy Word: **1 Corinthians 15:51-52**, ***"Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will be changed— In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."*** Amen!



FROM CUB TO LIONESSE

The healthy Christian life is characterized by growth. The fruits of the Spirit— love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control— are evidence of God's work in our lives. This maturing process takes time and promises us a secure future. Though the devil wants us to believe that we are his prey and lacking power, this is a lie. He would have us believe that we are alone and vulnerable, but we are not. We are never alone, and with God on our side, victory is sure. As we grow closer to God and experience His never-ending faithfulness, we can confidently claim this promise from **James 4:7b**, ***“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*** The devil is no match for our God, who holds our future and gives us power. Beckah Shae describes this beautifully in her song titled, “Lioness”: *“I never roam alone. I’ve got the best tribe. You [the devil] should give up now, my roar is getting bigger.”* Keep growing. Get louder. Claim God's power over the devil. You + God = Enough.





THE TRUTH IS... GOD IS ENOUGH

There is a battle between our wants and our needs. Would you agree? Others may see that we have many blessings to count and yet still our hearts want more and are drawn to things, adventures, and people who may not even be good for us. These things do not satisfy. They will never be enough. We need to take our thoughts captive when our minds stray and want things that are not the best. We can do this by clinging to God's word which tells us the truth— HE is ENOUGH! When our dreams are shattered, when the waiting is long, when the impossible is looming— God is enough. Cling to him, talk to him, run to him. Seek him in his word. Koryn Hawthorne puts it this way in her song "Enough": *"You're making me a fighter. You're taking me higher. You're giving me the strength I need to believe life is worth living 'cause you love me, and that's enough. You're enough for me."* So, when we want things we don't need, let's take action and do what it says in **2 Corinthians 10:5b**: ***"Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."*** HE is enough!

GOD LOVES YOU - YOU CAN BET ON IT!

Some people say that love is a risk– a gamble. We put our hearts on the line when we open them up to another person. Love requires hope, and hope is believing that there is a chance and that the risk is worth it. Have you ever loved and lost? Not with God you haven't. God's love is a sure thing. He loves you **with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3)**. If you are struggling to feel that today, take a moment to pray. Close your eyes. Take a deep slow breath. And then read these lyrics from Danny Gokey's song, "Haven't Seen It Yet": *"It's like the brightest sunrise waiting on the other side. All his promises are just up ahead. Maybe you just haven't seen it yet. He is moving with a love so deep. Good things are coming even when we can't see."* Don't give up. Don't forget. Don't ever lose hope. A gambler takes risks because of the possibility that the next roll will result in a win. God is faithful. He is a sure bet. He is worth the gamble. God loves you too much to not deliver on his promises. Remember what God has promised you. Believe that YOU ARE LOVED WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE!



GOD ABOUNDS IN LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS

God's love for us is new each day, just as his great faithfulness is new every morning. They are both "New Today" as Micah Tyler says in his song by that name. Often in scripture, God's love and faithfulness are mentioned together. In **Psalm 86:15** King David says this about God: "**You, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.**" The original Hebrew words that are used here for love and faithfulness deepen our understanding of this comfort and promise. Translated as love, "hesed", conveys the deep steadfastness of God's care for us. The word for faithfulness, "emeth", amplifies God's powerful committed faithfulness, faithfulness we can trust. God's trustworthy, powerful, and steadfast love is new every morning. What a revelation of the character and heart of God! God gives grace to start over every day— that is how much he loves each and every one of us. We can rest in that truth. Great is His faithfulness!



LOOKING FOR SOME TRUE GOOD NEWS?

When life is full of conflicting and confusing information— bad news, fake news, and clashing perspectives, we all could use some news that is both good and true. God not only gives us good news, we can know it is true! It all started long ago in Bethlehem. In the Bible we find this message: “I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Savior— yes, the Messiah, the Lord— has been born tonight in Bethlehem.” (Luke 2:10b The Living Bible)

Why is this birth announcement truly good news? Because it reveals God’s plan to rescue and redeem all of us who listen and take to heart his message. God sent Jesus on that night long ago to rescue us and save us from our sins. When we admit our sinfulness and believe that Jesus died in our place, we receive the gift of eternal life. This gift is given to us by grace, through faith. We cannot earn it— it’s not about being “good enough.” That is why this is such good news. It’s not about what we do or what we have done. It is about belief, surrender and faith alone.

Take a step of faith to ask God to take control of your life, and allow him to guide you to a new life of belief and surrender.

Admit your faults and mistakes- things that have made you feel unworthy of God’s love. He reaches out to you, just as you are.

Accept God's grace and forgiveness. He offers this grace to you in a supernatural way. He does not ask you to earn it. He knows you don't deserve it; he offers it as a free gift. This is the best news ever!

You can be assured of this supernatural grace if you put your faith in God and allow him to take control of your life. He loves you so much that he sent his son to cover your mistakes and open the door to everlasting life. God's son Jesus bridges the gap between you and God. Choose, by faith, to believe that Jesus is the only way to ensure your eternal life in heaven. Once you have made this decision, your new life will start and you will begin to experience the faithfulness of God, even in hard times.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear God, thank you for the true good news that Jesus came to rescue me. I am taking the step of faith to believe in you. I open the door of my heart and accept you as my Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me life that is everlasting. Take control of my life. Make me the person you want me to be. Thank you for your grace and your love. Amen.

Promises	I AM THEY
Uh Huh	Joshua Micah
To the One	I AM THEY
Citizen of Heaven	Tauren Wells
Lioness	Beckah Shae
Edge Of My Seat	TobyMac
REALITY	ELEVATION RHYTHM
WALK ON WATER	ELEVATION RHYTHM
Enough	Koryn Hawthorne
Dancing On Top Of The World	The Afters
Awake	Beckah Shae
Is That Okay?	Social Club Misfits
No Hold On Me	Matty Mullins
Haven't Seen It Yet	Danny Gokey
Rise Up (Lazarus)	CAIN
Jericho	Andrew Ripp
Until Grace	Tauren Wells & Rascal Flatts
You Said It	B-SHOC
Promises Never Fail (Live)	Bethel Music & Emmy Rose
New Today	Micah Tyler

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