

GOD IS
WITH YOU
Every Day

A 365-DAY DEVOTIONAL

MAX LUCADO



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

God Is With You Every Day

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Unimpeachable Authority

He sustains everything by the mighty power of his command.

Hebrews 1:3 NLT

Jesus has unimpeachable authority.

The Roman government tried to intimidate him. False religion tried to silence him. The Devil tried to kill him. All failed. Even “death was no match for him” (Acts 2:24 MSG).

He was not kidding when he declared, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18 NIV). Jesus is the command center of the galaxies. He occupies the Oval Office. He called a coin out of the mouth of a fish. He stopped the waves with a word. He spoke, and a tree withered. He spoke again, and a basket became a banquet. Economy. Meteorology. Botany. Food supply. “All things have been handed over to me by my Father” (Matthew 11:27 NRSV).

That includes Satan. The Devil was soundly defeated by Christ on the cross. Jesus outranks him in every situation. He must obey Jesus, and he knows it. Prayers offered in the name of Jesus have “divine power to demolish strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:4 NIV). Demolish! Not damage or hamper but demolish.

Satan setting up a stronghold in your life? Lift up a prayer and unleash the demolition power of Jesus.

Before Amen

Ask for Hebron

*When doubts filled my mind,
your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer.*

Psalm 94:19 NLT

Turn a deaf ear to doubters. Ignore the naysayers. People have a right to say what they want. And you have a right to ignore them.

When the twelve spies reported back to Moses, all but Caleb and Joshua were spouting doubt (Numbers 13:26–33). They were outnumbered ten to two, but they still believed in God’s power. Let’s take our cue from Caleb. Disregard the lethal disbelief of cynics.

This is no sanction for rudeness or isolation. When people express their sincere struggles or questions, help them. But some folks do not want to be helped. They would rather pull you down than let you pull them up. Don’t let them.

Caleb didn’t. He filled his mind with faith and took on a God-size challenge.

When Moses sent Caleb to spy out the land, Caleb saw something that troubled him: the town of Hebron. Abraham had buried his wife there. He was buried there. So were Isaac, Rebekah, and Jacob.

Hebron was a sacred site, but it was inhabited by unholy people. So Caleb asked Moses for Hebron.

Moses took the request to God, and Caleb was given the land. Forty-five years later, at the age of eighty-five, the old soldier chased the enemy and reclaimed the city.

Caleb wanted to do something great for God. He lived with a higher call. You can too. Ask for your Hebron.

Glory Days

The Discovery That Changes Everything

“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.”

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

You are in the hands of a living, loving God. Random collection of disconnected short stories? Far from it. Your life is a crafted narrative written by a good God, who is working toward your supreme good.

God is not slipshod or haphazard. He planned creation according to a calendar. He determined the details of salvation “before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20). The death of Jesus was not an afterthought, nor was it Plan B or an emergency operation. Jesus died “when the set time had fully come” (Galatians 4:4 NIV), according to God’s “deliberate plan and foreknowledge” (Acts 2:23 NIV).

God isn’t making up a plan as he goes along. Nor did he wind up the clock and walk away. “The Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will” (Daniel 5:21 ESV). He “executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another” (Psalm 75:7 ESV). “The LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intentions of his mind” (Jeremiah 30:24 ESV). Look at those verbs: God *rules, sets, executes, accomplished*. These terms confirm the existence of heavenly blueprints and plans. Those plans include you. “In him we were also chosen, . . . according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will” (Ephesians 1:11 NIV).

This discovery changes everything!

God’s Story, Your Story

God's Unrivaled Goodness

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good;
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

Psalm 34:8

The heart of God is unblemished. “There is nothing deceitful in God, nothing two-faced, nothing fickle” (James 1:17 MSG). He has no hidden agenda or selfish motive. He loves with a good love and forgives with a good forgiveness.

God’s goodness is a major headline in the Bible. I think I know why. If God were only mighty, we would salute him. But since he is merciful and mighty, we can approach him. No wonder the psalmist invited, “Taste and see that the LORD is good” (Psalm 34:8). A glimpse of God’s goodness changes us.

God’s unrivaled goodness undergirds everything else we can say about prayer. If he is like us, only slightly stronger, then why pray? If he grows weary, then why pray? If he has limitations, questions, and hesitations, then you might as well pray to the Wizard of Oz.

However, if God is at once Father and Creator, holy—unlike us—and high above us, then we at any point are only a prayer away from help.

Before Amen

Your Helper

*The LORD is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?*

Psalm 27:1

“I will not leave you nor forsake you” (Joshua 1:5).

That’s the promise God gave Joshua. And he gives you the same promise. In fact, the writer of Hebrews quoted the words in his epistle: “For [God] has said, ‘I will never leave you or forsake you.’ So we can say with confidence, ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?’” (13:5–6 NRSV).

That last question is a troubling one. *What can anyone do to me?* You know the answers. “Lie to me.” “Deceive me.” “Injure me.” “Terrorize me.” “Bully me.”

But the Scripture asks a different question. If the Lord is your helper, what can anyone do to you?

The Greek word for “helper” in this passage is *boētheia*, from *boē*, which means “a shout,” and *theō*, which means “to run.”² When you need help, God runs with a shout, “I’m coming!” He never leaves you. Ever! He never takes a break, takes a nap, or takes time off for vacation. He never leaves your side.

Since God is strong, you will be strong. Since he is able, you will be able. Since he has no limits, you have no limits. With the apostle you can boldly say, “The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (v. 6).

Glory Days

We Never Travel Alone

“I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:20

Jesus loved people. He paid no heed to class or nationality, past sins or present accomplishments. The neediest and loneliest found a friend in Jesus:

- a woman scarcely clothed because of last night’s affair. Christ befriended and defended her (John 8:3–11).
- an unscrupulous tax collector left friendless because of his misdealings. Christ became his mentor (Luke 19:2–10).
- a multiple divorcée who drew from the well in the heat of the day to avoid the stares of the villagers. Jesus gave her his attention (John 4:5–6).

Could a lying sham love this way? If his intent was to trick people out of their money or worship, he did a pitifully poor job, for he died utterly broke and virtually abandoned.

What if Peter was correct? “You are the Messiah” (Mark 8:29 NIV).

What if Jesus really was, and is, the Son of God? If so, then we can relish this wonderful truth: we never travel alone. True, we cannot see the path. We do not know what the future holds. But, no, we are not alone.

God’s Story, Your Story

Take That, Satan

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

Satan wants to take God's place, but God isn't moving. Satan covets the throne of heaven, but God isn't leaving. Satan wants to win you to his side, but God will never let you go.

You have his word. Even more, you have God's help.

You don't have to face Satan alone. You know his schemes. He will attack your weak spots first. He will tell you to meet your own needs. When you question your identity as a child of God, that is Satan speaking.

Even more, now you know what to do.

Pray. We cannot do battle with Satan on our own. He is a roaring lion, a fallen angel, an experienced fighter, and an equipped soldier. He is angry—angry because he knows that his time is short (Revelation 12:12 NIV) and that God's victory is secure. But there is wonderful news for the Christian: Christ reigns as our protector and provider. We are more than conquerors through him (Romans 8:37 NIV).

Arm yourself with God's Word. Load your pistol with scriptures and keep a finger on the trigger. And remember: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12 NIV).

If I were the Devil, I wouldn't want you to know that. But I'm not the Devil, so good for you. And take that, Satan.

God's Story, Your Story