

This Is How I
Start My Day
with the Lord





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This Is How I Start My Day: Prepared for Adventure

by Lysa TerKeurst, from *Embraced*

*“Open my eyes that I may see
wonderful things in Your law.”*

—Psalm 119:18

Oh, how we underestimate the power made available to us when we spend time with God. Our earthly eyes are so limited because they don't allow us to see what is happening in the heavenly realm. A daily battle is being fought for our attention and our devotion.

Satan would love nothing more than to keep us separated from the power God gives us during our time with Him.

It's time to stop feeling guilty and ill-equipped and start embracing the incredible privilege of meeting with Jesus every day.

Remember, this time doesn't have to be perfect to be powerful and effective. Jesus just wants a willing soul to come to Him—to verbalize her desire to seek Him and acknowledge her need for Him. Then He'll show her how to make each moment with Him exactly what she needs.

Most days before I start my time with the Lord, I pray a very simple prayer that ushers my heart into the right place with God:

“God, I want to see You. God, I want to hear You. God, I want to know You. So that I can follow hard after You.”

This prayer is not a magic formula, just four short sentences that perfectly express my desire to experience God throughout my day. I want to see Him working in me, around me, and through me. I want to hear His voice so clearly that I won't doubt when He asks for my obedience. I want to know Him—not just facts about Him—but really know Him personally and intimately. And lastly, I want to follow hard after Him, to be the woman He wants me to be in every circumstance of my day.

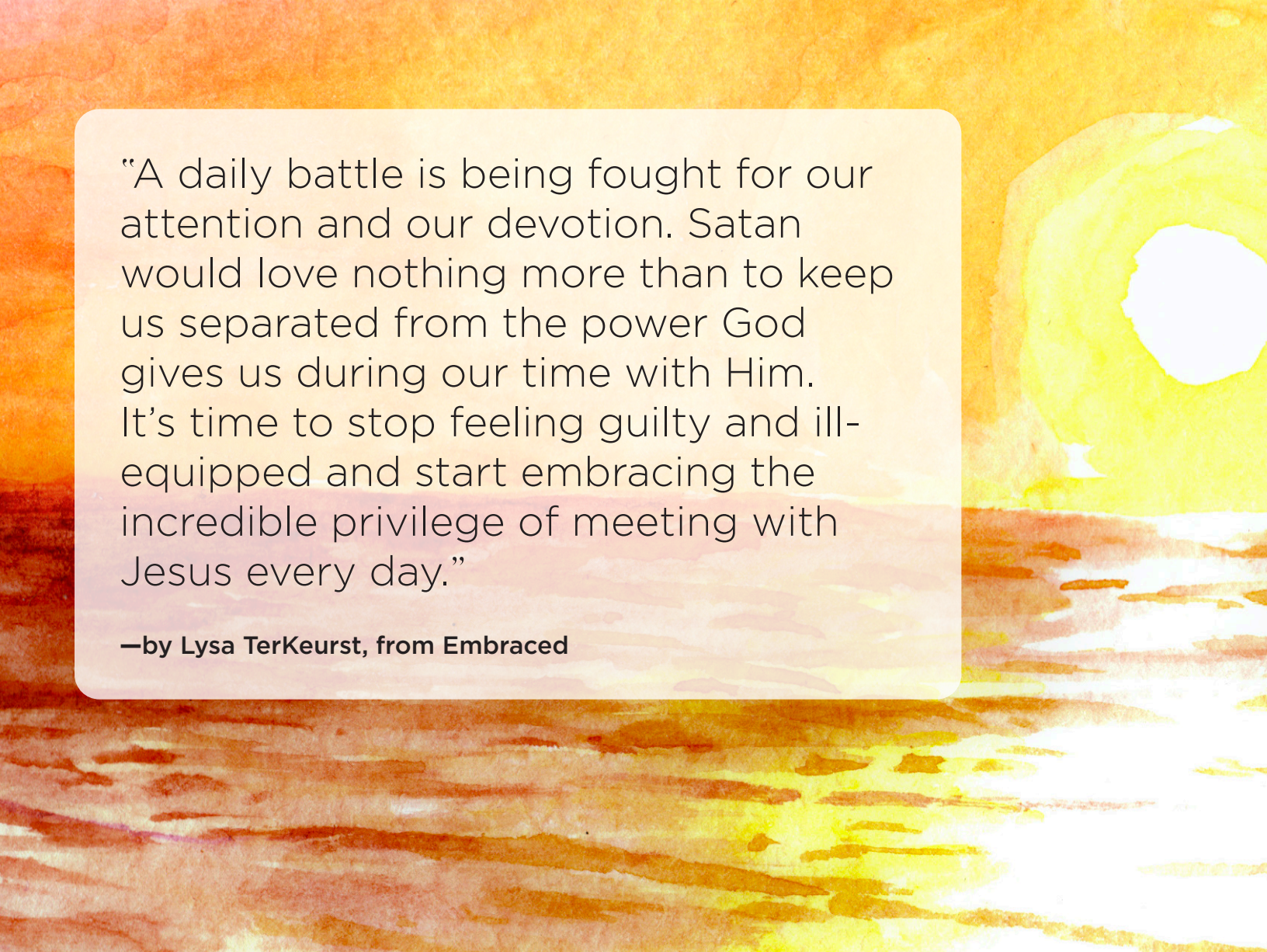
It's amazing that when I verbalize my heart's desire in this way, something inside me shifts and I'm ready for the Word of

God in a fresh way. It reminds me of the psalmist's request in Psalm 119:18: "*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.*" A request God delights in answering.

I don't want to just read and pray to check it off my to-do list. I see this time, instead, as preparation for the great adventure God and I are about to head off

on together in the hours ahead. Now what could be more exciting than that?

"Dear Lord, I want to see You. I want to hear You. I want to know You. Please help me recognize Your presence in my day today so that I can follow hard after You. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

A watercolor illustration of a bright yellow sun with a white center, partially obscured by a dark, irregular shape. The sun is positioned in the upper right quadrant. Below the sun, there are horizontal brushstrokes in shades of orange, yellow, and white, suggesting a reflection on water or a sunset sky. The overall color palette is warm and vibrant, dominated by yellows and oranges.

"A daily battle is being fought for our attention and our devotion. Satan would love nothing more than to keep us separated from the power God gives us during our time with Him. It's time to stop feeling guilty and ill-equipped and start embracing the incredible privilege of meeting with Jesus every day."

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Morning Routines: It's a New Day.

by Rebekah Lyons, from *Rhythms of Renewal*

“The first hour of the morning
is the rudder of the day.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

Early mornings are my favorite. It wasn't always this way. For years I rebelled against the six a.m. alarm of my youth. But as a mama of a toddler and teens, I'm now the first to wake, usually a few moments before dawn. I love when the house is hushed and reverent, and on the days I'm fortunate enough to catch the first glow of orange on the eastern horizon, I smile. I believe God grins back. Even when I've had a week wherein I can't seem to get it right, Jesus is near.

Here are a few steps to my morning routine:

1. Kneel and Pray

Each morning, coffee brews, the

comforting cadence of hot water dripping through freshly ground beans echoing in the empty kitchen. When it's finished, I pour the coffee into a sealed tumbler to keep it hot as long as possible. I light a candle or start a fire, depending on the season. If it's cold, I'll spread a thick blanket in front of the fire and quiet my heart as I kneel in child's pose, arms extended over my head, palms up.

A dog-eared book of liturgies is on our coffee table, gifted to us this past Christmas. Many mornings I whisper my favorite passage from Douglas McKelvey's *Every Moment Holy*, to center my mind and heart.

*Meet me, O Christ, in this stillness of morning.
Move me, O Spirit, to quiet my heart.
Mend me, O Father, from yesterday's harms.
From the discords of yesterday, resurrect my peace.
From the discouragement of yesterday, resurrect my hope.
From the weariness of yesterday, resurrect my strength.
From the doubts of yesterday, resurrect my faith.
From the wounds of yesterday, resurrect my love.
Let me enter this new day, aware of my need,
and awake to your grace, O Lord. Amen.*

Once here, in God's presence, I feel no urgency to leave, as the prayers flow freely. I ask, listen, and wait. There's no other place to be, naked and honest, but before the heart of our Father. In those moments, God sees our all, before the daily chaos and confusion, before any fear or delusion. There, he bends low to meet us in our intention. He gives strength to help us push through it all.

If possible, I start every day this way. Prayer grants me access to the Holy Spirit's comfort, a balm that transcends time and space, reputation and race. Through these moments, Jesus repairs, restores, redeems, and resurrects.

Prayer grants me access to the Holy Spirit's Comfort, a balm that transcends time and space, reputation and race.

2. Journal thoughts for the day

My morning routine starts with prayer because it leads me to comfort and shields

me from the world's spin cycle of striving, stress, and anxiety. It roots my day in fullness instead of scarcity.

When I'm well-rooted, I then turn to my journal.

We all journal in different ways, I suppose, but often, I'll scratch out my ongoing dialogue with God. Each entry begins with the setting, the time, the date. As much as these entries help me discern the direction of any given day, I know they'll serve as reminders of God's faithfulness in the days to come. (My journal collection stretches back more than a decade). I don't stop with prayer and journaling, though.

3. Read God's Word

Each morning, I turn to God's Word, which nourishes my soul and fills me up after the previous day's pouring out. Through the Scriptures, I learn who he's made me to be. I learn how to live a life that

looks more like Christ's. I learn how to love others—my husband Gabe, my family, the world around me—well.

How do I approach the Bible? Each day is a little different.

Sometimes I take a passage and camp there, or a long section of Psalms, sometimes an entire book at a time in the Old or New Testament. But each day, this time in the Scriptures is like the table set by God in Psalm 23. It's a feast the Father has laid out for me, offering me everything I will need as I set out for the rest of the day.

4. End with Gratitude

The last step of my morning routine is gratitude—giving thanks. It's a practice that's grown out of my time reading Scripture. The summer before I wrote this book, old worries began haunting me; I felt stress and anxiety setting in. But one morning, I woke with these words on my lips: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

As I spent time in God's Word, I sensed the Holy Spirit inviting me to lay down my anxieties and to give thanks for the deliverance he was bringing, even if I couldn't see it yet. And so I began my

daily intention to offer thanks—thanks for the things that already happened, the things that were happening, and the things that would come. Culminating my morning routine with a short gratitude list and a closing prayer of thanks, I emerge ready to face the day.

Making Space for the Comforter

I think of what Jesus said to his disciples in the upper room in what I like to call his "great commencement speech." Over the course of that long meal, he washed his disciples' feet, served them Communion, and told them everything they were going to need to know when the time came for him to return to his Father. This would be their last meal together before his arrest and crucifixion.

One of the six things he promised his followers was the gift of the Holy Spirit, the comforter and advocate. I think of this every time I create a space for God in my quiet moments before dawn.

Sometimes I begin the day overcome by grief, by insecurity, by discouragement, by loneliness, and all I want is to get on my knees and plead for grace and healing. There are days I need to process my failures from the day before. Sometimes I need encouragement for the day ahead. No matter the situation, though, I begin the morning anticipating a meeting with the Holy Spirit, the one who brings whatever comfort and direction I need. Even in my moments of tearful confession, He's there.

God promises to be our comforter and help, but we have to give him an opportunity to do just that. If we don't make space for him, if we don't build it into our routine, how will he meet us where we need him most?

What's Your Morning Routine?

A morning routine sets the framework for our day. When we begin our days by spending time with God, with his comfort, his pace, his timing, it brings healing. There's no script, no race, no rules. There's only peace, courage, and strength for the day ahead.

God promises to be our comforter and help, but we have to give him an opportunity to do just that.

What's your morning routine? Do you drag yourself out of bed late, slog through a rushed and harried process of getting out the door and entering into the demands of the day? Or do you take it more slowly, settle into God's rhythm, and let his comfort dictate the pace? If you find yourself in the former camp, consider making a shift.

Get more sleep the night before so you wake bright-eyed, ready to spend time with your Creator. Meet him with expectation, ready to hear from him. Meet him in prayer, in journaling, in the Scriptures, in gratitude. As you meet him, expect him to bring comfort to your anxiety

“A morning routine sets the framework for our day. When we begin our days by spending time with God, with his comfort, his pace, his timing, it brings healing. There's no script, no race, no rules. There's only peace, courage, and strength for the day ahead.”

—by Rebekah Lyons, from *Rhythms of Renewal*



Morning Meditation: Praise and Thanksgiving

by Chrystal Evans Hurst, from *The 28-Day Prayer Journey*

“Starting with a grateful heart overflowing with thanksgiving for what God has done and for who He is can change the way you see your world.”

Sometimes when we go to God in prayer, we do it with a big laundry list of what we want God to do for us! (Not me, of course. Other people.) And thankfully, God is gracious to hear and receive our prayers for what we need and want.

But when we praise God, we adore Him for who He is. When we thank God, we express our gratitude for what He has done. Rather than beginning with ourselves, our prayers of praise begin with God. If God never did another thing for us, these are the reasons we would still love, admire, and honor Him.

Here’s the real deal: when you praise God, you don’t need a bunch of religious fanfare. Just tell Him what you think about Him that’s good. Compliment Him like you would compliment a friend. Seriously, it’s as simple as taking a moment—any moment during your day—and telling God what you know to be true about Him.

And thanking God is pretty simple too.

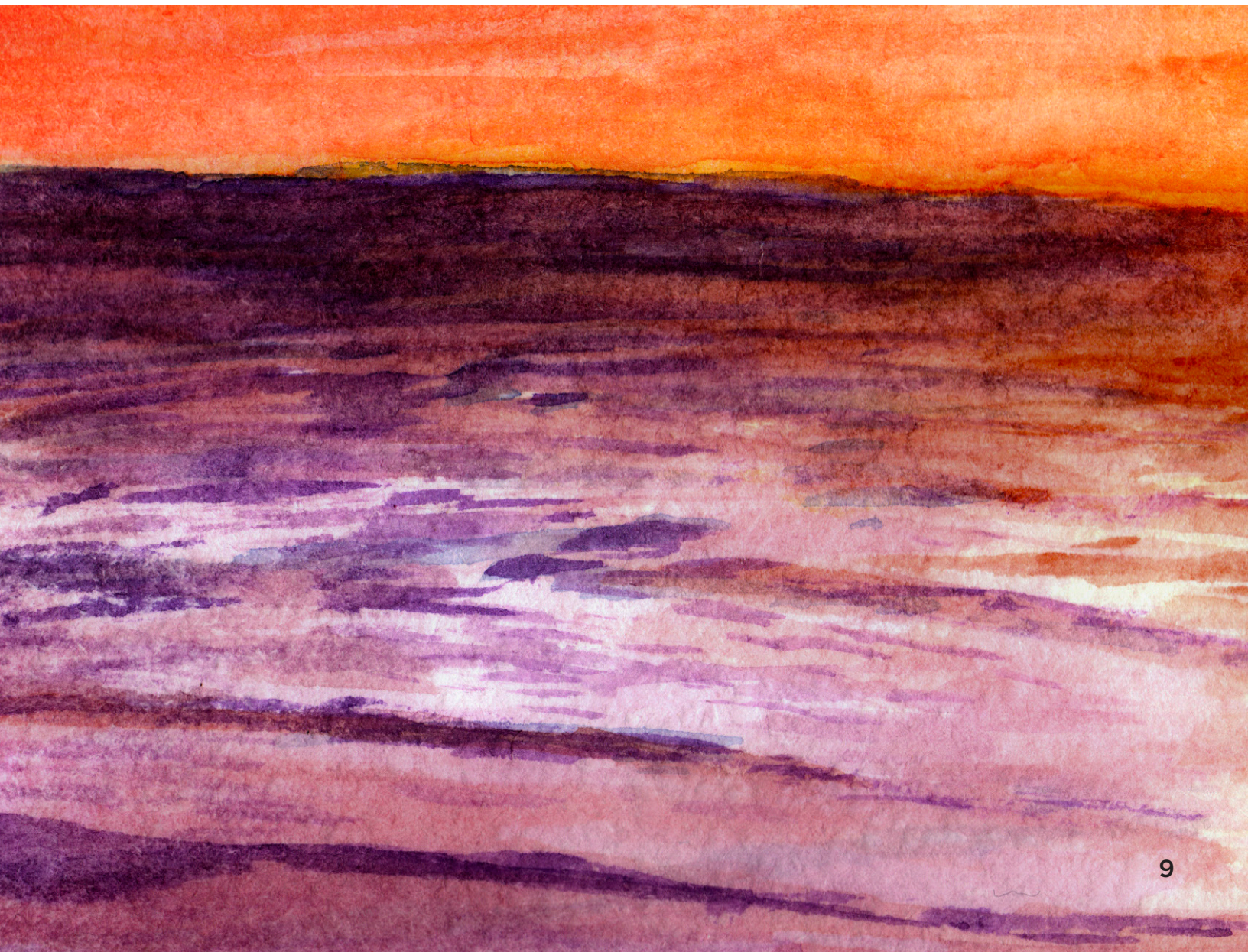
Do you remember a few years back when it became “the thing” to keep a gratitude journal? Perhaps you’ve already discovered for yourself how powerful it can

be to choose gratitude every day. Research has demonstrated that we can transform our attitudes— toward God, toward others, and even toward ourselves—when we practice gratitude. When we slow down to pay attention to our lives—spiritually, physically, relationally—we notice all that God has provided for us. And we have the opportunity to give God thanks.

Each day is a brand-new start. And you get to choose the attitude with which you greet each day. Starting with a grateful

heart overflowing with thanksgiving for what God has done and for who He is can change the way you see your world. When you realize that life doesn't just happen to you but that you get to happen to your life, you will grasp the power that your praise can have.

If you believe that you have been blessed because God has been good, express your gratitude to Him and watch that appreciation affect your outlook. Try it!





Seek Me First

by Kathie Lee Gifford, from *The Rock, the Road, and the Rabbi*

*“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
His mercies never come to an end; they are new every
morning; great is Your faithfulness.”*

—Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV

Before I (Kathie Lee) began my new job as co-host of the fourth hour of The Today Show in 2008, I felt the Lord tugging at my spirit with the words of Matthew 6:33: *Kathie, seek first My kingdom and My righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

I remember responding, *“Lord, You know that’s what I am trying to do — put You and Your kingdom first in my life.”*

Then I felt Him gently rebuke me: *You’re not listening. I said to seek Me first!*

“Lord,” I questioned, *“do You mean first thing in the morning before anything else?”* In my heart, I sensed His clear answer: Yes.

Wow. I already got up earlier than most—usually right before dawn. *“Really, Lord?”* I said. *“Before I go into work?”*

Yes. I felt Him tenderly remind me, As you begin your day, so goes your day.

So I began to wake up before 4:00 am and pray for an hour for my family members, friends, colleagues, world situations, and personal concerns. Then I would open the Bible and study God’s Word for an hour more, with my puppies and the birds outside my window as my only company.

This new discipline soon became the best part—and my favorite part — of the day. Changing my morning routine has changed my life. I began not only to study the Word but also to memorize as much as I could so that Scripture would become a living, breathing part of me. No textbook needed, no study guide necessary — just the pure, life-giving, sustaining Word of God settled deep in my soul.

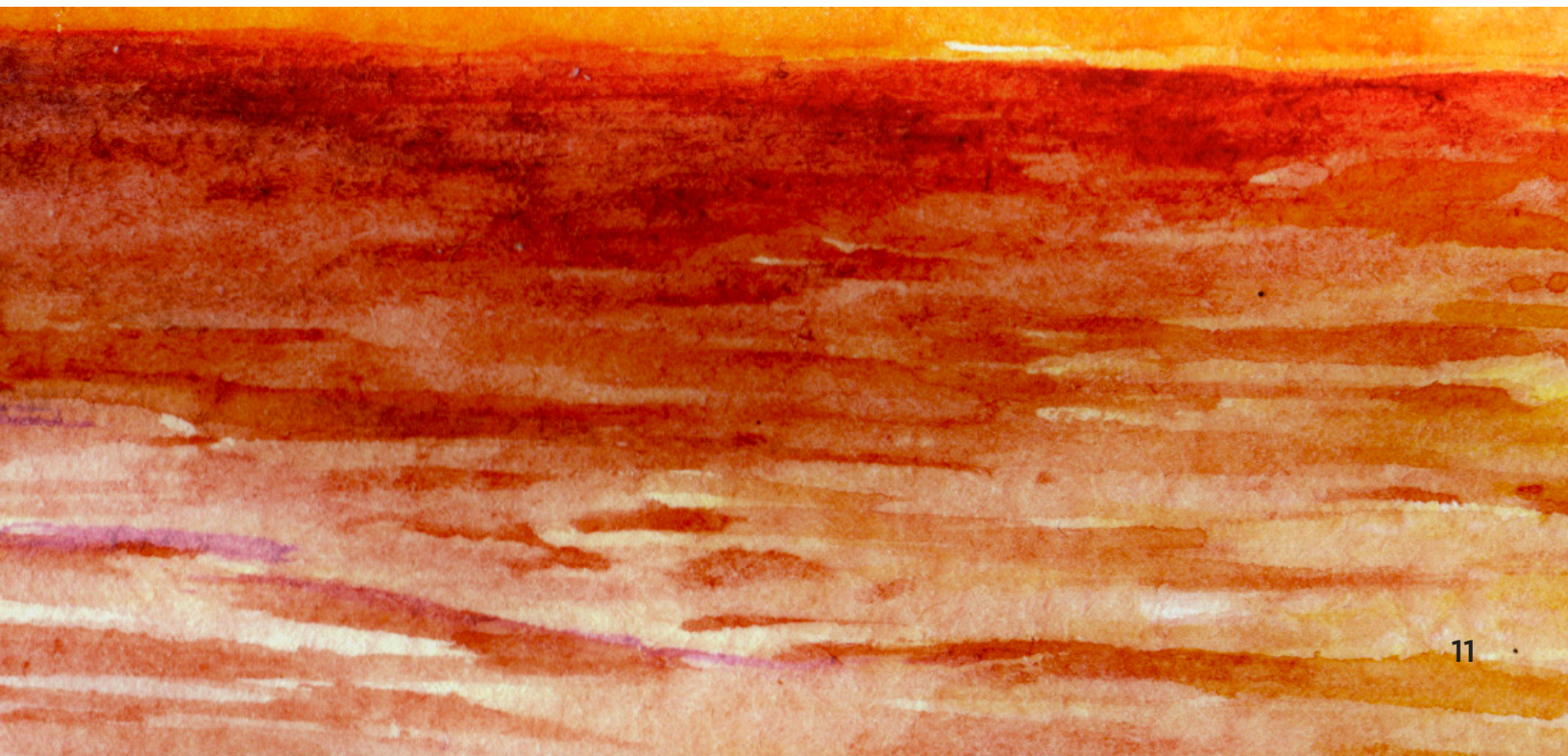
One of my favorite verses is Psalm 18:30:

As for God, His way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless.

Friends, this is either a fact or a lie. There is no middle ground. This is why I have grown so passionate about learning what the Bible really says. If I am going to base my life on something, it has to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me, God! But how can we live the truth if we don't even know it?

The word truth occurs in the Bible over 200 times. God places immeasurable value in it, and He longs for each of us to seek it, find it, and apply it to our lives. All too often we are so overwhelmed by technology, our personal dramas, and our endless ambition that we neglect to study God's Word. Imagine how it breaks the heart of our heavenly Father, who loves us, when He sees us putting our energy into everything but the one thing that can bring us life.

You have the exciting opportunity to discover the truth of the Bible and learn what many passages in the Bible really mean. You can experience the Rock (Jesus), the Road (the Holy Land), and the Rabbi (the Word of God) in a way you might not have done before. So come deeper as we explore the land of Israel and mine the treasures of God's Word!





Walking with God

by Anne Graham Lotz, from *The Joy of My Heart*

“Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,
for I lift up my soul to You.”

—Psalm 143:8 NKJV

Every morning that I’m home, weather permitting, I walk with two friends for two and a half miles. We abide by two basic rules when we walk: we walk at the same pace and we walk in the same direction.

The same two rules apply when walking with God. To walk at the same pace means that we are living our lives in step-by-step obedience to His Word. To walk in the same direction means that we surrender the direction of our lives to Him.

The only way we can know His pace and direction is to prayerfully read His Word. What adjustments do you need to make so you can walk with God? Adjustments in your daily and weekly schedule? Adjustments in your attitude and ambition?

Make sure you are not too busy for daily prayer and Bible reading, or you will get out of step and lose your sense of direction.



It's a New Day: The Choice Is Yours

by Max Lucado, from *Let the Journey Begin*

*"Because of Calvary, I'm free to choose.
And so I choose."*

—Max Lucado

It's quiet. It's early. My coffee is hot. The sky is still black. The world is still asleep. The day is coming.

In a few moments the day will arrive. It will roar down the track with the rising of the sun. The stillness of the dawn will be exchanged for the noise of the day. The calm of solitude will be replaced by the pounding pace of the human race. The refuge of the early morning will be invaded by decisions to be made and deadlines to be met. For the next twelve hours I will be exposed to the day's demands. It is now that I must make a choice.

*Because of Calvary, I'm free to choose.
And so I choose.*

I choose love. No occasion justifies hatred; no injustice warrants bitterness. I choose love. Today I will love God and what God loves.

I choose joy. I will invite my God to be the God of circumstance. I will refuse the temptation to be cynical... the tool of the lazy thinker. I will refuse to see people as anything less than human beings, created by God. I will refuse to see any problem as anything less than an opportunity to see God.

I choose peace. I will live forgiven. I will forgive so that I may live.

I choose patience. I will overlook the inconveniences of the world. Instead of cursing the one who takes my place, I'll invite Him to do so. Rather than complain that the wait is too long, I will thank God for a moment to pray. Instead of clenching my fist at new assignments, I will face them with joy and courage.

I choose kindness. I will be kind to the poor, for they are alone. Kind to the rich, for they are afraid. And kind to the unkind, for such is how God has treated me.

I choose goodness. I will go without a dollar before I take a dishonest one. I will be overlooked before I will boast. I will confess before I will accuse. I choose goodness.

I choose faithfulness. Today I will keep my promises. My debtors will not regret their trust. My associates will not question my word. My wife will not question my love. And my children will never fear that their father will not come home.

I choose gentleness. Nothing is won by force. I choose to be gentle. If I raise my voice, may it be only in praise. If I clench my fist, may it be only in prayer. If I make a demand, may it be only of myself.

I choose self-control. I am a spiritual being. After this body is dead, my spirit will soar. I refuse to let what will rot, rule the eternal. I choose self-control. I will be drunk only by joy. I will be impassioned only by my faith. I will be influenced only by God. I will be taught only by Christ. I choose self-control.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithful-ness, gentleness, and self-control. To these I commit my day. If I succeed, I will give thanks. If I fail, I will seek His grace. And then, when this day is done, I will place my head on my pillow and rest.



Start Your Day with the Lord

by Sheila Walsh, from *5 Minutes with Jesus*

*"It's not a bad way to start the day,
but I've found a much better way."*

—Sheila Walsh

I don't trust hotel wake-up calls. Whether you will actually receive one when you ask seems to depend on the state of mind of the person entering your request. If he's just broken up with his girlfriend, for example, and her name happens to be Sheila, I'm either getting a call in the middle of the night or none at all. So I set my own alarm on my phone. I actually set two. The first is when it would be good to get up, and the second is when I'd jolly well better get up.

I'm just not a morning person, so I like to ease into a day slowly.

I used to crawl out of bed, check that our son was up and in the shower, turn on the television to the morning news, and make myself a cup of coffee.

"It's not a bad way to start the day, but I've found a much better way."

I realized that if the first thing I pay attention to is what's happening in our world, those images and words impact my view of the rest of the day. But if the Word of God is the first thing I give my heart and mind to, I see everything as under the control of my all-good, all-powerful, and all-loving heavenly Father. It's hardly surprising that this new start to my day has had a huge impact on my life.

The moment I awake, I say Psalm 143:8 (NIV) to myself—or, if Barry is already awake, I say it out loud. I repeat the verse several times. It's become a great way to start a day:

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love,

My love will fall and fail, but God's love never will.

for I have placed my trust in you.

The psalmist is very intentional here: trusting God is an act of the will.

Show me the way I should go,

I pray, "Show me, Father, which way I should go today."

for to you I entrust my life.

I say, "My life is Yours, Lord, and I trust You with everything."

Then I pray these simple words:

"Good morning, Lord! I don't know where You are going today, but wherever You're going, I'm comin' with You!"

"A good way to start the day every single day is to declare the Word of God and thank Him for it".

Five Minutes in the Word

What does the Bible say about beginning your morning with prayer and with the Lord? Read these key scriptures.

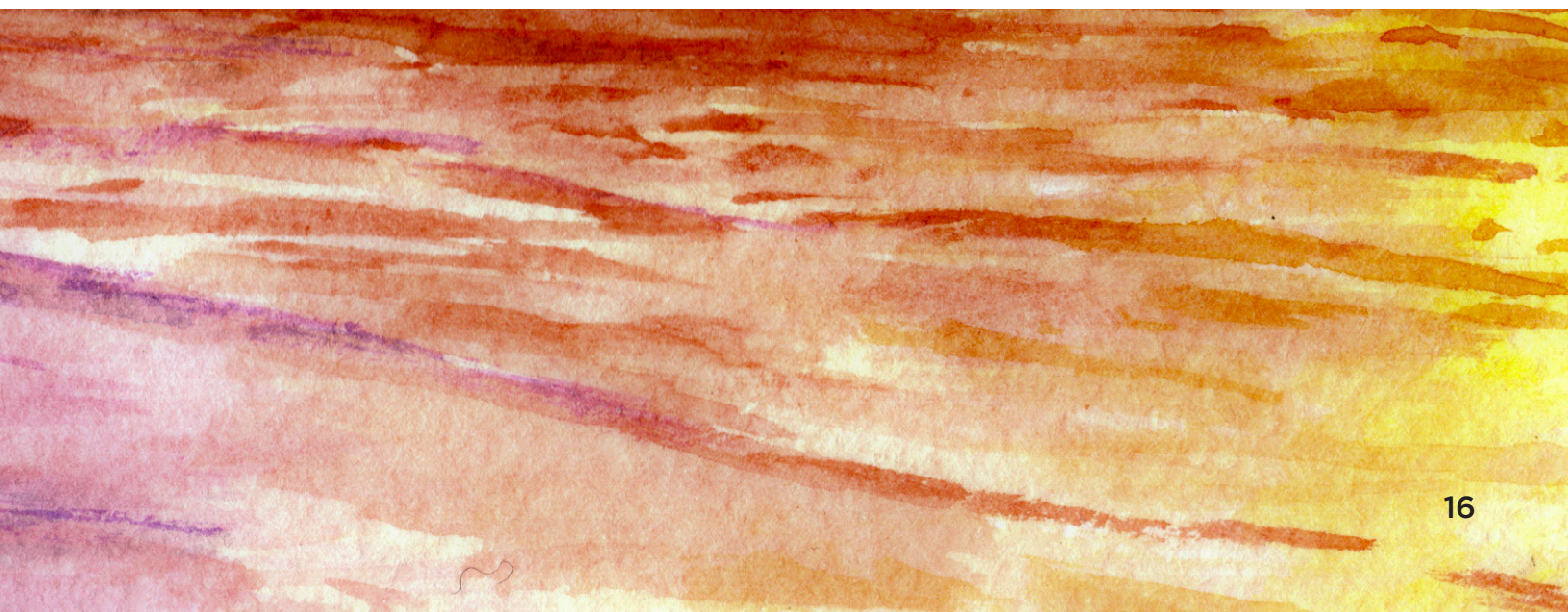
"Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life." - Psalm 143:8 NIV


"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness". - Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV

"Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning." - Psalm 30:5

"It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening." - Psalm 92:2

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." - Mark 1:35 NIV





“Good morning, Lord! I don’t know where You are going today, but wherever You’re going, I’m comin’ with You!” A good way to start the day every single day is to declare the Word of God and thank Him for it.”

—by Sheila Walsh, from **Start Your Day with the Lord**

BIBLE VERSES ABOUT

Mornings with the Lord

- Morning by morning new mercies I see! —**Lamentations 3:23**
- In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly. —**Psalm 5:3 NIV**
- For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. —**Psalm 30:5**
- Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. —**Psalm 90:14 NIV**
- But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. —**Psalm 59:16 NIV**
- Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. —**Psalm 119:105**
- Look! I am making things new! —**Revelation 21:5**
- Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. —**Psalm 143:8 NIV**
- The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. —**Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV**
- It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening. —**Psalm 92:2**
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- Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You. —**Psalm 143:8 NKJV**

Habits tracker

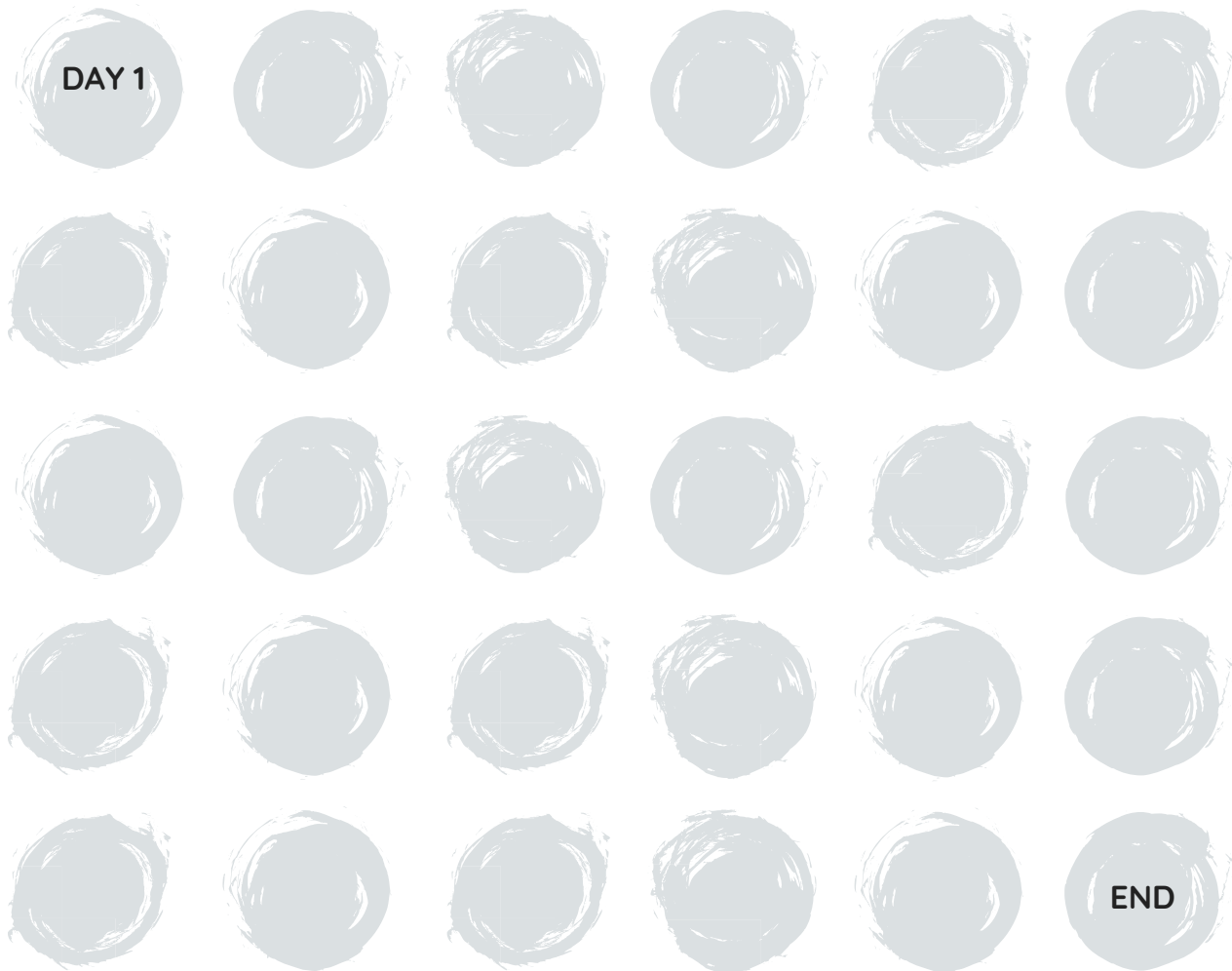
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HABIT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Habits tracker

Goal:

Start Date:



For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

...You have gotten rid of your old way of life and its habits. You have started living a new life. Your knowledge of how that life should have the Creator's likeness is being made new.
- Colossians 3:9-10 (NIV)

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.
Amen
- Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)