

A 5-Day Devotional

WAKING UP

— *to the* —

GOODNESS
OF GOD

BY SUSIE LARSON

INTRODUCTION

Susie Larson has lived much of her adult life bracing for impact. Though she loves Jesus, after suffering from decades with unpredictable and devastating symptoms of Lyme disease, she developed a posture of self-protection, just waiting for the next storm to hit. Then, one day, God showed her her heart in a way she could not deny. She realized she was disappointed in Him. Hurt by Him. Not enough to walk away from Him, but enough to rob her of the gift of expectancy. So Susie turned to earnestly *cultivating an expectant heart around God's goodness*. And it changed everything! She's not the same person she once was. She's healing from the inside out. God doesn't write the pain into our stories, but He will most certainly redeem it for His glory. Are you ready to experience renewed vitality? Do you believe God cares about the condition of your soul and that He still answers prayer? Are you willing to position yourself on the path of His promises and see what He might do in and through you? Follow along to discover God's goodness—today.

day 1

BELIEVE GOD FOR GOOD THINGS

Exodus 34:6; Psalm 23:6; James 1:17

Sunrises. Sunsets. Belly laughter. Frosted brownies. A colorful salad. A fluffy pillow. Water to drink. Clothes to wear. Friends and family to love. New mercies every morning (Lamentations 3:22–23). Unending faithfulness at night. Eternal security. Moment-by-moment grace. Jesus alive in you. Jesus all around you. The promise of His presence and access to His power.

You're not just blessed; you're profoundly, abundantly, and lavishly cared for.

Imagine it: God the Father watches over you. He charges angels to intervene for you and protect you (Psalm 91:11-12).

Even so, it's hard to see and enjoy the goodness of God when pain, loss, or heartache are all we feel. At times, I felt like I lived my life behind plexiglass. I could see God's gifts, but I didn't feel well enough to enjoy them. Pain compels us to look down. Faith invites us to look up.

Counting your blessings is better than complaining about your hardships. But holding each treasure before the Lord and acknowledging His very specific love for you? It'll change your life. Why? Because with each gift you notice comes a message to your heart that your heavenly Father sees you, knows you, loves you, and has promised to take good care of you.

When you train your thoughts and your gaze to look for the gifts from God's hand, you'll start to believe—down deep in your bones—that you not only have a history with God, but you have a future with Him too. It's impossible for Him to fail you.

Good and gracious Father, thank You for the countless ways You provide for me. Things I notice and things I miss. Things I cherish and things I take for granted. You're intimately involved with my life, and I can trust You. Amen.





day 2

DARE TO DREAM

Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 3:20; Psalm 37:4

Many years ago, I sat in a managers' meeting in the health club where I worked, while one of our VPs led us through a training exercise. He said, "Picture yourself at the end of your life. You're ninety-five years old, on your deathbed, and you're looking back over your life journey. Take out your notepad and write this statement at the top of the page: 'I wish I would have.' Then finish that sentence as many times as you need to." He stepped away from the podium and gave us time to think about our answers. I didn't need to think about it. I put my pen to the paper and wrote, "I wish I would have written a book."

I'd been through a lot. God had been so faithful. Yet I felt myself drifting. I was no longer in crisis. But neither was I taking steps toward the God-given longing of my heart. When there's no vision in our hearts, there's no purpose in our steps. And when there's no purpose in our steps, we drift to lesser things that drain the vitality right out of life.

I went home to my husband, Kev, with a new fire: and we made plans to make this dream happen.

Regarding God's promises, He invites us to engage with Him consistently. Stress doesn't exhaust us; stress without purpose does. It's not waiting for the breakthrough that drains us; it's passively waiting without activating our faith that robs us. We're wired for tenacious, hope-filled, purposeful faith. Allow me to put it this way: What are you believing God for?

Not every desire in our heart is God-given. But many are. If you walk intimately with God and treasure His Word in your heart, He'll shape your desires to match His desires for you. He'll prepare you to steward the dream. He'll confirm His will and way to you repeatedly. When You delight in Him first and foremost, He will always establish you in His perfect will and timing.

Father, help me pray for and believe for things that only You can accomplish. I'm Your vessel. Flow freely and powerfully through me. Amen.

day 3

BELIEVE AND THEREFORE SPEAK

Proverbs 18:21; Proverbs 31:26; Mark 11:23-24

I've struggled for more than three decades with daily symptoms of Lyme disease. Yet God has ignited more healing in these past couple of years than in all the other years combined. He's gone after the buried trauma that kept me bracing for impact.

To be honest, I'm clunky at this healing. One moment, you'll find me testifying to something miraculous God did within me, and the next (if you find me on an off day), I'll sigh and sometimes sob over these dumb symptoms that never seem to go away. Yet God continues to call me higher and deeper regarding my words. He showed me that our words are seeds that go into the ground and sprout in due time. I've planted both flowers and weeds. I want more flowers.

But didn't Jesus tell us to *speak* to our mountains?

Though I can't explain why complete physical healing has taken so long for me (while others get an instantaneous miracle), I can say that I'm literally infused with power when I remember God's promises and then roar them over my life on a regular basis. I'm planting a garden of truth all around me!

God wants us to know what Jesus won for us. He wants us to rehearse His promises and to remember that though we see many hardships in this life, there are significant benefits to being a child of God.

Even though you can't possibly use up all God has provided or fathom the fullness of His love, why don't you try? Imagine yourself swimming in the ocean of His goodness! He's made it available to you. Saturate yourself in His holy provision. Start speaking to the obstacles in your life. Tell your body to heal, your mountains to move, and your enemy to be gone, in Jesus' name.

Mighty Redeemer, Show me what I believe, and then tell me what's true. Infuse my words, empower my prayers, and energize my steps with mountain-moving faith. Amen.

day 4

KEEP WALKING; KEEP BELIEVING

Psalm 23:1-3; Psalm 30:1-5; Psalm 147:3-4

How do we live with joyful assurance when some of the longings of our hearts remain unfulfilled? Is it possible to walk in the abundance of God while you wait for the promises of God? Yes, I believe it is. But not without utter honesty and holy dependence.

So what do we do? We sincerely bring our story to our loving Father. We believe with all our hearts that He cares deeply and is already moving on our behalf. We know that our tender vulnerability and trust mean something to God. Our faith is precious to Him.

Does God care about all our suffering and stresses? Yes. With all my heart, I know He does. And He manages the universe at the same time.

He wants us to acknowledge our lament, which is a holy exercise, vastly different from self-pity. Then He helps us find that sweet spot of remembrance and expectancy.

How do we walk in the fullness of God's love while we wait for the fulfillment of His promises? We remember what we possess in Christ Jesus *right now*. We revel in the assurance that we have an eternity with God, and no demon in hell can snatch it from us. We realize that while we walk this earth, we live in the now and the not yet. We lean hard on the Lord. We envision God's intervention. We get a picture of what healing might look like for us. We rejoice in God's goodness, and we keep walking. And we keep believing.

Loving Father, thank You for being so attentive to the places in me that still hurt. I know that healing often happens in layers. Help me trust You in the meantime. Amen.



day 5

TELL YOURSELF A BETTER STORY

Psalm 43:5; 2 Corinthians 4:13; Matthew 11:28-30

I believe one of the leading causes of exhaustion and procrastination is the story we tell ourselves. I marvel at how many times I've caught myself talking myself right into a funk. Maybe I didn't sleep well the night before. Even so, I got enough sleep to function. I started the day rehearsing, "I'm exhausted" and carried it throughout the day. I'm sure you can imagine what kind of day I had.

One day I realized what I was doing and changed the story. I took inventory of the energy and grace I did possess and went after my day with gusto. It turned out to be a great day, and surprisingly, when I quit saying I was exhausted, I realized I actually felt pretty good.

What had I been telling myself up to this point? *I'm exhausted. This is too much. I hate these symptoms. Will they ever end? My inbox is impossible. I'm stuck. I'll never get ahead of this task list. Will I ever have energy again?*

My goodness, it's embarrassing to admit such defeatist thinking. But that's where I was when exhaustion overtook me.

Then I decided to pull God's promises closer than my problems, and my confessions started to sound like, *I am strong and mighty in the Lord! I am energized to do all He's given me to do! I get to do the work of the Lord, and I will do it with all my heart. I'll do my best and trust Him with the rest. It's the Lord who fulfills His purposes for me.*

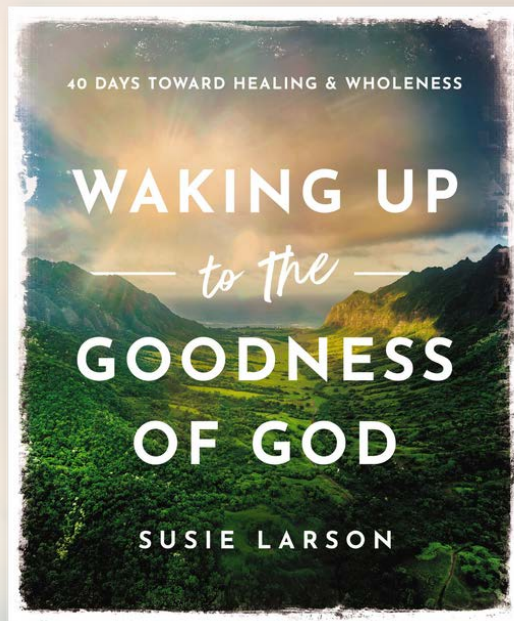
I don't have words to describe the difference it made when I lined up my script with God's story for me.

How about you? Are you tired and weary? First, run to Jesus.

Trust Jesus for the energy and the rest you need. And ask Him to show you a better way to tell your story, a better way to speak about your life when the waves crash against you. Pull His promises closer than your problems. In due time, you'll be walking on the water with Him.

Precious Father, You are writing a beautiful story with my life. Help me hear the song You're singing over me even now. I will declare Your goodness over my life today! Amen.

For those who have been disappointed when the "good life" let them down or discouraged by life's struggles, the goodness of God is trustworthy, life-giving, and everlasting. Jesus wants to lead you on a healing path to redeem your story and to make you whole.



Join best-selling author, popular radio host, and Bible teacher Susie Larson on a 40-day pilgrimage to explore God's invitation to flourish, heal, and know His peace in a way that changes us forever. Through this journey, readers will discover how to:

- Retrain their brains and renew their minds to notice God's goodness and to make that their default setting
- Revive their faith by immersing in God's promises, saying and praying them more than ever
- Restore a right view of God's character based on His Word and stop drawing wrong conclusions about Him
- Redeem their story and renew their strength by following the Healer

Do you still believe God is good? Do you believe He cares about the condition of your soul? And that He still answers prayer? Are you ready to position yourself on the path of His promises and see what He might do in and through you?

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