

Fresh
Hope
for Today

Devotions for Joy on the Journey



GRACE FOX

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This book is given to

on this day



Contents

God Is in the Details	10
Joy Defined	12
The Spirit's Fruit	14
The Rain Will Stop	16
Good Trumps Evil	18
Loved	20
Celebrate	22
Good from Pain	24
God-Sized Assignments	26
Rescue	28
Use Your Gifts	30
Equipped	32
Five Loaves, Two Fish	34
Not Alone	36
Don't Look Back	38
Forgiveness	40
Joy Restored	42
True Wealth	44
Wait	46
God Keeps His Promises	48
Love in Action	50

Service	52
Discipline	54
Treasures	56
For Such a Time As This	58
Ripples of Joy	60
Sunrise, Sunset	62
An Unexpected Helper	64
Praise	66
Our Citizenship	68
A Heavenly Perspective	70
The God Perspective	72
Blessings	74
Fear	76
Sleep in Peace	78
A Little Bit of Hope	80
Cling to God	82
God's Hands	84
Beauty from Brokenness	86
Let It Go	88
Renewal	90
Friends	92
Rejoice	94
Real-Life Struggles	96
Hardships Happen	98

Suffering	100
Enjoying God	102
Joyful Disruptions	104
God Provides	106
A New Path	108
When Plans Change	110
Beneficial Words	112
Run the Race	114
Give Thanks	116
The Upside of Pain	118
Choosing to Be Joyful	120
Waiting on God	122
Sowing Seeds	124
Joy Is a Choice	126
God Answers	128
Strength to Strength	130
Siri and the Spirit	132
Yahweh	134
Choices, Choices	136
Because You Prayed	138
Wonder	140
Are We Almost There?	142
Love Speaks Every Language	144
Good News, Great Joy	146

Burden Bearer.	148
God's Power Displayed.	150
Beyond Imagination	152
God's Consolations	154
Today's a Gift	156
The Key to Hope.	158
Worship Despite Disappointment.	160
Praise God in the Unexpected	162
Greater Joy.	164
The Power of Song	166
Trust.	168
Community	170
Always Available	172
The Spirit	174
Precious Words.	176
The Right Path.	178
Nothing's Impossible	180
One Thing	182
Seek God's Face	184
Joy for Now.	186
Abide	188



Dear Friend,

Welcome aboard, fellow traveler. I'm so glad we can take this faith journey together. It's comforting to have a companion when the road on which we walk feels lonely or steep. It's reassuring to hear the stories of others who have gone before us and know the way. And it's encouraging to discover, or be reminded of, truths from God's Word that shed light on our path, especially when it takes an unexpected detour.

No matter where our journey leads, we can know for certain that God goes with us and cares for us. We can face the road ahead with hope for a good outcome under his sovereignty. His promises to guard, guide, and give us every reason to choose and experience joy. My prayer is that the words on each page will restore your hope and renew your joy—and do so abundantly.

Dear God, thank you for providing travel companions for this journey called life. Please lead my friend along the path you've chosen. Grant strength when the way feels wearisome and peace when it perplexes. Give hope on dark days. Grant joy in sunshine and in shadow. I pray this in the power of your name with thanks in advance. Amen.

Know you are loved,



Grace Fox



God Is in the Details

*The LORD directs the steps of the godly.
He delights in every detail of their lives.*

PSALM 37:23 NLT

Pause

My husband (whom I've nicknamed Sailor-Man) and I left our marina, intending to spend a week-long working vacation on our boat-home before returning to help our son with a project. Our calendar cleared when our son canceled his plans.

Rather than return to our marina, we decided to combine working from the boat with traveling to the area where we used to live, while stopping to visit friends in a few coastal communities along the way.

One get-together was especially meaningful. We'd known Tom and Linda for twenty-five years and shared a lot of history. We recalled fun memories and swapped current stories for an hour. Fellowship was sweet, and goodbyes came too soon.

Tom passed away nine days later. The news shocked us, but it didn't surprise God. He knew what was coming. I believe he gave us the idea to take a working vacation so that we'd continue traveling up the coast when our son canceled his plans. One decision led to another, so we could visit Tom once more before he moved to heaven. God was in every detail.

Ponder

How have you seen God in the details when your plans changed unexpectedly?

Pray

God, take my journey in the direction you want, so your purposes can be accomplished.

“Who is God? He is the Lord. He is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. He knows what you’re feeling and why. He knows what you need, and he will give it as you can receive it. He is a rock—strong, bold, mighty, immovable, unyielding in power. The Lord your God will guide you right.”

PETER M. WALLACE





Joy Defined

*Always be joyful. Never stop praying.
Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is
God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 NLT

Pause

God commands us to always be joyful. We can easily obey that command when everything's going well, but how can we do it when our journey leads through disappointments and dark valleys? Here's where it's helpful to understand what joy is.

My favorite definition, which was coined by Kay Warren in *Choose Joy: Because Happiness Isn't Enough*, is "Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be all right, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation."

Joy isn't a fleeting feeling based on happy circumstances. It's an unshakable emotion that says everything's going to

be okay because God is wise, loving, good, and sovereign, and he still sits on the throne. It takes root and grows deep when we choose to praise God, even when things aren't going well, and it enables us to hold on to hope for a good outcome.

God never issues an impossible command. Joy at all times, good and bad, is his desire for us, and it becomes our reality when we trust him unconditionally.

Ponder

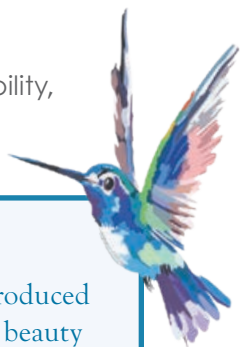
What's your definition of joy?

Pray

God, thank you for making lasting joy a possibility, because you are who you say you are.

“Christian joy is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as he causes us to see the beauty of Christ in the word and in the world.”

JOHN PIPER, author of *Desiring God*



The Spirit's Fruit

*The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit
in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness, and self-control.*

GALATIANS 5:22–23 NLT



Pause

My oldest daughter and her husband live in an arid region of Washington state. The road between their home and our marina winds through hills that resemble the set for a western movie, complete with sagebrush and rattlesnakes.

Interestingly, some of those same hills are able to sustain orchards of apples, peaches, pears, and grapes. We can spot the orchards from miles away because irrigation turns them a lush green—a stark contrast to the sunbaked brown around them.

As Christ's followers, we ought to stand in stark contrast to the world around us—especially when facing hardship. Our ability to experience joy despite heartache and tears

bears witness to God's presence and supernatural work within us.

Joy is not the typical response to trouble, nor is it something we can produce on our own. The Holy Spirit produces it in direct proportion to the access we give him to our lives. The more authority we allow him, the more spiritual fruit he grows in us, even when difficulties surround us.

Ponder

Do others see joy produced in your life?

Pray

God, make my life like a lush orchard that produces joy as a fruit of your Holy Spirit.

“Hope fills the afflicted soul with such inward joy and consolation, that it can laugh while tears are in the eye, sigh and sing all in a breath; it is called ‘the rejoicing of hope’ (Hebrews 3:6).”

WILLIAM GURNALL,
The Christian in Complete Armour;
or a Treatise on the Saints’ War with the Devil

