



A 10 Day Devotional  
*Be Encouraged. Be Empowered. Be Blessed.*

*Hi friend!*

I want to take the time to say thank you for your support and generosity! I am so humbled by your kindness! My prayer for you is these devotionals would uplift you in some way. When I went on my first mission's trip in August of 2016 to Cuba, I had no idea what to expect. It was my first time away from home with people I did not know doing something I'd never done. But it was one of the greatest experiences I've ever been a part of. I went in with the belief poverty ruled Cuba but what I found was a people rich in humility, service, and love. While I did encounter extreme poverty and heard heart-wrenching stories, I was able to experience the gospel in its purest form. From walking down dusty roads, I found in the heart of Cuba the gospel is to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and to love people as yourself. I was able to be a witness the gospel need not be made attractive, it stands on its own; I am simply a vessel God has chosen to deliver that message in the form of love. Ever since that mission's trip, I've been praying for God to open a door to go on another trip. Honduras is that door. I want nothing more than to bring the truth of Christ's love to a broken and wounded people. So, with your donation to my mission trip comes this devotional.

Many of these devotionals are from my online ministry called Project Healing. Project Healing started out as an idea birthed in prayer that has since developed into a God-given vision. What began as simple text messages in 2014 to encourage family and friends expanded to email devotionals filled with encouragement, truth, and love. It was a way for me to share what God was teaching me through bible study, prayer, and fellowship. As I was praying over Honduras and how I could fund it, I thought of sharing with you some of those devotionals and new ones as well. Each devotional is accompanied with a reflection question you can reflect on and journal through. Take the time to digest each devotional as you journal. Read the chapters of each verse and let that time be an intentional conversation between you and the Lord. The hope is for your faith to be strengthened and your prayer life to be transformed as you go deeper with God. My prayer is these words will encourage you, empower you, and bless you!

With love and many blessings,

Neli Betancourt

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## Day 1 – The Anointing

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“ Before a young woman’s turn came to go in to King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics.”

*Esther 2:12 NIV*

Esther was a beautiful young woman. A woman full of purpose and conviction. A woman with a voice. However, Esther was also a woman who knew suffering. The Bible doesn’t specifically tell us Esther was a woman acquainted with pain but we know her story. She lost both parents as a child. She was an orphan, an exile in a foreign land, being raised by her cousin. Esther knew grief. She knew abandonment. She knew hardships. Yet, she was chosen.

In Esther 2:12, Esther needed to go undergo 12 months of treatment before going into the King's presence. This treatment consisted of an oil of Myrrh anointing. What’s so significant is oil of myrrh was used to clean and heal wounds. Esther needed to undergo an inner healing that she would be set apart for kingdom purposes. The pain Esther endured was a magnified preparation for the elevation she was to get to that was activated by an oil anointing. Esther needed an outpouring of Oil of myrrh to heal those old wounds. She needed to enter a time of preparation followed by an anointing before the king could put her in a position of influence. Before you get elevated, there is a preparation period.

Beloved, please don’t despise your preparation period for it is the small beginnings that carry the anointing. It’s in the anointed preparation you learn your kingdom purposes. This anointing carries glory to heal, to intercede, and to save.

What you are feeling is part of the preparation process. Where you are right now in this season of your life is exactly where you need to be to step into your next God ordained assignment. The preparation plus the anointing equals purpose and elevation.

This oil of myrrh anointing is one God outpours to advocate for the voiceless, to bridge the gap between the kingdom of heaven and God's people, and it comes with the divine authority to rid what is not of God. Esther was able to call out the injustice, which led to the salvation of her people.

12 in the Bible symbolizes divine authority which means God's divine authoritative hand is over your life shifting, healing, mending, preparing, and outpouring for His glory. The tears you have poured out and the pain you have gone through are not insignificant. In essence, they are prophetic because every tear you cry, God collects them. They are prophetic because they speak volumes into what God is going to do in your life. Your pain is the predecessor to your position. Pain has the potential to be transformed into power. Your oil of myrrh anointing is not by accident. It is on purpose for a purpose. God’s preparation in advance is what is propelling you into your God given position.

From ancient times, the priests and kings were anointed as a sign of God’s power upon them. They had to be anointed before going into office. The oil is what sets you apart. The anointing in your life precedes the divine appointment and future elevation. Whether you are 24, 94, or somewhere in between; you are right where you need to be.

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**Reflection Question: What season are you in? What does it look like?**

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## Day 2 – The Promise

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“Saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.”

*Mark 11:2 NIV*

Point A is a great place to be. It is the place of conception for the promise given to you by God. This isn't just another pinky promise between two friends; it's as a result of your relationship with Jesus. It is in the journey with Christ that promises are cultivated. In Mark 11:2, Jesus sends two of his disciples to a village ahead of them with a word. He says, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.” Jesus is intentional when He gives you a word because He knows that promise must carry you to your promised land. He knows it must sustain you as you walk on ahead.

This is point B. It is the carrying of the promise. Carrying your promise and standing on that word implies you move forward. Your steps cannot be ordered toward your promise if you aren't moving, working, and praying. Your steps must mirror that of the promise. However, rest assured as you get closer to your promise, people will rise up and ask, “What are you doing?” and “Why are you doing that?” But stand on the word the Lord gave you because once you reach the promise, it will be waiting for you just as Jesus said. You are to carry this promise into fruition.

This is point C; the fulfillment of the promise. Beloved, as you're walking to your promise holding on to the word the Lord gave you, you may start to get tired. You may start to doubt because nothing around you looks like that promise. In fact, it may even start to get a little dark but be encouraged because you are standing on holy ground. What God says is always true, it's always full of purpose, and it always comes to pass.

This is point D. Point D is where point A and point C merge. Note when Jesus sent His disciples ahead of Him, He stood at point A because they needed to trust Him at His word. Point D is where God gets the glory for your faithfulness. You may be waiting for finances to roll in, for a child to get well, for your marriage to be restored, for a loved one to be saved, or for your future spouse; be empowered because that promise has your name on it and no one has ever touched it except Jesus.

Point A: Conception of the promise

Point B: Carrying of the promise

Point C: Fulfillment of the promise

Point D: Point A and point C merge

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**Reflection Question: What has God promised you?**

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## Day 3 – The Struggle

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“Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

*Genesis 32:28 NIV*

As a society, the word struggle has come to mean something negative, yet in Genesis 32, we see Jacob wrestling with God. He struggles with God. However, this wasn't any ordinary struggle; it was a holy one. It was a physical struggle encountering a spiritual cause. At face value, Jacob was a thief and a runner. He stole his brother's birthright and his blessing. But God knew Jacob's innate tendencies. The difference is God did not define him by this. You see, the world will define you by what you've done but God will define you by who He is. God saw beyond Jacob's faulty sense of identity and saw his godly potential.

The struggle Jacob encountered with God was an intentional part of God's plan for Jacob to develop a godly character. Godly character precedes a godly reputation. In the development period, there is a struggle because you are stretched as you wrestle. You are broken down physically in order for there to be a spiritual breakthrough. However, the thing about the struggle is you develop skills you didn't know existed. You sharpen abilities and gifts already ingrained in you. The struggle is an integral part for the formation of your identity in Christ.

In that struggle, Jacob was asked his name not because God didn't know it, but to make Jacob aware of his fleshly nature. He needed Jacob to be self-aware because it's only in the struggle you learn who you are in God.

It's important to note Jacob's name was changed as a result of him confessing who he was. The confession was the identification of his limitations and his weaknesses. Jacob means “he cheats; he grasps the heel.” How intentional was it Jacob's identity was tied to his name. Throughout his life, he became a cheater, a deceiver; he became a person who stole another person's blessings. He was a people pleaser, a liar, and a runner. But now came the time to fight for his own and the struggle was for him to learn his true identity.

Maybe your life has been characterized by others telling you what to do and how to be, yet, here comes God and offers you a brand new name and identity; one that is connected to your very purpose. Your name change is indicative of your identity in God. Just like Jacob, it is one that will amplify your calling. Jacob's name change is what defined his purpose as the father of the 12 tribes. He was now a new creation. You are a new creation. However, this doesn't mean you won't have a limp. The limp Jacob walked away with was evidence God was with Him in the struggle. The limp you have, whatever it may be, keeps you dependent upon God. That limp is evidence of your encounter with The Most High; it's evidence of God in your life. After you encounter God, you are never the same. You learn who you are because of whose you are. Remember, the struggle is never in vain.

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**Reflection Question: How does God see you? Who are you in Christ?**

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## Day 4 - The Freedom

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“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery.”

*John 8:3-4 NIV*

Growing up, I thought I had to be perfect. I had to look and act perfect. I had to speak perfectly and have the perfect weight. In fact, I developed the disease of perfectionism because I thought I needed to be perfect. And while God has been working on my perfectionism, whenever I am exposed, whenever someone points out something wrong with me, I cringe. Even if it's constructive criticism, I turn into this little girl that always needed to fight. Sometimes I even freeze. But the point is, I identify with the adulterous woman. She must have felt humiliated and embarrassed because her dirty laundry was just aired. She must have lost her voice in that moment. She was exposed and all eyes were on her.

The bible says, “They made her stand before the group.” To put it simply, her sins were on display. There was no hiding or running. Yet Jesus had a purpose. He was already in the temple courts teaching so He used this as a teaching moment. As the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were questioning Jesus so He would condemn her, Jesus does something odd; He bends down and starts to write on the ground with His finger. Theologians debate about what He could've written but they believe He wrote their names and their sins. As they continued to question Jesus, He says, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her”, and He bends down and starts to write again. And finally, one by one they start to go away until it was only Jesus and the adulterous woman.

Jesus wanted it to be just Him and her because He wasn't afraid of her sin. He wanted to show her He was in her mess with her. Jesus wanted intimacy with her because her sin had just been exposed and He knew how she felt. She was vulnerable. I believe Jesus intentionally wrote in the dirt because we are formed from dirt, from the dust of the earth. And

Jesus knew how she was formed. He knew she was fragile. Psalm 103:14 says, “As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him: for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.”

Whatever Jesus wrote, he used the very thing we were created with to convey a prophetic message that revealed the prescription for her sin; it was Jesus. It was intimacy with Jesus. It was in the middle of her expose, in the center of her sin, the adulterous woman met her savior. Where there is sin, there is the potential for forgiveness and salvation. But sin needs to be exposed for there to be forgiveness. Being exposed is hard. It's vulnerable. But if there is sin in your life, confess it. Bring it to Jesus. He will not condemn you. Because while sin needs to be exposed for there to be salvation from it; the forgiveness of Jesus precedes your freedom. Be free from sin.

**Reflection Question: What do you need to let go of?**

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## Day 5 – The Stages of Healing

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“When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, ‘Do you want to get well?’”

*John 5:6 NIV*

I recently brought the youth and young adults I teach through a teaching series titled, "Meeting God in different seasons in different ways". For one particular lesson, they learned about "The God who heals". During Jesus' ministry on earth, He healed countless people from a myriad of diseases and ailments, among other things. As I studied the stages of healing, I realized how much we have control over our own healing. Let me explain. . .

In John 5:1-9, Jesus is in Jerusalem near a healing pool called Bethesda. While He was there, He noticed a man who had been an invalid for 38 years. Now it's important to note this man was paralyzed in some way for a full 38 years, yet the first question Jesus asks him is, “Do you want to get well?”

When you are in a certain state for a period of time, you become conditioned to being that way. You become accustomed to living with the aches and pains, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. It becomes your normal. So the first stage of healing is to actually *choose healing*. We have to choose to want to get well. The second stage is to *understand only Jesus can heal you*. In John 5:7, the invalid says he has no one to help him into the pool. He comes to the understanding only Jesus can help him because no one else has been able to. However, it's important to do the work of healing.

The third stage is *being aware of what you need healed*. In Matthew 20:32, Jesus comes across two blind men as well and the first question He asks is, “What do you want me to do for you?” In order for healing to begin, you need to be aware of your need for healing. Awareness is the most powerful because it means you are no longer blind to your wounds. You can now identify them.

The last stage of healing is to *believe in the healing*. In Matthew 9:28, Jesus is in his hometown of Capernaum and He comes across two blind men. As they are following Him, Jesus goes indoors and asks them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” Healing isn't a question about whether Jesus can heal or not, Jesus is healer. But it is a question of “Do you believe?” You need to believe to be healed. You have to believe in the healing even before it comes. This is the epitome of faith; seeing the potential of something before it comes to be.

I want you to pay attention to the fact in all these stories of healing, Jesus asks the person in need of healing a question. Sometimes we go to God asking Him what to do but because we aren't expecting Him to answer a certain way, we misinterpret God's answer for silence. Sometimes God speaks in questions too. So as you go forward in your healing journey, remember the acronym: CUAB.

1. *Choose* healing
2. *Understand* only Jesus can heal
3. *Awareness* of what you need healed
4. *Believe* in the healing

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**Reflection Question: What do you need healing from?**



“He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.”

*2 Kings 22:2 NIV*

Sometime last summer I went white water rafting for the first time with my mother. It was an adventure to say the least.

What was most interesting is even though there was someone on my raft with the most experience; I was voted to be captain. With fear and apprehension, I readily agreed. After letting all my teammates on the raft, I followed suit. You could feel the excitement rushing as the river pulled us upstream. However, the more my team paddled forward, the more we weren't going anywhere! In fact, every other raft had gone so far ahead of us, we could no longer see them. I didn't realize I needed to direct my team in order to move forward. As a result of not directing them effectively, we'd spin in circles, get caught on huge rocks, and stuck in trees. I could hear the frustration in everyone's voice yet I had no idea what to do or how to help. It was here while stuck on a rock in a tree, an expert rafter came alongside us and screamed, “It's you captain! It's up to you to lead them.”

It was in this moment I learned when God gives you a position of leadership, your imperfections, your faults, and your weaknesses are exposed. But what God exposes it's primarily to heal. Ultimately, He desires to set free, to refine, and to restore. When I finally accepted the responsibility of leading my team, my shortcomings had to be revealed in order to tap into the grace of God that is sufficient for all things. This is what keeps you dependent upon God for direction and wisdom in your leadership. You have to be able to identify what your blind spots are as a leader because leadership begins with you. It is in this exposure the unfolding happens and vulnerability is born. When you finally understand the power of the Holy Spirit on the inside of you, this is when you can access the influence and impact given to you by God to guide your team away from the rocks, past the trees, and over the circles. You'll learn leadership is identifying your team's weaknesses and their strengths to best assist them along their journey.

If God exposes to heal then when you are healed, those under your leadership begin to mirror that. It's called transparency. Leadership is calling out purpose, influencing greatness, ushering the healing of others, and loving unconditionally when it's most difficult. As a leader, you have to be able to direct your team to work with you not just for you. Your leadership whether at home leading your children, at work leading your team, or at church leading a ministry, should mirror that of Jesus. When Josiah became king in Jerusalem, scripture says, “He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.” Josiah was one of the youngest kings yet because his end goal was always God, he was extremely successful! He led one of the greatest religious reforms in all of Israelite history, which resulted in the consecration of God's people. He knew his end goal was Jesus and when you have Jesus at your forefront, you can lead with Holy Spirit guidance, biblical effectiveness, God's grace, and Jesus-filled love. Leadership entails direction, encouragement, and celebration. At the core of a fruitful leadership should be:

1. **Seeking** God first for all you need.
2. **Doing** what is right in the eyes of God. You cannot be a people pleaser and a God pleaser. This indicates a division of heart.
3. **Being** all in for the cause of Christ.
4. **Having** godly counsel. You need mentors who are echoing the voice of God for you.
5. **No** compromising your convictions.
6. **Sensitivity** to the Holy Spirit.
7. **Undergoing** a consecration process. A great leader is set apart for and to the Lord. Constantly undergo self-examination to grow, learn, and heal.

**Reflection Question: Examine your leadership whether it's at home, church, or work. How would you define your leadership?**

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## Day 7 - The Wilderness

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"Then say to him, "The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness. But until now you have not listened.'"

*Exodus 7:16 NIV*

There are moments in life that seem as if you're being bombarded by one thing after another. It gets to a boiling point where you have nothing left to give. You're at a loss in every area because you have no idea what to do. I've come to value these moments because when you give up, God moves in. It's in the middle of the wilderness when you have no resources, except yourself to give, that God provides. The dictionary defines 'wilderness' as a "wild and uncultivated region, as of forest or desert, uninhabited or inhabited only by wild animals." The wilderness is sometimes the only place where you can learn who God really is. It's in the wilderness of life; God demonstrates His glory of cultivating the harvest in impossible circumstances. But the question is how do you respond when you're in the wilderness?

In the book of Exodus, Moses and his brother Aaron were chosen by God to speak to pharaoh. You see, Pharaoh had all of the Israelites in bondage and used them as slaves for hundreds of years. They were beaten and overworked to the point of exhaustion and starvation. Although no one seemed to care, God sent Moses on His behalf to rescue them. In Exodus 5:1, God speaking says, "Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness." The Lord was rescuing His people and He could've easily brought them to a 5 star resort yet He rescues them into the wilderness.

We sometimes become discouraged because we believe everything is supposed to be perfect. At any sign of trouble or distress, we're quick to become angry at God. However the truth is, God never said we wouldn't encounter heartache and opposition. What He did say was, although we go through deep waters, we will not drown. He said, although we go through fire, we will not be burned. He promised where there is no way, He will make a way. He will part red seas and make walls come crumbling down. Because even though we're going through things, we're still getting through because He is with us. I believe what God wants from you, is to worship and praise in spite of the fact you are in the wilderness.

God wanted His people to specifically hold a festival for him in the wilderness. A place where nothing grows, where nothing lives, God wanted them to throw a party! They had nothing to give but the beautiful thing is God wasn't asking for anything BUT worship. In Exodus 7:16, it says, "Then say to him, "The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness." Worship means you recognize God is above anything you are facing. It means you surrender yourself to God. Worship means praising God through the storm and uncertainty. It means being able to acknowledge who God is in the face of your adversities and doubts. Worship is honoring God in the nothingness of the wilderness.

Worshipping God in the wilderness is one of your most powerful weapons. It says, "I may be going through things but God is in control and because He's in control, I am still His and He is still God." When you worship in the wilderness, chains are broken. In the wilderness is where healing happens. In the wilderness is where repair and restoration occurs. It's the place where everyone says, nothing can happen, God uses to cultivate His greatest miracles. It's the place God has prepared for you in advance for worship.

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**Reflection Question: What has God freed you from? How can you worship Him?**

## Day 8 – The people pleaser

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“For they loved human praise more than praise from God.”

*John 12:43 NIV*

It is a disease. It threatens to steal your freedom and calculates your every move. When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he came at night (*John 3:2*) because he was afraid the other Jewish leaders would kick him out of the synagogue. He cared more what others thought than what Jesus thought about him. His disease of people pleasing limited his behavior. He could not move freely for fear of not belonging, of disappointing others, and losing his credibility. Fear is the predecessor for loving human praise. People pleasing is rooted in the fear of not being chosen, wanting to belong, and fear you won't be liked or loved.

It begins to dictate your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It constricts you and limits you where God wants to lead you into freedom. This disease creeps in and is as a result of perfectionism. People pleasing is the action of perfectionism. This action is fueled by a lack of heart knowledge you are fully known, deeply loved, and totally accepted by God without conditions. If I can be honest, this disease has crippled me for many years and I'm just now beginning to see the light.

People pleasing is like sitting in a waiting room hoping to be noticed and called on by your name. This causes you to perform. In that performance, very significant symptoms begin to surface as a result of deep-rooted trauma. Some of these symptoms are pretending to agree with everyone, extreme difficulty sharing your voice, over apologizing, not being able to say no, mirroring how others behave around you, loving human praise, needing to be validated, intentionally avoiding conflict, and not identifying how you truly feel with others. Sound familiar? I've been there too. To be honest, I still find myself there at times. In this performance, you will never be enough because people pleasing is an unattainable expectation we set for ourselves that changes with each relationship. It's unstable. Yet God hasn't called you to perform but to live loved boldly and authentically.

The first step is self-awareness and acknowledging you are a people pleaser. Your initial reaction may be denial, which is a natural human response. However, don't allow yourself to stay there. God can only heal you if you give him access into this area and are willing to do the work. Remember the devotional on healing? Choose healing, understand only Jesus can heal, be aware of what you need healed, and believe in the healing. The thing with God is you don't have to wait in a waiting room to get His attention. You can go straight into His presence because you already have His undivided attention. You already have access into His throne room.

As with every disease, there is a prescription. The prescription is the love of Jesus. When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he was confronting the people pleasing head on. As the conversation with Jesus unfolded, it was God's love that transformed him and he eventually became the one to prepare Jesus' body for burial. What a privilege! In the presence of the Lord there is freedom; freedom from people pleasing because His love is what activates your transformation. Walking in that love causes you to freely live loved. Living loved is the work of God's grace. Jesus is inviting you today into His love. In His love, you belong, you are secure, you have a voice, you are forgiven, you are validated, and you are bold.

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**Reflection Question: How can you begin to live loved?**

## Day 9 – The Morning Mug

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“And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.”

*Galatians 4:6 NLT*

Whenever my sisters and I come together, we have morning mug. It’s where we have a cup of coffee sitting on the bed to talk. We share and we listen. In that moment, we’re doing life together. I’ve now named my time in the mornings with Jesus our morning mug. I sit at our usual meeting place in the living room on my comfy couch to read His word and talk with Him as I sip my hot coffee. It’s the favorite part of my day that grants me the courage to go out into the world and interact with people. It’s where my greatest insights happen, where I am most secure, and it’s where I can surrender my heart to The One who crafted it with intention and purpose.

Where and when is your morning mug time?

Galatians 4:6 says, “And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” Abba is the Aramaic word for ‘Father’ that holds a weight so deep and so strong; it pulls you in connection to God. Because the Spirit of Jesus is on the inside of you, it cries out ‘Abba.’ By definition, this means you need intimacy with Christ. The thirst you have can only be quenched as you spend time with God. Nothing and no one can fill you like God can.

As His child, He longs to spend time with you. He longs for you to know Him personally and intimately. When you intentionally carve out a time to meet with Him, He faithfully waits for you. He sits at that place at that time ready to love on you. He desires to tell you great and unsearchable things. But He can’t do that if you aren’t willing to set a specific time to meet with your Abba. If you want to go deeper, allow Abba to shake up your schedule, your plans, your time, and your dreams, that your life would be a fragrant offering to Him. Allow Him to shake up your life in a dangerously holy way. You can try and do this thing called life without God and still be successful but completely be lacking His presence. The beginning of your earthly purpose is called out as result of the daily time you spend with Abba. Your primary purpose is to reflect Him a little more each day that begins with your own morning mug time.

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**Reflection Question: What can you do to intentionally spend time with Abba?**

## Day 10 – The Grace

“Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.”  
*Isaiah 64:8 NIV*

Grace is how God can meet you where you are. It’s an undeserved love, acceptance, and favor from God to you. You can’t do or say anything that causes you to earn that grace. It’s simply as a result of you being a child of God bought with the blood of Jesus that gives you access into a relationship with Him. Grace is the defining ingredient God uses to mold you as the clay and Him as the potter.

Mercy is the workings of grace that rewire the posture of the human heart. In 1 Chronicles 21, David decides to take a census of his army to feed his pride and enlarge his ego. However, this action was not a godly one because it had selfish motives. Because of this, God becomes upset with David and sends His messenger to speak with him. He tells David to choose between three disciplinary actions and David decides to fall into the hands of God. He says in 1 Chronicles 21:13, “I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into human hands.” As a result, a plague comes over the land and in order for it to stop, David must go up to the threshing floor and build an altar to God.

The threshing floor is a place where farmers would place two oxen together using a yoke to thresh the wheat. In this process, the wheat would be separated from the chaff that was not edible. The threshing floor is what God used for His mercy to rework David’s prideful heart. God needed to separate that which was not conducive to David’s growth from the things that were.

The moment you decide to step onto the threshing floor, you are in the center of God’s will surrounded by a hedge of protection. This is where the plague stops and God begins to work within you. Sometimes you may want to rush the process of being molded and built up but it takes work. It takes willingness of heart and spirit in order to be developed into who God has called you to be. This does not mean you aren’t who God has created you to be right now because you are. However, this life is a daily process of looking more like Jesus. Part of this process is replacing lies with God’s truth. It’s important to be content in the process allowing God to build, to add, to take away, that you would be a mighty servant for the kingdom of God. The work doesn’t feel good because you are stretched and challenged but who you are developing into is part of holy surgery.

What God does in you on earth is for the development of others. It’s for kingdom purposes. Wherever you are right now maybe you are in a graduate program, a higher position at work, unemployed, or leading ministry, God is using it to prepare you for future preordained plans. His grace is meeting you right where you are to tap into those areas that need exposure for healing and molding. This does not mean God saves you to change you. The transformation is what comes out of the relationship with God because of His grace. Love is the activator for the grace of God.

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**Reflection Question: Where do you see the grace of God in your life?**

## A Prayer for you from me

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Father God,

I lift up the person reading these words. God, you know them by name and you know the smallest detail about them. Lord, I feel you calling them forth into your presence. I know your very breath is what sustains them. So I boldly lift them to you knowing that you have them in the palm of your hands. Your hands have crafted them. Your words have brought them into existence. Your thoughts are so great for them they cannot even be numbered. So I come on their behalf and I ask they would grow in wisdom and in love. I ask they would reverence you and in return, your love would be poured into their hearts. I ask this love would posture their hearts toward you and be inclined towards the needs of people. Lord, fill their hands beyond measure with what they need to respond to the cries of your people. God, I even go as far as asking you to break their hearts for what breaks yours that they would be moved to compassion and take risks as Jesus did.

God, would you be with them all days of their lives; that your presence would always go before them as they walk to what you have called them to. As they boldly live loved in your love, place your full armor upon them Lord; that they would always be ready at your word and protected by your Holy Spirit.

I ask you would enrich them with knowledge of who you are in their lives. Take them deeper like never before. Grant them a relationship with you so intimate and so personal that they would smell like you, look like you, talk like you, and fully represent you.

I pray whatever they need, wherever they are lacking that you may supply in abundance. I ask when doubts come that your peace may flood their spirits. I pray for their heart God. I ask that you would filter all things that come up against their hearts for your word says that no weapon forged against them will prosper. I pray when the grieving comes because I know it will, that you may carry them and grant them your strength. Sustain them by your grace.

Lord, anoint them with your holy oil and help them to carry your promises to fruition. I ask you would heal them in those places only you know. I ask they would walk boldly into freedom.

Abba, as I end this prayer, I pray it never expires. I pray for their families and their loved ones; that you may bring salvation where it is needed and that your blessings would be abundant in their lives. Rise up your soldiers for such a time as this.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.