

A SEVEN-DAY DEVOTIONAL

It Is Okay to Not Be Okay

Gentle readings for heavy seasons

Simplify to Glorify

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to Use This Companion

If today is heavy, you do not have to make it lighter to be here. You can come exactly as you are.

This is a small companion for seven days. One short reading a day. There is nothing to achieve and no feeling you are required to produce. If all you can do is read one line and close the page, that is enough.

Depression can make faith feel far away. You may not feel God right now, and these pages will not tell you to feel something you do not feel. They will only sit with you and point, gently, to what remains true even on the days you cannot sense it.

Read slowly. Skip a day if you need to. Come back when you can. He is not keeping score, and neither am I.

You Are Allowed to Be Here

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.

Psalm 23:4

REFLECTION

Notice that the psalm says through the valley, not around it. There is no detour offered here, no promise that the dark place will simply vanish if you believe hard enough. Think of someone hiking a long trail through a deep canyon. They cannot teleport to the far rim, and pretending the canyon is not there will not help them. The only way forward is through, one step at a time, with a guide who knows the path. The promise is quieter and steadier than a rescue from the valley. You are not walking it by yourself. You do not have to pretend it is something prettier than it is, and you do not have to find the bright side before you are allowed to be honest about how hard it feels. You can call it what it is. You can name the shadow without losing your faith. And even here, in the lowest part of it, you are still held by a God who walks at your side and matches His pace to yours. He does not drag you forward or shame you for being slow. He simply stays, all the way through.

A SMALL STEP

You do not need to climb out of the valley today. You only need to take the next small step inside it, knowing He is there.

PRAYER

Lord, I am in a low place, and I cannot see the way out. I am not going to pretend otherwise, and I am tired of pretending I am fine when I am not. Thank You that I do not have to climb out of this valley before I am allowed to come to You. Thank You that You are here in it with me, walking at my pace instead of rushing me. Help me to be honest with You about how heavy this is. When I cannot feel You, remind me that feeling and truth are not the same thing, and that You are near whether I sense it or not. Steady me for the next step, and only the next step. I do not have to see the whole way out today. I only have to know You are walking beside me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

When You Have No Words

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

Romans 8:26

REFLECTION

Some days prayer feels impossible. The words do not come, or they feel hollow and far away when they do. If you have been carrying guilt about that, set it down for a moment. Think of a young child who is crying too hard to explain what is wrong, and a parent who somehow understands anyway, gathering what the child cannot say into words of their own. That is what this verse describes. When you cannot pray, the Spirit prays for you. Your silence is not a failure of faith, and your wordless groaning is not God's disappointment. It is a prayer He hears completely, even when it has no shape you could put into a sentence. You do not have to perform a prayer today or find the right words to be heard. You only have to let yourself be carried by One who already knows the full weight of your heart and is speaking on your behalf, in a language deeper than your own exhaustion.

A SMALL STEP

If words will not come, you can simply sit and breathe. Let your silence be the prayer. He is already translating it.

PRAYER

Father, I do not have the words today. I have sat down to pray and found nothing, or found only silence, and I have wondered if that means something is wrong with my faith. Thank You that it does not. Thank You that when I cannot form a single sentence, Your Spirit is already speaking for me, gathering what I cannot say. Thank You that You understand the cry underneath my silence the way a parent understands a child who is crying too hard to talk. Carry what I cannot put into words. Hear the prayer I do not know how to pray. Let me rest in knowing that my wordlessness has not left me unheard, and that You are near even when I have nothing to offer You but my tiredness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

He Is Near to the Brokenhearted

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and He saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:18

REFLECTION

We often imagine God is closest when we feel strong and faithful and full of light. We picture Him drawn to our best days, our steadiest prayers, our cleanest moments. This verse says something almost the opposite. Think of how a parent moves through a house full of children, but the moment one of them falls and starts to cry, that is the child they go to first. The hurt is what draws them. God is near to the brokenhearted in the same way. His nearness is drawn to the very place you feel least worthy of it, the place you might be tempted to hide. You do not have to clean yourself up first. You do not have to feel better, or sound more grateful, or manufacture hope before He will come close. The breaking itself is where He draws near. If your spirit feels crushed today, you are not far from Him at all. You are standing in the exact spot where His presence is promised to be closest.

A SMALL STEP

You do not need to hide your brokenness from God. It is the place He has promised to be closest.

PRAYER

Lord, my heart feels broken and my spirit feels low, and part of me has wanted to hide that from You, as if I should wait until I am stronger to come close. Thank You that this verse says the opposite. Thank You that my brokenness is not something that pushes You away, but the very thing that draws You near, the way a parent runs first to the child who has fallen. Help me to stop hiding the parts of me that feel crushed. Come close to me here, in the place I least expected You to want to be. I do not have to perform or improve to earn Your nearness. Let me simply rest in the nearness You have already promised, exactly as I am, exactly as low as I feel. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Rest Is Not Failure

Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

REFLECTION

Depression carries a particular kind of tiredness, the kind that sleep does not fix and rest does not seem to touch. It is a weariness in the bones and the spirit at once. Think of someone carrying a heavy bag on a long walk, who has held it so long they have forgotten they are allowed to set it down. Their shoulders ache, but the bag has started to feel like part of them. Notice that Jesus does not meet that weariness with a list of things to do or a correction about your effort. He meets it with an invitation to come and rest. He does not say try harder, pray more, or summon a faith you cannot find. He says come, just as you are, and let Me carry what you cannot. Rest is not you giving up or falling behind. Rest is you trusting that He is strong enough to hold what has become too heavy for your own hands. You are allowed to set the bag down. You are allowed to simply be carried for a while.

A SMALL STEP

Let yourself rest without guilt today. Resting in Him is not quitting. It is a quiet act of trust.

PRAYER

Jesus, I am weary in a way that is hard to explain, the kind of tired that sleep does not reach. I have been carrying this so long that I have forgotten I was ever allowed to set it down. Thank You that You do not meet my exhaustion with a longer list of things to do. Thank You that You simply say come, and that You do not ask me to be stronger or more faithful before I am welcome. Help me to believe that rest is not failure, that laying this down is not quitting but trusting. Take the weight that has become too heavy for my hands. Let me lean into the truth that You are strong enough to carry what I cannot. Teach me, even today, how to simply be carried for a while. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Your Tears Are Seen

You have taken account of my miseries; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book?

Psalm 56:8

REFLECTION

There is a strange loneliness in sadness that no one else seems to notice. The tears that fall when you are alone, late at night or in the quiet of an ordinary afternoon, can feel like they disappear into nothing. Think of a keepsake box where someone saves the small things the world would throw away, a ticket stub, a handwritten note, a pressed flower, because to them those things are precious. This verse says God keeps your tears like that. He has taken account of every one and gathered them as if they are worth saving, worth remembering. Nothing you have wept has gone unseen or unrecorded, and nothing has been dismissed as too small to matter. Your sorrow is not invisible to the One who made you. If today is a day of quiet tears, the kind you do not even try to explain to anyone, know this. They are not falling into emptiness. They are held and counted by a God who treasures even this part of you.

A SMALL STEP

If tears come today, let them. They are not a weakness. They are seen and kept by God Himself.

PRAYER

Father, sometimes I feel like my sadness goes unnoticed, like the tears I cry when no one is around simply disappear and mean nothing. Thank You that this verse tells a different story. Thank You that You keep my tears the way someone keeps the most precious things in a keepsake box, that not one of them has fallen without You seeing it. Thank You that my sorrow is not too small or too repetitive to matter to You. Help me to stop believing the lie that my pain is invisible. When the tears come today, let me know that they are not falling into emptiness, but into the hands of a God who treasures even this part of me. Let me feel seen by You in the places I have felt most alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.

One Day at a Time

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:34

REFLECTION

When you are in a hard season, the future can feel like a weight too large to lift. Imagining all the days ahead at once, stacked end to end, can be enough to flatten you before you have even gotten out of bed. Think of trying to carry a month of groceries inside in a single trip. You would buckle under the load and drop all of it in the driveway. But carried one bag at a time, the same weight becomes possible. Jesus offers that gentler way to live. He asks you to hold only today, and to leave tomorrow in His hands, where it has always belonged anyway. You do not have to figure out how you will survive the next month or the next year. You do not have to solve the whole road at once. You only have to get through the hours directly in front of you, and you do not have to get through them alone. Today has enough in it. Let tomorrow keep its own troubles until it comes.

A SMALL STEP

Do not carry tomorrow today. Ask God for grace for these next few hours, and let that be enough.

PRAYER

Lord, the future feels too heavy to hold. When I try to imagine all the days ahead at once, I buckle under the weight of them before the day has even begun. Thank You that You never asked me to carry it all in one trip. Thank You that You ask only for today, and that You hold tomorrow in Your hands where it belongs. Help me to set down the months and years I cannot control and to take only the next few hours. Give me enough grace for right now, and trust that there will be more grace waiting when right now becomes tomorrow. Quiet the part of me that races ahead into every worst case. Keep me here, in the only day I have actually been given, with You beside me in it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Held When You Cannot Hold On

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

REFLECTION

On the hardest days, you may feel like your grip on faith is slipping, like you are barely holding on by your fingertips. This verse offers a quiet and steadying relief. Think of a small child asleep in a parent's arms. The child is not gripping anything. Their hands have gone loose in sleep, and yet they do not fall, because they are not the one doing the holding. It is not your grip on God that keeps you. It is His grip on you. Read the long list again and notice what is not on it. Your weakest day is not on it. Your numbness is not on it. The distance you feel is not on it. Not the depression, not the silence, not the days you cannot pray or believe or feel anything at all. None of it has the power to separate you from His love. When you cannot hold on to Him, He is still holding on to you, and nothing in all of creation can loosen that hold.

A SMALL STEP

You do not have to hold on tightly today. You are held by a love that does not let go, no matter what.

PRAYER

Father, I feel like I am barely holding on, like my grip on faith has worn down to my fingertips. I have been so afraid that if I let go, even for a moment, I will fall away from You. Thank You that my place in Your love does not depend on the strength of my grip, but on Yours. Thank You that I am like a sleeping child whose hands have gone loose, held safe not by my own effort but by the arms around me. When I cannot pray or believe or feel anything at all, hold me anyway. When the depression tells me I have drifted too far, remind me that nothing in all of creation can separate me from Your love. Hold me when I cannot hold You. Keep me when I have no strength left to keep myself. In Jesus' name, Amen.

A Word as You Close This

You reached the end of seven days. In a heavy season, that is not a small thing. Notice it gently, without pressure to feel proud or fixed.

Nothing here asked you to be better than you are. Depression is not a faith problem, and it never was. Whatever you are carrying, you carried it here in the company of a God who stayed close the whole way.

If these days helped even a little, come back to them. Read the one you need most. Let it sit with you again.

He is near to the brokenhearted. He hears the prayers you cannot say. He keeps your tears. He holds you when you cannot hold on. All of that is still true tomorrow, and the day after, and every day you are in this valley.

You are not alone here. You never were.

With grace, Simplify to Glorify

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