

lighthearted

100-DAY
DEVOTIONAL

—
ONE-WORD
PROMISES TO
LIGHTEN YOUR
LOAD AND LIFT UP
YOUR HEART
—



Susie Crosby



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Susie Crosby

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To my guys—Bob, Andy, and Ty.
You are three of the most amazing examples of how God keeps
his promises to me. I love you with all my heart.

To Jesus—I am in awe of your faithfulness, your kindness,
and your divine power. Thank you for inviting me into this
amazing life with you.

*His divine power has given us everything
we need for a godly life
through our knowledge of him who called
us by his own glory and goodness.
Through these he has given us his very
great and precious promises,
so that through them you may participate
in the divine nature.
(2 Peter 1:3–4 NIV)*

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Introduction

The photograph that inspired the title of this book was taken by my grandpa at our family beach cabin. It's five-year-old me floating on an inner tube in the salt water wearing my favorite swimsuit and a pair of old canvas tennis shoes. My one-tooth-missing, sparkling-eyed smile takes me back to simpler times when I didn't have a care in the world.

I was *lighthearted*: free from care, anxiety, or seriousness. Cheerfully optimistic and hopeful.

Sometimes I really miss those days.

Life seems extra stressful now, with so much anxiety and negativity all around. The threats of this dangerous world seem closer, relationships are more difficult than ever, and our problems seem to come in multiples. Our tender hearts get weighed down by all the loss, fear, shame, hurt, and worry.

Wouldn't it be refreshing to be able to get on the inner tube and float for a while? To experience deep, lasting peace and real, life-giving joy in the midst of all the heaviness?

Jesus is inviting us to this.

In 2 Peter 1:3–4 (NIV), we read that his power gives us *everything we need* to live life with him. My favorite part of this passage tells us that he has given us “great and precious promises,” so that we may share in his divine nature.

His great and precious promises will hold us up.

I wrote this devotional because I often need help remembering these promises. Maybe you do, too.

As you journey through this book, you will find that it is organized by the heavy emotions we experience. Each section offers several devotions based on scriptural promises to remind us of God's trustworthiness, his power, and his overwhelming compassion for his people. Each devotion

contains a **key word** that is connected to biblical truth. You will be encouraged to READ, REFLECT, and REMEMBER the promise that stands no matter what is going on around or inside of you.

You may want to read the devotions through from Day 1 to Day 100, or you may choose to turn directly to the section that promises God's help for the emotion you are currently feeling. My hope is that you will do both, so I have included a quick reference guide in the back of the book listing the promises by theme.

Even through the deepest, roughest waters of this life, our God is faithful to keep his promises to us. When difficult and overwhelming situations threaten to take us under, his words will keep us afloat.

Jesus is offering to lighten your load and lift up your heart today.

My prayer is that you will let him.

With love,

Susie

Promises
for When
You Feel



Afraid



God Will **HOLD** on to Us

Key word **hold** (*verb*): to bear the pressure of; to support, to grasp

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.”

Isaiah 41:10

READ

God knows us so well.

He knows that one of the emotions we struggle with much of the time is fear. Sleepless nights, bouts of high anxiety, and even panic attacks are happening more and more to the people I love.

When we are in the grip of fear, he reassures us in this promise that we are not alone. **“I am with you,”** he says.

But what about the heaviness of dealing with long-term fear? Many of us feel an underlying apprehension that causes us to focus on what might go wrong or to always imagine the worst-case scenario. We live with a sense of helplessness that never goes away. The difficulty we have in just trying to get through a day in this unpredictable world is paralyzing.

“Do not be afraid,” God tells us here. **“I am your God.”**

God doesn’t want us to be bound by fear. He knows how much it hurts us and how it keeps us from experiencing the freedom and victory of his abundant life.

And he really doesn’t want us to worry.

But worry creeps into most of our hearts every day. We worry about ourselves and about the people we love. We worry about health, safety, and the future. We worry about things we have control over and things we don’t. We worry about things that could really happen and things that probably never will.

Underneath it all is the terrifying question: *Can we handle what comes next?*

What if we can’t?

God promises, **“I will strengthen you.”**

He will give us his energy and the stamina to keep going. He will sustain us with his power and make sure we have all the resources we need to get through the hardest things.

God promises, **“I will help you.”**

He will protect us, he will bring light into a dark and confusing time, and he will give us comfort. He will help us in exactly the ways we need it, and he will never leave our side.

And then he promises this: **“I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.”**

Not only will he give us his strength and help, but he will **hold on to** us. In some translations of the Bible, the word used here is **uphold**.

Strong’s Concordance defines **uphold** this way: *to sustain, to keep fast, to stay.*¹

To sustain: When the rug has been pulled out from underneath our feet, he will support us and be our place to stand.

To keep fast: When our minds are slipping down the slope of worrying about things we can’t control, he will help us focus on his truth and cover us with his peace.

To stay: When we feel surrounded and it is all too much, he will grasp our hands and pull us closer to him.

And right there in his hands, we will be able to handle whatever comes next.

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are with me when I struggle with fear. Please help me remember that my help and strength come from you. Thank you that your mighty hand is holding mine right now. Amen.

REFLECT

In your journal, write **Isaiah 41:10** in your own words.

What does this promise reveal to you about God’s character?

What’s one thing you can do today to better let Jesus hold you in your fearfulness?

REMEMBER

In your journal, write the keyword (or a different word) you want to focus on in this verse. How will it help you hold on to this promise?

Draw an image to remind you that God will hold on to you today.

Jesus REACHES out His Hand to Us

Key word **reach** (*verb*): to stretch out, extend; to touch or grasp

But when he saw the strength of the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately, Jesus reached out his hand, caught hold of him . . .

Matthew 14:30–31

READ

Jesus had just said to his disciples, "Have courage! It is I. Don't be afraid" (v. 27). It seems like he had to say this often. So did almost every angel who greeted someone with a message from God. Hmm. Seems like those of us who live with fear and anxiety are in good company.

One of our relatable companions in this struggle is the disciple Peter.

In this story, Jesus is walking on the water through a terrible storm toward his disciples in a boat. This has all the makings of a panic situation—an unexpected, dangerous storm with a ghostlike figure approaching.

Where is he? Is that Jesus? I'm not sure.

Peter and the other disciples become convinced that it is Jesus, and he doesn't seem one bit worried about the strong winds or the crashing waves. So Peter asks Jesus to call him to walk on the water, too. When Jesus does, Peter gets out of the boat and begins to walk to Jesus. He is doing fine until he takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses on the storm.

I'm trying to be brave, but these waves are so high. And this wind is out of control! Jesus, save me!

Jesus reaches out his hand to Peter and saves him from drowning. They both get into the boat, as Jesus calms the storm *and* Peter's heart.

What just happened? That was terrifying. I actually walked on the water for a few steps. But then I didn't see Jesus anymore. I started going under, and Jesus had to catch me.

Sometimes we are so much like Peter.

A storm comes out of nowhere. The panic starts to rise. It looks and feels like we are going to be overtaken. We think we are going down. Is that Jesus coming toward us?

It is Jesus! Here he comes, reaching out his faithful, steady, loving hand. We can reach out of our fear for a moment and grab on to him. We can hold onto what we know of his faithfulness, his power, his goodness, and his truth. Even if the wind doesn't stop and the waves start to pull us under, we don't have to stay in the panic.

Jesus reaches out to catch us and save us every time. Through the voice of a friend, the perfect song, a breath of fresh air, the warmth of the sun, or one of the millions of creative ways he knows will calm us. Whether the storm is short-lived or much longer than we ever thought it could be, we are safe because he is always right there—reaching out his hand and helping us back into the boat. With him.

Dear Jesus, I'm scared and looking for you. Please help me see you coming toward me, reaching out your hand in comfort and strength. Thank you that nothing is too hard or too scary for you. Amen.


 REFLECT

In your journal, write **Matthew 14:30–31** in your own words.

How would you explain this Scripture promise to a young child who is feeling **afraid**?

What is crashing around you that you can look for Jesus's hand to reach through?


 REMEMBER

In your journal, write the key word (or a different word) you want to focus on in these verses. How will it help you hold on to this promise?

Draw an image to remind you that Jesus is reaching out to you.

God Is Our REFUGE

Key word **refuge** (*noun*): shelter or protection from danger or distress; haven, retreat, sanctuary

God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble.

Psalm 46:1

READ

Kids have so much fun building forts out of sofa cushions and blankets. When ours were little, we would come home from date night to a living room full of every blanket in the house, cushions and pillows everywhere, and giggling boys. I remember building them when I was younger, too. Being covered and protected in these cozy shelters gave me a deep sense of security mixed with the excitement of being hidden from view.

Maybe that's what *refuge* means. Surrounded yet incredibly free at the same time.

A refuge can be as protective as the cave King David hid inside, a building downtown with a free bed on a cold night, the spare room at a friend's house, or the keep of a castle. Refuge can also be as peaceful as a bench by the water, a walk in the woods, a cup of hot tea, or a few minutes of solitude in a busy house before the day begins.

We all need a peaceful, protected spot to retreat to, a place where we can be taken care of and strengthened so we can make it through the hard stuff. But we don't live in a castle, we can't always get outside to a peaceful spot, and we are probably a bit beyond the age of making forts with the couch cushions. Places of refuge are sometimes hard to find.

But Jesus isn't. He is right here.

I love thinking of Jesus as our refuge. Our shelter, our retreat, our hiding place away from all the demands and pressures and worries of each day. This promise reminds us that he is ever present. He is everywhere we are and everywhere we're going. Just knowing that we can say his name anytime and picture him ahead of us, behind us, and all around us can give us strength and calm. Sometimes it can even give us that almost giddy, hiding-in-the-sofa-cushions feeling of freedom and fun.

Whether we are in a time of crisis or just dealing with everyday stress, let's remember that we have an arms-open, mercy-providing, fiercely protective God. He welcomes us in, wraps us up in his protective care, and breathes into us the restoration and the refreshment we so desperately need.

Dear Jesus, my heart doesn't feel secure, and I want to find my peace in you. I need to feel your strong protection and your unconditional love. Thank you for being a safe place for me no matter where I am. Amen.


 REFLECT

In your journal, write **Psalm 46:1** in your own words.

Look up this verse in a few other Bible translations or paraphrases (<https://www.biblehub.org> and <https://www.blueletterbible.org> are two online resources you can use to do this). Write what you notice.

What kinds of things make you want to hide? How can this promise help you in your fear?


 REMEMBER

In your journal, write the keyword (or a different word) you want to focus on in this verse. How will it help you hold on to this promise?

Draw an image to remind you that God is a refuge for us.

What are the words you hold in your heart?

Are words like *afraid, discouraged, lonely,*
and *overwhelmed* weighing you down?
Do words like *shame, doubt,* and *heartbreak*
hover overhead like a dark cloud?

In the heaviness of life, we often forget that Jesus promises us his uplifting peace and presence no matter what we are facing. We sometimes wonder if God's promises truly have the power to help us live differently, peacefully, bravely, *lightheartedly*.

Susie Crosby has written this refreshing *100-day devotional* to remind us that they do. *Lighthearted* will:

- * Equip you with many promises from *Scripture* for each hard emotion
- * Include a short meditation with a *keyword, prayer,* and some simple ways to *remember God's faithfulness* throughout the day
- * Offer compassion, strength, truth, and help by calling you back to Jesus

A lighthearted life with Jesus is truly possible if you take hold of his promises. Let this simple devotional help you do just that.



SUSIE CROSBY is the author of *Just One Word: 90 Devotions to Invite Jesus In* and the children's poem "Moon Wonder." Her greatest joy is sharing encouraging words with the people she loves. When she's not writing, she teaches physical education, music, art, and technology at a kindergarten school. Susie and her husband live in a seaside town in Washington State. They love to hike, kayak, paddleboard, and explore the islands in Puget Sound. They are huge Seattle sports fans, and their favorite thing is spending time with their two adult sons.

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