



**SNEAK
PEEK!**

Take a look
inside

Walking *in* Grace

2025 Daily devotions
to draw you
closer to God

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to *Walking in Grace 2025*! We're excited to greet you as you embark upon a devotional journey that we pray will inspire and encourage you to greater faith and closeness with the living God. This beautiful annual devotional tradition connects readers from all over the country and encourages so many in their daily faith walks. *Walking in Grace 2025* is filled with 365 all-new devotions, written to refresh and enliven you as you spend quiet solitude in God's presence each day.

The theme for *Walking in Grace* this year is a balm to our weary souls. We focus on "An Everlasting Love," one of God's attributes, taken from Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV): "The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.'" We see the many ways God's love, providence, and guidance cover our lives.

Brock Kidd shares the inspiring way he lives his life—as though everything were a miracle—and the encouragement that brings to him. Feeling stressed by the demands of ministry, Pablo Diaz experiences a perspective change when he watches some joyful children at play. Carla Hendricks blesses us with a beautiful story of remembrance about a beloved teenager she knew who tragically passed . . . and how God can offer comfort and hope even during heartbreaking times. Logan Eliasen recognizes that even a Christmas quarantined with a sick dog can be joyful and filled with the peace of Christ. Evelyn Bence rediscovers the joy of hosting and opening her home, and is inspired to gather more friends and serve her community after a long hiatus. Edward Grinnan reflects on the Golden Rule and reveals how good neighbors can become like family. A baking session with Ashley Kappel's daughter turns into an unexpected opportunity to witness Jesus's love. Vicki Kuyper's granddaughter lovingly reminds her how God views Vicki. Debbie Macomber recalls various waiting rooms she's spent time in and how God has provided for her in each one. One of Rick Hamlin's best friends, Jorge, leads Rick to reflect on the God-given gift of good friends.

We are delighted to bring many special series to you this year. Shawnelle Eliasen shares vulnerably about a new stage in her life—moving from full-time homeschooling to becoming a phlebotomist—in "When Change

Comes” as she discerns the sustaining comfort of the Lord during a time of intense transition. Jenny Lynn Keller writes with insight about “Life Lessons from the Beach” as God uses the beauty of the seaside to reveal his truths. Patty Kirk sheds light on little-known biblical characters to remind us how precious we are to God and the wisdom we can gain from these people in “Seemingly Insignificant.” Come along with Carol Knapp as she explores how twenty-first-century Christians need to be equipped when Jesus calls to us in “Journeying with Jesus.” Roberta Messner shares movingly about her experience of doubt during a time of medical difficulty and how God sustained her through His faithfulness. Gail Thorell Schilling walks us through Holy Week as she recalls her pandemic experience from Easter 2020 in “Sheltered in Grace.” J. Brent Bill ushers us into a reflective Advent season in his series, “Filled with Holy Anticipation.”

Jerusha Agen won’t be writing for us this year; we will miss her and thank her for all of the devotional stories and insights she has shared.

We are excited to introduce you to two new writers who are joining us in the 2025 volume: Lisa Livezey and Rachel Thompson. We hope you enjoy getting to know them and find inspiration in their warm, sincere offerings.

As you begin this new year, and new devotional journey, we pray you will experience God’s great blessing and promise of everlasting love in your life.

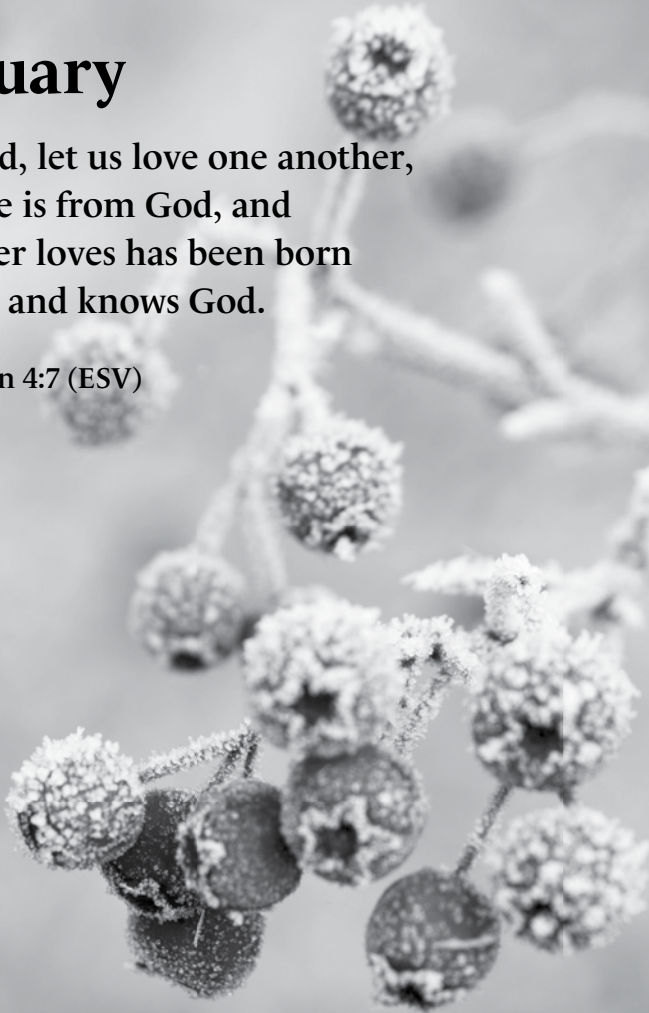
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The Editors of Guideposts

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January

Beloved, let us love one another,
for love is from God, and
whoever loves has been born
of God and knows God.

—1 John 4:7 (ESV)



New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1

Be still, and know that I am God . . . —Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

Walking in the park on this chilly New Year's morning, my mind is overloaded with to-dos, what-ifs, and if-onlys. Yes, I'm overextended. Running the orphanage and nonprofit we developed in Zimbabwe is a bit stressful. What if people stop giving or our budget becomes unmanageable?

Back to the present moment, my "praying tree" is in sight. I consider my to-dos. We have guests coming for a New Year's celebration. The menu's in my head, but I haven't begun preparations. And the table's not set. I really relish setting a beautiful table. And my friend, who is in the hospital, I haven't called her yet. By the time I reach the tree, I'm exhausted. Ridiculous, since, apart from worrying, I haven't done a single thing.

"God?" I ask. Sometimes He answers, sometimes He doesn't (at least not immediately). Today, He's quick on the draw.

"Be still." Oh dear, not the best answer.

"Be still . . . and know . . ." He continues.

I breathe deep.

"Be still . . . and know that I am God."

I exhale slowly. "Thanks, God, I needed that. My tendency to take over Your job is at times unrelenting."

Heading home, I call my friend as I walk along. I offer her the hope that a new year brings. Next, I create a visual image of the table, dishes, flowers. I rehearse the steps of cooking the meal. By the time I'm back in the kitchen, my work is half-done in the planning.

When the guests arrive, everything's ready. I relax in the stillness of my kitchen as I plate the food. *Knowing* . . . I smile to myself.

*God, please stay with me in the new year and
keep that "knowing" alive.*

—Pam Kidd

Digging Deeper: Genesis 18:14; Job 28:24

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
—2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)

As the world celebrated the arrival of a new year, my extended family pushed through bittersweet memories of my Uncle Verdell, who had passed two days before New Year's Day. This loss had hit us hard, since my uncle was my late father's last surviving sibling. Losing Uncle Verdell represented the loss of an entire generation of our family.

I contemplated ways to assist my cousin Monisha, who had been overwhelmed by the details of her father's funeral and burial. I offered to write his obituary. In preparation, I interviewed family members, read and highlighted a decades-old professional résumé of my uncle's, and extracted correlating facts from my father's obituary.

I'd been aware of my uncle's long career as an educator but was delighted to discover his early experiences using his hands for jobs in welding, carpentry, and bricklaying. I marveled to share that back in the 1980s, he had run for mayor in Baltimore, Maryland. It was also a joy to share the story of my parents playing Cupid by transporting a lovely widow to Virginia, where my father had grown up and my uncle still lived, to introduce her to my uncle. That blind date resulted in a wedding a year later and, down the road, my cousin's birth.

Writing my uncle's obituary proved therapeutic for me, helping me to celebrate his life while simultaneously grieving the loss. Though my family had lost an entire generation, we were encouraged by their legacy and impact. We were reminded that we would not be the parents, educators, and creatives we are today without the legacy of our ancestors.

*Lord, help me honor my ancestors through
a life of faith, perseverance, and love.*

—Carla Hendricks

Digging Deeper: Proverbs 13:21–25; Acts 20:24

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. —2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

She looks just like you.”

I hear the words often from people who think my daughter resembles me. Yet in my mind, she’s the spitting image of my mother-in-law. I’ve seen the photos of her from long before I married my husband and entered her life. I think she and my daughter share the same light behind their eyes, the same high cheekbones and stunning smile.

Despite how I feel about our physical traits, I know my daughter and I share the same mannerisms and character. That’s what people see. Our long strides, our posture, the way we hold our lips when we’re deep in thought or concentrating on a challenging task. We think alike about most issues, and since I’ve raised her by my side, we share the same morals and values.

Thinking about that, it struck me: people are seeing the overflow of our intimacy. I often tell my children to watch the company they keep because they will begin to emulate and resemble the people they spend the most time with. Our time devoted to personal Bible study, prayer, worship, and being the hands and feet of God shapes us into His likeness. When people see us, they should see Him.

Lord, let my life be a reflection of Your love. Let people see You when they see me. Change me from the inside out so that my life is a mirror of Your character. I pray that my faith journey is one that others will desire to have with You.

—Tia McCollors

Digging Deeper: Proverbs 13:20, 27:19; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10

... but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead. —Philippians 3:13 (NLT)

I stepped into my home office and stared at the pictures on my computer screen. Memories flooded my mind as each picture scrolled past, courtesy of my computer's sleep mode. Each photo recalled a certain time, place, and memory.

Pictures of the trip my husband and I took with a church group to Greece stirred my soul, seeing the smiling faces of friends. Each photo recalled a happy memory until I noticed several people who have since gone to heaven, making me want to go back to the time when they were still with us.

Many of the photos displayed trips we'd taken when Logan, my grandson, lived with us. The pictures of him remind me how much he's grown and how much I miss the little boy he used to be. And I want to go back to that time too.

Each of these memories reminds me that time has passed, and I regret not appreciating the experience back then. Now I face another new year, and I want to stop time and stay here before anything else changes.

A favorite movie scene comes to mind. In *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Indiana Jones needs to cross a deep gorge to get the sacred chalice that would save his father. There appears to be no way to get across. Yet realizing the challenge is a test of his faith, he steps off the ledge, and a bridge that hadn't been visible appears for him to cross.

Isn't that the way each new year is? In fact, every day is a step of faith, trusting God to get us through as He's done before. So, I step forward.

Lord, thank You for being with me, now and forever.

—Marilyn Turk

Digging Deeper: Joshua 1:9; Jeremiah 29:11

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. —Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)

Come into the kitchen,” my grandmother said. “I made coffee.” Though I hadn’t visited my grandparents’ home in a while, I knew the layout of their house well. I entered the kitchen and pulled two mugs from the cupboard near the sink.

My life had changed substantially in the past few years. I graduated law school. My parents sold my childhood home. But here, at my grandparents’ house, nothing ever seemed to change.

While my grandmother poured coffee, I looked out the window. I could see the pine tree my mother had planted as a girl and the garden where my grandparents grew tomatoes for canning.

But the corner of the yard was empty, save a dark ring of dirt. “The pool,” I said. “It’s gone.”

My grandma joined me at the window.

“Yes,” she said. “After all those years, it rusted through.”

I stared at the empty circle in the yard. As a child, I’d spent many summer afternoons in that pool. Now, fresh dirt was the only evidence it had existed.

“How do you feel about letting go of the pool?” I asked.

My grandma breathed deeply.

“Change is difficult,” she said. She handed me a cup of coffee. We both stared at the bare circle. Then she broke the silence. “I think I’ll plant a flower garden where the pool was,” she said.

I thought of green things growing in that empty place. And I began to understand that goodness can spring forth from even difficult change.

Lord, help me to embrace change as an opportunity to grow.

—Logan Eliassen

Digging Deeper: Isaiah 43:19; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Epiphany, Monday, January 6

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

—Psalm 47:1 (NRSVUE)

Do you ever ride the city bus? I sometimes do, because my wife has the car or because my youngest daughter thinks it's fun. She's still at that wonderful age when the world is full of joy and wonder, when she doesn't see inconvenience or grime. My little one likes to bounce in the rear seats and sit up high looking out the windows.

Today, we boarded the Milwaukee bus after school, heading to the museum downtown. It was very crowded.

An older woman, seeing that we couldn't sit together, grabbed my sleeve and insisted we switch seats with her. She was in a two-seat spot by herself. With a grateful smile, I took her up on the offer.

A few minutes later, we watched a man struggle to board the bus, his arms overfull with plastic bags filled with clothes and other things. The woman reached over and insisted he take one of her cloth bags to carry his stuff more securely. I watched as she helped him transfer his things from his ripped bag to her clean bag with good handles.

There are ordinary saints all around us. I saw one today on the bus. She reminded me of the feast of Epiphany, January 6, when wise men arrived to see the Christ Child in an animal trough. They wouldn't have come if they didn't have the wonder of a child, and their gifts, like those of the woman on the bus, were gestures of grace.

Lord, fill me with wonder. Show me Your face in the faces I see.

—Jon M. Sweeney

Digging Deeper: Romans 12:11–12

... And they will understand the loving kindness of the LORD.

—Psalm 107:43 (NKJV)

I yawned and stretched as I opened the cupboard door, glancing over the rows of coffee cups from which to choose. I sighed, missing my old favorites.

My morning coffee wasn't so much about the coffee as it was about creating an experience with God. For decades, I used the same tulip-shaped, oversize cups with cheerful snowmen on them—all year round. Following a process I had down to a science, I'd make a single cup of coffee stout enough to float a horseshoe, then, over the next couple of hours, I'd snuggle in my prayer chair, sipping the brew while I prayed and read His Word. But a couple of years ago—within two months—I'd accidentally broken both snowmen cups. Although I'd diligently searched stores and online, I hadn't been able to find any of the cheery tulip-shaped, oversize cups. I pulled a regular one off the shelf.

A couple of days later, while I was finishing up my once-a-week trip to town, I glanced across the street, and my favorite thrift store seemed to glow. Something urged me to stop. I shrugged my shoulders. I had a couple of extra minutes, so why not? To my surprise, on the top shelf in the housewares section were two tulip-shaped, oversize cups. My heart skipped a beat. The same artist had drawn the cheery snowmen, only these cups each had a word on them. One said "Faith" and the other "Joy."

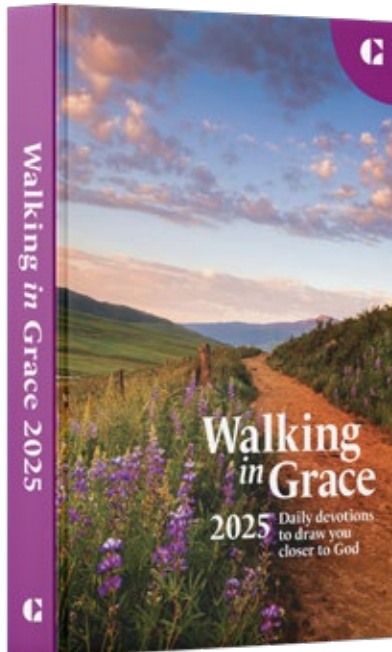
Lord, oftentimes tears leak down my face when You demonstrate how much You care for me—especially with the "little things."

I am so grateful. Thank You. Amen.

—Rebecca Ondov

Digging Deeper: Psalms 23, 103, 107:31

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