



IN THE MORNING
WHEN I RISE

*Life-Giving Conversations
with God*

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INTRODUCTION

DO YOU LONG TO HEAR God's voice more clearly? Do you wish he would speak into your current situation? It can be tempting to believe that God is silent about the struggles and challenges you face every day. However, nothing could be further from the truth. He wants you to tell him what's on your mind, and he wants to tell you what is on *his* mind. God speaks to us primarily through his Word, the Bible. To hear him, you simply need to take the time to quietly listen—to read his Word and hear him speak through it. This book offers a unique way to help you do that.

In the Morning When I Rise poses many of the questions you may want to ask God. Over the course of one hundred mornings, you are certain to find many questions that you would love to hear God answer. What's wonderful is how God answers each of these questions in his Word.

Each reading begins with two related questions. The answers are drawn directly from the Bible, often using several verses woven together from different

parts of Scripture. In some cases, the verses have been slightly paraphrased in voice or tense to keep with the theme of God talking directly to *you*.

God's Word is different and more powerful than any other book ever written. Because the Bible is a living document, conceived and inspired by God himself, it uniquely applies to each person who reads it, and God speaks uniquely to each individual through it—though of course there are also many truths and principles that apply to all people.

After you have spent time listening to God speak, pray the prayer that follows in each daily reading. These prayers are also taken directly from Scripture, and the wording has occasionally been adapted to fit the theme of your response to God. Let these prayers bless, inspire, and motivate you at the beginning of your day.

At the end of each reading, a short devotional thought or exercise will help you apply more deeply what you have read. This is the only part of the day's reading that is not adapted from God's Word.

Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of this devotional:

1. Read *slowly*. God's Word was never meant to be skimmed over. It is deep, rich, and worthy of your attention. Take the time to allow God's words to sink into your heart.

INTRODUCTION

2. Read *often*. We encourage you to stay committed to reading God's Word daily, because the more you read it, the more you will learn to recognize God's voice. Learning how to distinguish God's voice from your own, or from the voice of the enemy, has great power in your life.
3. Read *prayerfully*. Each morning, take time to settle into a quiet place, relax, and pray for an open heart as you read God's Word. Ask God to help you set aside distractions so you can be fully present and ready to receive his truth.

God has something to say to you about whatever issues and concerns you are facing. We pray that he will richly bless you as you ask him your questions, read his Word, and learn to recognize his voice.

In Psalm 27:8, God gives us an invitation: "Come and talk with me." May your heart respond as King David's did: "Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly" (Psalm 5:3). "Each morning I will sing with joy about your unfailing love. For you have been my refuge, a place of safety when I am in distress" (Psalm 59:16).

HE IS MAKING YOU INTO A NEW PERSON!

Lord, how does believing in you change my life?

Anyone who belongs to me has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! From my glorious, unlimited resources, I will empower you with inner strength through the Holy Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17; EPHESIANS 3:16

What does this process of becoming a new person look like?

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let me transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know my will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

ROMANS 12:2

What can I pray to truly transform my life?

Since I have heard about you, Jesus, and have learned the truth that comes from you, help me throw off my



old sinful nature and my former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew my thoughts and attitudes. Help me put on my new nature, created to be like you—truly righteous and holy.

EPHESIANS 4:21-24



Before you came to know Jesus Christ, you operated only in your own strength. When you began a personal relationship with Jesus, you became filled with the Holy Spirit, and the very life and power of God now dwells within you. God uses many avenues to transform your thinking and thus your actions, but you have to be open to his work and surrender to the process of change. Pray the prayer above with your hands open and lifted toward heaven as a symbol of your surrender to God's transforming work in your life.

THE FREEING POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Lord, why is the resurrection of Jesus essential to my faith?

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! And if your hope in Christ is only for this life, you are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead.

I CORINTHIANS 15:16-20

Jesus, how does your resurrection affect me personally?

I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. I died for you so that you who receive my new life will no longer live for yourself. Instead, you will live for me, who died and was raised for you.

JOHN 11:25-26; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:15



What prayer will help me affirm my belief in the Resurrection?

Jesus, you were shown to be the Son of God when you were raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. May I continue to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in you I will have life by the power of your name.

ROMANS 1:4; JOHN 20:31



Our problems on earth hold us in bondage, tempting us to live in fear rather than in peace. However, having the assurance of eternity with God frees you from living in fear. Focus on this truth today. Talk to God about an impossible situation, person, or problem in your life. Remind yourself that if God can raise his Son from the dead, then surely he can do the impossible in your life.

BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL OF YOUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

Lord, what does baptism represent?

You were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted my mighty power that raised Christ from the dead.

COLOSSIANS 2:12

How different will my life be after baptism?

Since you have died to sin, how can you continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when you were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, you joined him in his death? For you died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by my glorious power, now you also may live a new life.

ROMANS 6:2-4



*What can I pray to stay committed to
this new life I've been given?*

Wash me clean from my guilt, O God. Purify me from my sin. Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

PSALM 51:2, 7



Baptism is an outward symbol of an inward change. Baptism is important because it makes a public statement of your faith in Jesus. It is also important in the life of the church, as each baptism celebrates the power of the gospel of Christ to change lives. If you've been baptized, reflect on that moment. Has your life been different since then? How so? If you haven't yet been baptized, prayerfully consider whether you're ready for this next step of publicly confessing your faith.

WHERE REAL SECURITY COMES FROM

Lord Jesus, how does knowing you help me feel secure?

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. I give you eternal life, and you will never perish. No one can snatch you away from me. No one can snatch you from the Father's hand.

MATTHEW 7:24; JOHN 10:28-29

How do I deal with my feelings of insecurity?

Since you have been made right in my sight by faith, you have peace with me because of what Jesus Christ your Lord has done for you. Because of your faith, Christ has brought you into this place of undeserved privilege where you now stand, and you may confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing my glory. I am protecting you by my power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.

ROMANS 5:1-2; I PETER 1:5

What can I pray when the world makes me feel insecure and afraid?

Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate me from your love, God. Because of your grace, you made me right in your sight and gave me confidence that I will inherit eternal life.

ROMANS 8:39; TITUS 3:7



Governments shift and become unstable, relationships fall apart, and natural disasters threaten our homes. We each have our own fears and worries. But knowing God means we know the source of peace. You are tethered to God's love, which keeps you connected to him until you safely reach your eternal home. Tie a string around your wrist or finger this morning. When you feel insecure, look at the string to remind yourself that God is your Savior and your refuge, and nothing can snatch you from his hand.

PUT YOUR ENERGY TOWARD THIS

Lord Jesus, what drains my energy and distracts me from what's really important?

Don't worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that I can give you. Don't look at the troubles you can see now; rather, fix your gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things you see now will soon be gone, but the things you cannot see will last forever.

MATTHEW 6:25, 27; JOHN 6:27;
2 CORINTHIANS 4:18

What should I pour my energy into?

I am your God, the one and only. And you must love me with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. And love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these.

MARK 12:29-31

How can I pray when I need to refocus my energy?

LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is. I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize.

PSALM 39:4; PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14



We often spend our energy on what feels urgent, but how often do we spend our energy on things that matter for eternity? Look at your schedule for the week ahead. Where will the majority of your energy go? What distractions will keep you too busy to focus on loving God and others? As you look over the week ahead, ask God to help you focus on what's truly important from an eternal perspective.

SLOW DOWN AND SAVOR

Lord, why is it important to slow down sometimes?

Be still and know that I am God! I have made your life no longer than the width of your hand. Your entire lifetime is just a moment to me, and all your busy rushing ends in nothing. How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone. When Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile," he said this because there were so many people coming and going that he and his apostles didn't even have time to eat.

PSALM 46:10; PSALM 39:5-6; JAMES 4:14;
MARK 6:31

What happens when I take time out of my busy schedule to slow down?

Be still in my presence, and wait patiently for me to act. Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your

souls. Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength.

PSALM 37:7; MATTHEW 11:28-29; ISAIAH 30:15

What can I pray when I find myself always rushing?

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about you, LORD: You alone are my refuge, my place of safety; you are my God, and I trust you.

PSALM 91:1-2



When you rush through life, it's easy to miss out on all that God has waiting for you today. Intentionally fight against hurry by slowly reading the Bible verses on this page once again. Savor each word. Do you see anything you missed the first time you read through them?

GAINING CONFIDENCE STARTS HERE

Lord, how do I gain more confidence in myself, my faith, and my actions?

Trust in me with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Blessed are those who trust in me and have made me their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

PROVERBS 3:5; JEREMIAH 17:7; PSALM 1:3

How can I live each day with a confident attitude?

Because of Christ and your faith in him, you can now come boldly and confidently into my presence. Seek my will in all you do, and I will show you which path to take.

EPHESIANS 3:12; PROVERBS 3:6

*What can I pray when troubling times
shake my confidence in you?*

You are my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident. Teach me how to live, O LORD. Lead me along the right path, for my enemies are waiting for me. Yet I am confident I will see your goodness.

PSALM 27:1, 3, 11, 13



Do you see God as reliable? Do you feel you can count on him no matter what? Confidence in God grows as you step out in faith and find that he is there to catch you. Recount to yourself the times you've seen God come through for you. Where has he rescued you, blessed you, protected you, and provided for you? What is his track record in your life? How does this give you confidence in the situations you're facing today?