

The book cover features a central dark blue oval with a textured, watercolor-like appearance. To its right is a smaller, light brown oval containing a white leaf pattern. The background is a light cream color with several large, soft-edged abstract shapes in shades of yellow, blue, and teal. The title 'HOPE FOR HEALING' is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the dark blue oval.

HOPE FOR HEALING

*90 Moments with God for Physical,
Spiritual, and Emotional Wholeness*

DR. REGGIE ANDERSON
with JENNIFER SCHUCHMANN

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Hope for Healing: 90 Moments with God for Physical, Spiritual, and Emotional Wholeness

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Introduction

I have written these brief daily offerings to help you meditate on God's healing promises. My hope is that the devotions in this book will encourage you to pursue a closer relationship with him. I want you to see the many ways that he intervenes in the lives of the sick and the hurting, and the many ways that he heals, so that you will be inspired to have hope and faith—to know that God can bring healing to your life. I want you to see what I see every day as I care for my patients—namely, that God is alive and he is active in our lives. I want you to know how much he cares for you.

At the beginning of each devotion, I have included a verse or two of Scripture. But I encourage you to have your Bible handy so you can look up the verses in context to gain a more complete understanding.

Following the Scripture verse, each devotion has a story of healing. Sometimes the story is directly related to the verse; others are stories that came to mind after I prayed about the verse. My hope is

that the combination of these verses and stories will show you that our sovereign God is still very much in the healing business. I want to assure you that he loves you and desires for you to be whole and healthy—though sometimes we won't experience complete healing until we join him in our forever home. Even when healing doesn't happen as quickly or completely as we may desire, I hope these stories demonstrate that God is always present in your pain and suffering. My patients continue to amaze me with stories of how their faith has grown, even when their prayers weren't answered the way they hoped they would be.

At the end of each devotion, I offer a suggestion (Today's Rx) for something specific that you can do or consider that will make you feel better, grow stronger, or draw closer to our Father. Then I close in prayer.

The personal stories from my own life and medical practice are all true. But to protect the privacy of my patients, I have changed their names, circumstances, and other identifying information. After three decades of practicing medicine, I have seen many similar cases dozens of times, so some of the stories are composites of details from different cases. Conversations have been reconstructed based on my best recollections.

The medical information provided in this book is specific to the patients I saw in my office or in the emergency room. The treatments prescribed are not intended to diagnose, cure, or treat anyone else's

medical or health condition. It is not medical advice and should not replace the advice of your physician. Please consult your doctor to determine what is right for you and your situation.

And while I am adding disclaimers, it would be wise for you to consult with your pastor before following my spiritual advice, as well. After all, I'm not a theologian; I'm just a country doctor.

I hope the stories in this devotional will convince you that the healing hand of God isn't limited to the pages of the Bible. Our Lord continues to heal the sick and hurting today. I have seen his extraordinary work in my own life and in the lives of my patients. My prayer is that you will see God work in your own life, as well.

Dr. Reggie Anderson

Day 1

THE BEST TIME TO START IS NOW

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them.

Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body.

PROVERBS 4:20-22

Do you remember the last time you visited a doctor or a counselor? After discussing your ailments, the practitioner likely gave you a set of instructions to help you feel better.

When you left the office, you were committed to implement the recommended plan. But maybe that's as far as it went. Maybe life got in the way, and before you knew it, the doctor's advice had been shuffled to the bottom of your to-do list. A week later, you had forgotten you even had a plan. The advice that had once seemed important enough to consult with and pay a professional for had somehow slipped away.

The all-too-common pattern of wanting answers to our problems but never implementing them can also happen with God's Word. We go to him looking for wisdom and guidance, but even when we receive his instructions, we file them away for a day when applying them seems more convenient. But the right time never seems to come. We all have good intentions, but we're lacking on the follow-through.

We keep putting off until later what we should do right now. When we procrastinate, it often means we never get around to what is important.

If we really want the life and healing that God promises, we can't let his wise words slip away. If we lose sight of God's wisdom, it's worse than if we had never received it. We need to abide in God's Word, allow it to penetrate our hearts deeply, and put into action the things we've heard God say. Write down what God has said, and place reminders where you won't lose sight of them. That is how they will penetrate deeply into your heart.

TODAY'S RX

Has God asked you to forgive someone? Call that person now. Has God asked you to give something? Give it now. Has God asked you to show love to someone? Love that person now.

Lord, thank you for giving me wisdom and counsel through your Word. Help me to draw from it daily, impressing your instructions upon my heart and applying your words to the problems I face.

Day 2

DAYBREAK'S FRESH START

The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

Growing up on a farm, I learned that the early morning was the best time to get things done, before all the distractions of the day began to clamor for attention. As a doctor, I have continued that habit. For many years, I got up at 5:00 a.m. and drove twenty miles toward the eastern horizon, watching the sunrise and reflecting on how God's mercies are new every morning.

At the big-city hospital, I was usually one of the first doctors on the floor making rounds. This allowed me to get reports from the night shift nurses and greet the oncoming day shift. And because it was early in the morning, I also had the opportunity to speak with my patients as they woke up to hear about their dreams and how they had slept.

Medically speaking, the early hours of the morning are the most common time of day for a heart attack, stroke, or pulmonary embolism. This is due in part to low cortisol levels during the night and a sudden rise in blood pressure when the patient first awakens.

The greatest stories of God's mercy often came during the night, and I was first on the scene to get the full picture. Even though morning is a critical

time of day, it is also a time of joy, with the opening of new opportunities. The sunrise sheds light on the darkness of the night. Daybreak brings renewed hope of another day of healing.

TODAY'S RX

Watch tomorrow's sunrise; it's the sweet spot of the day.

God, thank you for each new day, for every breath that fills my lungs, and for every sunrise that reminds me of the hope I have in you.

Day 3

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.

JAMES 5:14

We've all had times when we've been sick. Whether we had a minor cold or something more serious, we learned how miserable we can feel when we're under the weather. With proper care and rest, we typically recover fairly quickly, and even those with chronic or debilitating illnesses would say they have good days along with the bad. But there's one thing that is always true: When we're sick, we want to feel better.

In today's key verse, James describes the importance of praying for healing when we're sick. Many Christian churches have a formal time for these kinds of prayers. Other churches may be less structured and more spontaneous as needs arise, but they are nonetheless committed to this practice. Having people pray for us when we're sick helps us to feel better. It's a sign that people love us when they will intercede with the Great Physician for our well-being. But prayers don't only help us to *feel* better; they can also help us *get* better.

In medical literature, there is scientific evidence that patients who have people surrounding them with love and prayer generally fare better than those who don't. Patients who have been prayed for recover

faster, report less pain, require less medication, and have fewer complications.

As a doctor, I've been at the bedside of many patients when elders from their church have come to pray for their healing. And I've personally seen many patients with severe illnesses recover and return home to their families and continue living fruitful lives.

I've also been at the bedside of many patients when prayers for healing were not answered as hoped, and we had to trust God for his higher purposes. But even when those illnesses ended in death, the process of praying brought emotional healing and comfort to those who were present. It's as if we were able to catch a glimpse of the patient's soul completely healed on the other side of heaven's veil.

TODAY'S RX

Whatever kind of healing you need—spiritual, emotional, or physical—ask others to join you in prayer today for your healing.

God, thank you for the comfort of bringing my requests to you and knowing that you hear me and love me. Where I am weary, please bring healing and strength, and help me to fully trust in you.

Day 4

STRONG AND COURAGEOUS FOR THE FIGHT

Be strong and courageous, all you who
put your hope in the LORD!

PSALM 31:24

“He just doesn’t seem as strong as before. He says it hurts to run and that he doesn’t feel well. He used to want to play outside all the time, but now he wants to stay in.”

Tommy’s mom was concerned. Tommy was only five, and he’d started losing weight and having night sweats.

“It’s the middle of winter, and he’s burning up every night. Last year he had strep. The year before that, both ears were clogged, and you sent him to get tubes in his ears. Do you think it could be one of those problems again?”

Tommy looked pale, and he was thinner than I remembered. When we weighed him, he’d lost five pounds—a significant amount in a child that young.

“Hmm. Let’s look and see.” I got my light out. “His throat looks good. Ears look good—the tubes have fallen out, and his tympanic membranes are normal.” I felt his neck and could tell that his lymph nodes were enlarged. They were also enlarged in his armpits. “Let’s get some lab work done and see if that will tell us anything.”

When the blood work came back, it gave us a

definitive answer—but one we had all hoped and prayed against. Tommy had acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), cancer of the blood and bone marrow. I joined hands with Tommy and his mother, and we prayed, “Lord, this diagnosis is not what we’d hoped for, but now that we know the answer, help us to fight this battle. Give us courage and strength, Lord, for our hope is in you.”

The next year was a difficult battle for both Tommy and his mother. The treatments seemed to last a lifetime, but he made it through. Tommy is now in remission with about an 85 percent chance of a cure.

In the midst of adversity, the Lord answered our prayers and gave both Tommy and his mom the strength and courage they needed during his fight.

TODAY’S RX

We all have areas in our lives where we must fight. Place your hope in the Lord, and ask him to provide you with the strength and courage you need to make it through.

Lord, sometimes the road ahead is daunting, and I’m overcome by the challenges I face. Help me to trust in you for courage and strength during these times of trial.

Day 5

PERSISTENCE IS NOT A PROBLEM

Everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

MATTHEW 7:8

“I’ve got a problem, and I was wondering if you could help me,” Drew said. “It seems kind of silly, but my wife—”

“Your problem is your wife?” I asked.

“No,” Drew said, laughing. “My wife thinks I may have a problem, but I’m not so sure. I’m here because she made me come, and I’m hoping you’ll tell me it’s not a big deal.”

“Sure. What’s up?”

“I have a spot on my back, near my right shoulder. My wife pointed it out a few months ago. I thought it had always been there, but she said it hadn’t. Now she thinks it’s growing, but I think it’s pretty much the same size—of course, I can’t see it that well because it’s on my back. It’s not painful or anything, but she won’t let it rest until I hear from you that it’s nothing to worry about.”

“All right, let me take a look,” I said.

I noticed the spot immediately. It had signs of melanoma—irregular borders, with different shades of brown and black.

“Well, Drew, I think your wife is right to worry

about it. I know you're a farmer, and farmers can get a lot of sun even when they're not trying. I think it would be wise for you to have a biopsy done."

I sent him to a dermatology department that specialized in melanoma. The report confirmed my initial diagnosis. Drew and his wife both came in to get the results. "We're going to storm the gates of heaven with our prayers," she said after hearing the news. She also wanted a list of the best oncological surgeons. "I'm going to call around and get as many answers as I can, and we'll just keep praying until God makes each step clear."

"Drew, it looks like your wife is looking out for you. Not only was she persistent about getting you in here, but I have a feeling she'll be even more persistent in her prayers for you."

TODAY'S RX

Is there something irregular in your life? Don't wait until it causes you pain; pray about it now. When it comes to prayer, persistence is not a problem.

God, help me to pray frequently and fervently, lifting my worries to you, knowing that you will hear me and answer me. Thank you for listening and keeping me under your watchful care.