

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

COMFORT

We all live busy, hectic, stressful lives and sometimes we would do anything to feel some peace, rest, and comfort. God has sent us the Comforter to give us peace. He promises to take away our weariness if we trust in Him. As you look through the scriptures this week, see how you can find comfort in your daily life.

DAY 1

ARE YOU WEARY AND BURDENED?

"YOU MAY READILY JUDGE WHETHER YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD OR A HYPOCRITE BY SEEING IN WHAT DIRECTION YOUR SOUL TURNS IN SEASONS OF SEVERE TRIAL. THE HYPOCRITE FLIES TO THE WORLD AND FINDS A SORT OF COMFORT THERE. BUT THE CHILD OF GOD RUNS TO HIS FATHER AND EXPECTS CONSOLATION ONLY FROM THE LORD'S HAND."

-CHARLES SPURGEON

New International Version

Matthew 11:28

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

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Jesus, I come to You right now. I am weary and burdened and I need rest. I take Your yoke upon me and learn from You. Thank You that because You are gentle and humble in heart, that I can find rest in You for my soul. And I praise You that Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light. I find comfort in Your promises to me. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.

REFLECT: Ponder the meaning of Jesus' yoke being easy and His burden being light. A yoke is a harness that an animal wears to be guided. Jesus tells us that we need to take His yoke, but that it is easy. He wants to train us, guide us and help us, but He says that it's a light burden. Can you trust Him to lead and guide you through each day, knowing that He will give you comfort and rest for your soul? He is telling you to come to Him. What a comfort that is. He is pretty amazing!

ACT: Make a list of all the burdens that you are carrying with you right now. Then give that list to the Lord, even read them out loud to Him and ask Him to take them from you and carry them Himself. Then thank Him for lifting your burdens, taking away your weariness, and giving you rest for your soul. Feel the Lord's comfort as you do this exercise. Do it again tomorrow and as often as you need to, until you truly feel peace, rest and comfort in Him!

DAY 2

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

"A CAREFULLY CULTIVATED HEART WILL,
ASSISTED BY THE GRACE OF GOD,
FORESEE, FORESTALL, OR TRANSFORM
MOST OF THE PAINFUL SITUATIONS
BEFORE WHICH OTHERS STAND LIKE
HELPLESS CHILDREN SAYING "WHY?"
-DALLAS WILLARD, *RENOVATION OF THE
HEART*

New International Version

Psalms 23: 1-4

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

DAY 2

PRAY: Oh Lord, You are indeed my shepherd and I thank You that You comfort me. This Psalm is like salve to my soul and I want to read it and say it again and again, as if it is brand new to me. Would You show me new and fresh, what this means and how You give me deep lasting comfort in my life because of Your promises? I want to fear no evil, even when experiencing difficult times, but embrace Your comfort instead, even when walking through the valley of the shadow of death. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever read through Psalm 23 and prayed through each sentence, one at a time, in order to understand it in a new way? It's a powerful Psalm and the promise of God's comfort is rich and true. Could it be that God might mean "green pastures" to be lying in bed sick or with a broken bone, or stuck somewhere without your cell phone? Could walking "through the valley of the shadow of death" be a broken relationship, losing a job, or having no money to pay rent? Do you see how relevant this Psalm is to your daily life? Notice how even a rod that pokes and a staff that guides can be used by God to give us comfort.

DAY 2

ACT: Psalm 23 is one of the most famous and powerful Psalms of the Bible. Jim and I said it to our boys every night before bed when they were little. Memorize and meditate on it if you don't already know it. You can write it on an index card and carry it around with you as you memorize it. If you do know it, then recite it out loud to someone else today to see how well you can say it. Having this Psalm in your heart and on the tip of your tongue will give you strength and comfort all the days of your life.



DAY 3

SHOUT AND SING FOR JOY!

"MY HEART, WHICH IS SO FULL TO
OVERFLOWING, HAS OFTEN BEEN
SOLACED AND REFRESHED BY MUSIC
WHEN SICK AND WEARY.

-MARTIN LUTHER

New International Version

Isaiah 49:13

Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth;
burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord
comforts his people and will have
compassion on his afflicted ones.

DAY 3

PRAY: God, I want to shout for joy and rejoice by bursting into song, for You comfort me and all Your people. Thank You that You have compassion on all of us, especially Your afflicted ones, and You care about every single person whom You've created. I need comfort when I'm scared, stressed, confused or angry and You promise me that I can turn to You for that comfort, and You have compassion on me when I am afflicted. I praise You and shout for joy, oh Comforter! I am rejoicing and bursting into song! Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever been so overwhelmed by God's love that you wanted to shout for joy? Can you imagine so much joy that the earth itself rejoices and the mountains burst into song? Now that's praise! A renown pastor and author, Jack Hayford used to go into his empty Southern California church sanctuary during the week and sing and dance to the Lord! He felt great joy and comfort in that private time of physical worship to the Lord. If we fully understood that the Lord personally comforts His people and has unconditional compassion on us, then we too would shout for joy, rejoice and burst into song! Can you do that?

DAY 3

ACT: Go to a private place right now and shout out to the Lord with joy or burst into song for God. Express your love and praise to Him through music, song, dancing or even shouting, and see if you experience something new in the presence of the Lord. Go ahead and try it. What you should feel is His comfort, His compassion, and His love. Shout with Joy to the Lord!



DAY 4

WE COMFORT THOSE IN TROUBLE

"WE WHO LIVED IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS CAN REMEMBER THE MEN WHO WALKED THROUGH THE HUTS COMFORTING OTHERS, GIVING AWAY THEIR LAST PIECE OF BREAD."

-VIKTOR E. FRANKL

New International Version

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

DAY 4

PRAY: Praise be to You, God the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, You the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. Thank You that You comfort me through all my troubles and in times of suffering. And then You let me comfort others who are in trouble, with the comfort that I've received from You. Lord, help me remember that though I share in Your sufferings, I also receive Your abundant comfort whenever I need it, through Christ Jesus. Thank You for always being there for me, in Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: It's important to realize that God comforts us, not only for ourselves, but so that we can then turn around and comfort others. God gives us everything we need so we can be ministers of the Gospel to other people. Are there people around you who need comforting and you never thought that you could be the one to comfort them? God tells us that our comfort abounds through Christ. Have you fully understood that before? How will that change your response to those around you who are going through hard, stressful, scary or painful days? Reflect on how you can share all that Christ has given you with the people in your life circle.

DAY 4

ACT: Reach out to someone today who needs comforting and offer the compassion and comfort that God has so abundantly given to you. Show that friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member God's comfort through your actions and words. Even if you don't feel like it, remember that God has given you enough comfort to give away to someone else. Let Christ's comfort overflow from you to someone you care about today!



DAY 5

WE GET BEAUTY FOR ASHES

"RELIGION WORKS. I KNOW THERE'S COMFORT THERE, A CRASH PAD. IT'S SOMETHING TO EXPLAIN THE WORLD AND TELL YOU THERE IS SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOU, AND IT IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT IN THE END. IT WORKS BECAUSE IT'S COMFORTING."
-BRAD PITT

New International Version

Isaiah 61:1& 2b-3

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and... to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

DAY 5

PRAY: My dear God, I want to experience Your Spirit upon me so that I can proclaim the good news to the poor, the captives and the broken hearted. I pray for the people in Hollywood who don't know You and proclaim freedom over them, in the name of Jesus. Please comfort all who mourn and let them see Your splendor. Bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. In Your righteous name I pray. Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on how God has given us the power to free the captives and comfort those who mourn. We are oaks of righteousness and we display His splendor! We can bring good news to those in our family, neighborhood, and even to those we don't know—even change the lives of media professionals by praying Isaiah 61:1-3 over them. Who can you pray for to receive a spirit of praise instead of despair? What captives can you set free?

ACT: Pray for one family member, one friend and one person in Hollywood who needs to be freed from some captivity, needs comfort, or who is lost and needs Jesus. Spend 10 minutes right now praying for these three people, these "oaks of righteousness" – whether they are Christians or not, and ask the Lord to fill them with His Spirit, to comfort them and to bestow on them the oil of gladness instead of mourning, through the power of the Spirit in you!

DAY 6

YOUR UNFAILING LOVE IS MY COMFORT

"IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL, KEEP GOING...THIS IS NO TIME FOR EASE AND COMFORT. IT IS TIME TO DARE AND ENDURE."

-WINSTON CHURCHILL

New International Version

Psalms 119:50 & 76

My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life... May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant.

DAY 6

PRAY: Lord, thank You that You comfort me in my suffering and that Your promise preserves my life. Oh Lord, may Your unfailing love be my comfort, according to Your promise to me, Your servant. And may I experience your comfort all the days of my life. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever physically experienced God's comfort? Have you ever literally experienced God preserving your life? Can you imagine that His love is so deep for you and so consistently strong and steadfast that it will never fail to comfort you. And know that this is not just a thought or a dream, but it's a promise from the living God, to you, His servant. His promise is literally preserving your life. Oh, may His unfailing love be your comfort!

ACT: Think about a time when you needed comfort. Did you feel it from God? If not, do you truly believe that He loves you so much that He promises to preserve your life and He is waiting to comfort you? Can you embrace His unconditional love right now, as a promise, that He will always be there for you, to personally comfort you? If not, then ask Him right now to reveal His love and comfort to you so dramatically that you will always know He's there and His promise is real. Now is the moment to stop questioning God's unconditional love for you!

DAY 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR COMFORTER

"I THINK ANYTIME IN SOMEONE'S FAITH JOURNEY, MY FAITH JOURNEY ALSO, YOU GO THROUGH DOUBTING... I THINK YOU KIND OF HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT, HONESTLY, JUST TO ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS... I MEAN, LIFE IS CRAZY, AND TO KNOW THAT, HONESTLY, A LOVING GOD IS WALKING THROUGH IT WITH ME IS VERY COMFORTING FOR ME."

-TONY HALE (ACTOR, COMEDIAN)

New International Version

John 14:26-27

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

DAY 7

PRAY: Holy Spirit, You are my comforter. I'm so grateful that the Father has sent You to teach me and remind me of Your promises and to give me peace. Thank You that You do not give me shallow promises or just a feeling of happiness, as the world gives, but You give me a deep peace in my soul, so that my heart is not troubled and I am not afraid. Oh Holy Spirit, fill me up with Your divine comfort that stays deep down in my soul. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on the Holy Spirit. He is the most intangible of the Trinity, but He's our comforter! He teaches us all things, reminds us of God's promises, guides us and encourages us. And that's comforting! He also leaves His peace with us, not as a temporary feeling, as the world gives, but as an eternal presence that never goes away. Because of the Holy Spirit in you, you never have to let your heart be troubled and you never need to be afraid. Doesn't that give you great, lasting comfort?

DAY 7

ACT: Have a time of silence right now to focus on just the Holy Spirit – not God, the Father, or Jesus, the Son, but just on the Holy Spirit, the Counselor and the Comforter. Talk to Him, experience His presence, listen to Him, thank Him for being all of these things: your teacher, guide, advocate, consoler, intercessor, the revealer of truth and your comforter. Get to know the Holy Spirit, who lives in you, much more intimately right now by spending time with Him, talking to Him, thanking Him, praising Him, listening to Him and feeling His presence and His peace. Your heart won't be troubled and you will not be afraid!

