



BHP TRAVEL

daily
DEVOTIONAL

BY COURTNEY WLAZLOWSKI AND
OTHERS, SPRING 2022

name

ABIDE IN LOVE

the herd
{1 John 4:16}

Congratulations! We said YES and God will use it all. Risk, fear, obedience, love, wonder and a desire to change to guide you into a healthier mind, body and spirit. This trip will shift your life. Refresh your life. Enrich one another's walk with God and give you an opportunity to grow closer to knowing more about Christ. Your openness and vulnerability will be the entrance God has to pour in. Get comfortable being uncomfortable. Good things are coming. They are already here. Already there. I am so proud to call you friends, willing to take the chance to love people you don't know and more than that, so proud to call you friends, brothers and sisters willing to learn the love of Christ and become more like Him.

Before we start scheduling or checking items off our lists each day, please use this devotional as a guide for focusing your mind and heart. Please pray that you would be willing to participate, ask for prayer, give prayer, offer to read scripture out loud and actively engage in fellowship. We will make our best attempt to gather in the morning and if the day doesn't allow, we will make time to gather at night.

Our time together for remembering is important. Friends and family back home, be participating, allowing each day to be different. Yes, this is your personal devotional to engage in how you see fit, but it is also time for intimacy, vulnerability and change. Take turns leading as you feel called.

A horse's herd is a family, a group of friends, with changing dynamics all the time. They travel with a pecking order, but a constantly changing one. Alpha horse, protector horse, settler and defender horses are a mix of mare, gelding and stallion running and operating together with roles always changing. In the wild, the outcast horse is typically seen roaming around alone and in turn, considered unhealthy. A reminder to not leave anyone in your herd out, you are good seekers, here to help heal and make others healthy in mind, body and spirit. Thank God we have each other.

Love you all,
Andra LaMarca

DAY ONE

the father will give you the HOLY SPIRIT

{find “Let there be” statements in Genesis 1 / read John 14:12 / Acts 1:1-10 / Luke 11:13}

Jesus knew firsthand the power associated with the Holy Spirit. I’m not talking about atomic power or even explosions on the sun. I’m talking about universe-creating power. When God said, “Let there be” (Genesis 1), He demonstrated a make-it-happen kind of power. All that power dwelled in Jesus, ready to be unleashed with just a word. It was limitless power, able to heal the sick, drive out devils, and calm storms. It was the same power that raised the dead body of Jesus back to life. In the Greek, it is called *dunamis* power. It’s where we get the word *dynamite*.

The Holy Spirit was given to Jesus so He could accomplish every assignment given Him. For us to truly be Christ’s followers and demonstrate the same works He did—and even greater works (John 14:12)—we must be empowered by the same Spirit. It is impossible for us to walk in the same anointing Jesus had without it. This is why Jesus insisted that the disciples not leave Jerusalem until they had received the promised Holy Spirit. While he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about” (Acts 1:4). Only after the Spirit came upon them would they receive *dunamis* power to take the gospel “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Just as the Father gave the gift of the Spirit to the Son and to Jesus’ disciples, He wants to give Him to us. If my young son asked me if he could drive a brand-new Ferrari, I wouldn’t grant that request. There is so little experience on his part to go with so much power. His maturity doesn’t match the privilege. Yet God knows exactly what He’s doing and gives us the Holy Spirit to grow us up in God. It is truly impossible to be a Christ follower without the Spirit, and the Father stands by, ready to give Him to all who ask.

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11:13)

PRAY SILENTLY. MAKE NOTE OF WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS FOR YOU TODAY.

// DRAWINGS // WRITINGS // WORDS //

the source of Jesus' power
{read Luke 4:14 / John 5:19}

If you've ever been to church or Sunday school or read the Bible, you're familiar with the miracles Jesus did while He was on earth. We know that not everything He did is recorded in the Word, but the gospels make it clear that His ministry included such amazing feats as raising the dead, healing the sick, delivering people from demons, and multiplying food. Have you ever wondered how He did those things? Yes, He was God, but what was the secret behind His supernatural abilities? Was it His divinity? What was the source of His power?

The Gospels tell us that Jesus had the Holy Spirit without limit and that He returned from the temptation in the wilderness full of the Spirit's power (Luke 4:14). The Holy Spirit was His secret!

In today's culture, it's virtually impossible to survive without Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi connects us to the world around us through messaging, emails, and social media. It's our access to the worldwide system of information through sites such as Google and Wikipedia. It has become almost as important as electricity or air conditioning. In a somewhat analogous way, the Holy Spirit was Jesus' connection, providing access to His Father, to His assignments, and to the power of heaven. Jesus did only what He saw His Father do first (John 5:19), and He could see that only because of the Holy Spirit.

Here's a question I've asked my kids: "If you had to go back in time several thousand years and could bring only one thing with you, what would it be?" They've said everything from a gun or knife to a car or plane. Once you play out all the scenarios, you realize what a difficult decision it would be. If you brought a car, you would eventually run out of gas. If you brought a gun, you'd run out of bullets. A book of ancient languages may be of some help, but who knows?

When Jesus came to earth, He basically left the most sophisticated society, the kingdom of God, and traveled into time with only one tool from that eternal realm to help Him navigate this world's craziness. That tool was His relationship with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was all Jesus brought with Him. With the Spirit's help, He had to fulfill every prophecy. He had to live a perfect, sinless life. He couldn't afford to make even one mistake. What a challenge! Still today, the Holy Spirit is Christians' only hope of fulfilling all the things we are created to do. We need Him not only to demonstrate God's supernatural power but also to love those around us the way Jesus wants us to. We need the Spirit to live in obedience to God's Word, resist temptations to sin, and even keep our mouths shut when we want to lash out. It's impossible to be a true disciple of Jesus without a deep relationship with the Holy Spirit.

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER:

Holy Spirit, help me pay close attention to the ways that You call me by name and draw me closer to You. And as You do that, show me how to live in a manner worthy of the calling You've given me. Help me to not do anything with selfish ambition, but instead, show me how to consider others as better than myself. Rather than seeking to immediately correct the wrongs I see in other people, let me first bring my concerns to You and allow You to direct my response. Let the conversations I have with others be filled with gentleness and respect so that nothing in my life detracts people from seeing You through me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY THREE

the Holy Spirit reveals truth
{read John 16:13 / John 8:32 / John 14:26}

In this day and age, we need truth in the worst sort of way. The current mantra seems to be “Don’t confuse me with the facts. My mind is made up!” A lot of erroneous teachings are out there, and people just soak them up. Information is coming at us faster than ever before.

The problem is, we don’t need more information. What we need is more truth. And who better to reveal truth than the Spirit of truth? Jesus said, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit authored the Scriptures. He inspired them. He illuminates and shines on them the light of understanding. This is why people who are not born again and do not have the Holy Spirit inside can read the Bible and get nothing or worse, come up with some strange doctrine. The Holy Spirit in us is the “it” factor.

Each day when I open my Bible to study God’s Word, I say, “Holy Spirit, reveal to me Your original intent when You wrote this scripture.” We all need to do this because people will come along with a myriad of theologies, opinions, and interpretations of Scripture. We need to seek the Author so He can explain to us the actual intent.

We can know the truth. We don’t have to be in the dark or be deceived. Jesus said, “and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32). The proof that something is truth is that it will set you free. If you’re not walking in freedom, then you haven’t taken hold of the truth.

For example, when you understand and apply the truth about God’s plan for finances, you start to be free financially. When you get hold of the truth about addiction, you begin to experience freedom from bondage that can’t be taken away. Living in this freedom has everything to do with soaking ourselves in God’s Word and letting the Holy Spirit help us. We may forget things we should know, “but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).

That’s a pretty big deal, if you ask me, because I desperately need that help. I need His still, small voice to illuminate the truth, to guide and encourage me, and to give me supernatural insight about various people and situations. I’m sure you do, too. And when you invite the Holy Spirit to work and move in your life, He’ll reveal truth to you in amazing ways

LET’S PRAY TOGETHER:

Lord, I ask that you give unto me a discerning Spirit so that I can make the right decisions at all times, that even when your instructions seem foolish I will obey them nonetheless, knowing that they will help me live directly in the center of your will. The book of Luke 2 tells us that Jesus grew in wisdom and stature. Heavenly Father, I therefore ask that you will not just give me the Spirit of wisdom but that you will help me to grow continuously in it, so that I will not fall out of your leading in all seasons of life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

DAY FOUR

the tree
{read Romans 8:32}

The life cycle of a tree has always fascinated me.

Watching them bloom in the spring with both elegance and delicacy and seeing them mature through the summer, growing bolder and stronger in color, all phases enlighten me.

When autumn arrives, I get to witness one of nature's more astounding views: the beauty of the trees preparing to release their leaves back to the earth.

Then, winter arrives and the trees seem to have lost most of their splendor.

But, I never worry about it returning.

Why worry about a season of emptiness when I know that new foliage will come in the proper season? Because of this certainty, I do not grieve the dying leaves of fall.

God is really smart. And I tend to see His genius most clearly in how He displays His majesty so purposefully through His creation. Besides being pleasant to the eye, the leaves of a tree also act as solar panels. They soak up sunlight that allows the tree to absorb nutrients and water through their roots. However, when the colder months come, the leaves would take up energy the tree needs to survive the cold. Instead of hanging on to what many perceive as the tree's glory, the trees willingly let go of their leaves.

They spend the early parts of the year preparing, gathering, and growing. Then, they willingly let go of what God has designed them to let go of. In the proper season, they rest.

If only I would always be as obedient and trusting as the trees.

I have to ask myself, if I am so confident in the trees blossoming again, why do I fret when God brings me to a 'dormant season'?

I know that the God of all provision has prepared the trees to both enter and endure the harsh cold of winter, so why would I not trust Him to do the same for His own children?

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

The hope we have in the trees is a small shadow of the hope we have in Christ. He has made His Body go from death to new life, from barren to producing good fruit in the proper season. I believe this, but sometimes I must cry "God, help my unbelief."

When I am brought to a dormant season, a season where it seems like there is more death than life, that there has been more taken than produced, it is easier than I like to admit to begin grieving. I start to grieve the all things I seem to have lost; understanding, endurance, joy, even faith, as if those things have died. But for those who are in Christ, death does not have the final say.

I do not grieve for the leaves of the fall because of my hope in the coming spring. I will not fret when God asks me to lay down parts of myself because my hope is not in the fruit itself, but the One who produces the fruit.

Love, Courtney.

DAY FOUR

// DRAWINGS // WRITINGS // WORDS //

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER:

God, You make all things beautiful in their proper timing. Nothing is too hard for You to accomplish! You are faithful to keep Your promises. But so often, I forget this and grow discouraged when my situations don't seem to change. In those moments, it's easy to forget that You are not done working. Through Your Holy Spirit, please change the way I think and behave. When I start to grow weary, help me to remember that You are with me, You are faithful, and You have given me everything I need to live a faith-filled life in this season, today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

the wildflowers

{read Matthew 6:29 / Matthew 6:29-33 / Psalm 139}

“Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these” (Matthew 6:29). This verse has often puzzled me. Maybe I am a bit dense or maybe it is immaturity, but when I would read Jesus’ words in Matthew 6, all I usually thought was “flowers don’t wear clothes.” And then like any ‘good student’, I pretended I understood, ‘praised’ God for His provisions, and moved right along.

It was not until I entered into a season where my physical needs were many and it seemed provisions were few, that I finally decided to ask Jesus what He meant. “I need clothing for this season. I am at the mercy of the elements, the storm, the scorching heat! Where is the splendor, my Lord?”

The longer I sat with God and meditated on this scripture, I had to ask myself what splendor meant to me. And one day, God, in His loving kindness, showed me my misunderstanding. Solomon was dressed in human splendor, the kind of splendor I often desire.

Clothes, walls, jewels- all crafted and remade by human hands. The flowers however- they display the splendor of a creator. No one can recreate the beauty of nature untouched by human hands. It’s why we spend so much money and time traveling to behold the ocean, the mountains, the forests- there is a splendor that cannot be adorned by human efforts. But of course, that does not stop us... me... from trying.

After considering all of this, I was reminded of Psalm 139 - “your works are wonderful, I know them well.” How often I have spoken these words, and how often have I not believed them.

By God’s mercy, I can look back and see my worry as evidence of my lack of faith in God’s wonderful works. I can look back on my desire for human splendor and see it as evidence that I do not trust God to give me what I need.

At times the declarations of my life have said:

“God’s works are wonderful- until His works are not my will. “

“God’s grace is sufficient- until I am no longer satisfied in my circumstances.”

“God’s word is truth- until my faith is tested.”

So when I worry about tomorrow, it is not because I do not know the future, but because I do not know if the future He has is the one I desire. Now I realize, it is at these times that I do not trust His wonderful nature is enough to fulfill His wonderful promises.

God’s workings are beautiful, because He is beautiful- even when His works and provisions come in splendor that I have not learned to admire yet.

If you continue reading, Jesus reminds His listeners to not seek the provision, but instead the ‘Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of these things will be added to you’ (Matthew 6:33). So, maybe I should focus less on seeking the splendor, and instead seek the one who is Splendid. I do know full well that God’s works are wonderful.

So why do I worry about tomorrow?

I am not sure I know the full answer to that question just yet. But I truly believe that as I continue to seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness, tomorrow will not seem so worrisome.

Love, Courtney

DAY FIVE

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER:

Heavenly Father,

When I feel crushed by my own worries,

Lift my mind and help me to see the truth.

When fear grips me tight and I feel I cannot move,

Free my heart and help me to take things one step at a time.

When I can't express the turmoil inside,

Calm me with Your quiet words of love.

I choose to trust in You, each day, each hour, each moment of my life.

I know deep down that I in Your grace, am forgiven,

restored by Your sacrifice,

You have set me free, like the wildflowers.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY SIX

the focus
{read Hebrews 12:1-2}

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

When my daughter turned three she was gifted a balance bike (a miniature bicycle without any pedals). The idea is that a child learns to balance first, making the transition to a bicycle quicker and easier. The thing is though, as with most new skills, learning to balance has its own challenges. When my daughter first started practicing, I would hold the handlebars of her bike and guide her, instructing her on the mechanics as I did all of the work of actually moving her forward. After she made progress, I let go of the bars, but kept my hands floating around her to catch her when her balance would fail. Soon, with my hands visibly close (even though I was not touching her) she was able to easily zoom forward. She was ready - or so I thought.

I took my place a few yards in front of her and called out for her to ride over to me. As soon as she started to go forward, she began looking all around her instead of straight ahead. This caused her to lose balance quickly. This time, I was not close enough to stop her from falling but I was always near to pick her up, comfort, and instruct her when she did.

“Don’t look around, Rosie Girl. Keep your eyes on me as you move.”

She tried again - focusing on me as she started. After a few steps, she could not help but miss the comfort of my arms around her and started to look around again. “Rosie, keep your eyes on me! Look at me! Don’t look around! Look at me!”

She looked to the right and to the left to make sure she was not going to hit something, even though I had already made sure we were in an open, hazard free area. She looked down at her feet to make sure they were on the ground, even though I had adjusted the seat to the appropriate height. She was constantly looking for dangers I had already considered and taken action to protect her from. It took a while for her to learn she did not have to look in every direction all at once to keep herself safe - that actually was the cause of more falls than anything else.

Suddenly, right in the middle of me shouting over and over to her “Don’t take your eyes off of me,” I was reminded of Hebrews 12:1-2. Sitting there watching my daughter struggle because her fear was still greater than her trust, I felt the sweet burn of conviction.

How many times has my Savior shouted in the depths of my soul “Keep your eyes on me!”? But more often than I want to admit to myself, I still think scanning the horizon for dangers is what is going to keep me from falling. It never has though. When I come to an obstacle in the course, I worry that maybe I am not equipped to overcome it. I wonder if God has in fact made the right provisions for me - has he ‘adjusted the seat’ correctly, or did he forget this time?

The truth is all of the worry and the concern do nothing to protect me. At best they take the joy of the ride away. But more often, they are the things that make me stumble and fall more than the things I am worrying about ever do. The final truth is this: the only way to persevere to the end of the ‘ride’ is by throwing off everything that hinders us from looking at the one who created and is perfecting our faith. We can trust Him, and Him alone. My prayer for you and I is that God continues to convict me when my eyes are anywhere except my Savior. The One who went first, who made a way for me to finish the race. The One who’s joy it was to do so. Jesus, thank you!

Love, Courtney

DAY SIX

// DRAWINGS // WRITINGS // WORDS //

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER:

A Prayer to Guard My Heart

I will run to you, Lord, whenever I feel afraid. I know your hand will protect me and lead me into your shadow, Almighty God, where I can rest and be safe. I know that bad things can happen to all of us, but you are always there to bring good out of it. And you've promised me that no one can harm my spirit/soul—the innermost part of me that you've destined for eternity. Because I belong to you, you will give me safe passage all the way to my eternal home.

But while I'm still living in my temporary house on earth, I pray you will not only guard my heart, but also my mind from foolish thoughts and actions. Expose the lies that try to twist the truth. Give me discernment, Lord, and wisdom for the good times, the hard times and all the in-between-times. Let me never leave home without your protection and without the spiritual armor you've given me.

I place my trust and dependence on you, today, Lord. Like the commander of a great army, you are in control, and you will go to any lengths to ensure the safety of those under your wing of protection. I believe you want good, not harm for my life. And I am asking that you will replace fear with the confident assurance that you are always here with me, protecting me from harm. Others may try to hurt my body, Lord. But they can never destroy my soul. I'm safe with you, Jesus.

*In Jesus' precious name,
Amen*

DAY SEVEN

faith

{read Hebrews 11:1-3 / Hebrews 12:1-2}

People often focus too much on where they've been. Where they are from, the manner in which they grew up. The poor choices they've made, and the setbacks that they've experienced. But life isn't about where you've been, it's about where you're going. The person I was isn't the person I am, nor is it the person that I hope to become.

You see, God wants your attention to be focused on the present. He wants you to look straight ahead, because what He has for you is not behind you, but in front of you. Reminding yourself of your past mistakes does nothing for today. It doesn't help you. People get so stuck looking back at the storms they've weathered that they don't notice where their ship is headed. They look at their flaws and faults when they should be looking forward at the greatness that God has planned for them. They're too focused on what the enemy is up to, and not focused on what God is doing in their lives right now!

Looking back is the same thing as dropping anchor. It is choosing to sit still, to be stagnant. To do nothing. Don't drop anchor when God is telling you to open up the sails. Don't let yourself focus on the negative when the positive is just within reach. Your best days are not to be left in the past.

Faith is the light that shines in through the tunnel. It is the compass that points north when you get off course. Faith is what you have left when everything else seems so far away. It isn't always easy to have faith, but it is always necessary. Faith is what gives us as Christians the strength to carry on despite our circumstances.

Faith is easy to find when you have calm waters and clear skies. It's when the clouds come in that Christians begin to struggle with their faith. It is when the water begins to get choppy and the wind starts blowing that faith starts to falter.

Have unwavering faith! Know that whatever is going on in your life has already been planned out. God has you covered.

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER:

Almighty and eternal God, by your Holy Spirit you have revealed to us the gospel of your Son, Christ Jesus. Awaken our hearts that we may sincerely receive your Word and not make light of it, or hear it without fruit as did your people long ago.

Instead lead us to fear you and daily grow in faith in your mercy and finally through your Son Christ Jesus, obtain eternal salvation; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

