



BEGINNING *Again:*

A 7-DAY DEVOTIONAL
FOR THE LIFE YOU DIDN'T EXPECT

— *by Sade Ellison* —



How to Use This Devotional

This devotional was written for the woman standing somewhere between the life she planned and the life she's actually living.

Each day includes a short reflection, a passage of Scripture, a devotional thought, a central truth to carry with you, a prayer, a question to sit with, and space to write down whatever surfaces. There's no wrong way to move through it. Read one day at a time, in order, ideally at the same time each day — but if you miss a day, simply pick back up. Grace has never required perfect attendance.

My hope is simple: that somewhere in these seven days, you'll feel less alone, and a little more certain that God isn't finished writing your story.

A Word From Sade

I write stories about ordinary people encountering the extraordinary faithfulness of God — usually in the middle of grief, disappointment, or a season that looks nothing like what they expected. This devotional grew out of the same conviction that shapes everything I write: no chapter of your life is beyond His redemption, and beginning again is always still possible when Christ is the one holding the pen.

I'm so glad you're here.

Day One: The Life You Thought You'd Have

Scripture

"How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?" — Psalm 13:1–2 (NIV)

Devotional

There's a particular kind of tired that has nothing to do with sleep. It's the tired that comes from carrying a life you didn't plan for — watching the one you imagined slip further out of reach with every passing year.

David asks God how long four times in two verses. He doesn't perform a faith he doesn't feel. He tells the truth — and the Psalm is in our Bibles anyway, unedited, because God was never afraid of his honesty.

There's a woman I've come to know through the pages of a story — a labor and delivery nurse who spent her days helping other women hold the very thing she quietly ached for herself. Every shift meant showing up for someone else's answered prayer while her own still waited. She wasn't bitter. She was tired in that particular way — the tired of loving her work and still going home to a life that hadn't turned out the way she pictured it.

She didn't move forward by trying harder. She didn't find healing by pretending she was fine. Something shifted the day she finally let herself be honest — with God, and eventually with someone else — about the life she thought she'd have by now. That's where healing tends to start. Not with a five-step plan. With honesty.

Central Truth

God is not waiting for you to feel better before He'll come near. He's already near — even in the parts of your story you haven't said out loud.

A Prayer for Today

Father, I don't want to pretend anymore. You already know what I was hoping for. I bring You the disappointment I've been carrying quietly, the comparisons I keep making, the tired that sleep doesn't touch. Thank You for being close to the brokenhearted, even when I forget to ask. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

What is the life you thought you'd have by now — and have you let yourself grieve it honestly, or have you been quietly performing acceptance instead?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Two — When Grief Wears a Suit and Tie

Day Two: When Grief Wears a Suit and Tie

Scripture

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." — Psalm 147:3 (NIV)

Devotional

Some of the loneliest people you know are the ones who never miss a day of work. Grief doesn't always look broken. Sometimes it looks composed, capable, and completely put together — right up until the lights go out and the house goes quiet.

There's a man I think of often — a widower, respected by everyone who knows him, admired for exactly the kind of steadiness people lean on in hard seasons. Two years after losing his wife, he still stands in front of thousands of people every Sunday and tells them God is faithful. He believes it. He also goes home to a kitchen where her coffee mug still sits exactly where she left it, because moving it would mean admitting she isn't coming back.

Publicly capable. Privately lonely. Both true at once.

Maybe that's you. Maybe you're the one everyone else calls strong — the friend people lean on, the parent who holds it together, the coworker who never seems rattled. Being capable was never supposed to mean you stopped being allowed to grieve.

Psalm 147:3 doesn't say God heals the people who fall apart visibly. It says He heals the brokenhearted — full stop, regardless of how well they've learned to hide it.

Central Truth

You can be steady on the outside and still be breaking on the inside — and God sees both, without requiring you to perform one over the other.

A Prayer for Today

Lord, thank You for seeing what I've learned to hide so well. I don't have to keep proving I'm fine to earn Your attention. Bind up what's still broken in me, even the parts I've gotten good at covering. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

Where in your life have you mistaken composure for healing?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Three — Manna, Not a Five-Year Plan

Day Three: Manna, Not a Five-Year Plan

Scripture

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” — Matthew 6:34 (NIV)

Devotional

When the ground feels unstable — a job that disappeared, an income you can no longer predict, a future you can't map out the way you used to — the temptation is to demand a five-year plan from God when He's only ever promised today's bread.

In the wilderness, God didn't give Israel a warehouse of food to last the whole journey. He gave manna — enough for one day, gathered fresh each morning, with the instruction not to hoard it. It taught a nation that had known nothing but slavery how to trust a Provider they couldn't yet fully see.

We are not so different. In seasons of financial fear — when applications go unanswered, when the news makes tomorrow feel unpredictable, when providing for the people you love keeps you up at night — it's tempting to believe faith means having the whole plan figured out. It doesn't. Faith, most days, simply means gathering today's portion and trusting there will be more tomorrow.

In uncertain seasons, we often delay moving because we cannot see how every need will be met. But God's provision frequently arrives alongside obedience rather than before it. The open door, the timely resource, the unexpected encouragement, or the strength for one more day may not appear until we take the step already in front of us.

Central Truth

God does not ask you to carry next year today. He promises to meet you here, in this day, with the grace you need for the step in front of you.

A Prayer for Today

Father, I confess how much energy I spend trying to secure a future only You can see. Teach me to gather today's portion of peace, provision, and trust — without hoarding fear about tomorrow. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

What would it look like to trust God for today, specifically — instead of demanding certainty about the next five years?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Four — The Friend Who Drags You Toward Hope

Day Four: The Friend Who Drags You Toward Hope

Scripture

“Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus, and after digging through it, lowered the mat the man was lying on.” — Mark 2:4 (NIV)

Devotional

Sometimes the most spiritual thing a friend can do for you isn't a perfectly timed Scripture verse. It's showing up at your door and refusing to let you stay isolated.

This has always been one of my favorite pictures of friendship in Scripture. A paralyzed man wants to reach Jesus but can't get there on his own — so his friends carry him, and when the crowd blocks the door, they climb onto the roof and lower him through it. Nothing about that was convenient. It was inconvenient, a little reckless, and completely necessary.

There's a scene I keep returning to: a woman who had quietly assumed church wasn't really for her anymore — not after disappointment, not after a life that hadn't gone the way she'd hoped. Her best friend never lectured her about it. She simply showed up one evening and invited her to something she wasn't sure she needed. That one ordinary invitation became the doorway to an entire season of healing neither of them saw coming.

If you have a friend like that — someone who keeps showing up even when you've stopped asking them to — thank God for her today. And if you're the friend who's been sensing you should reach out to someone who's drifted, don't wait for a more convenient moment. Sometimes we are the roof someone else needs opened.

Central Truth

God often delivers hope through ordinary, persistent people — and you may be one for someone else, even today.

A Prayer for Today

Lord, thank You for the people who have carried me toward You when I couldn't get there alone. Show me who might need me to do the same for them. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

Who has been your friend on the roof — and is there someone God might be asking you to carry today?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Five — Seasons Aren't Identities

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Scripture

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

Devotional

Winter feels permanent while you're standing in it. It rarely feels like a season. It feels like the way things are now, forever.

I once heard a pastor tell his congregation, "Winter is a season. It is not your identity." I've never forgotten it. It's easy to let a hard season rename you — to start calling yourself unemployed, single, grieving, behind, instead of simply in a season that happens to include those realities right now.

Solomon didn't write Ecclesiastes 3 to comfort people going through easy seasons. He wrote it because seasons change — and the God who walked with you through spring is the same God who remains with you through winter. Your circumstances are not a life sentence. They're a chapter, and chapters end.

Central Truth

Whatever season you are in right now, it is describing your circumstances — not defining who you are.

A Prayer for Today

Father, help me stop calling myself by the name of my hardest season. I am not my unemployment, my loneliness, or my grief. I am Yours, and You are still writing this story. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

What language have you been using to describe yourself that actually just describes your current season?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Six — Open Hands in a Closed-Fist World

Day Six: Open Hands in a Closed-Fist World

Scripture

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." — 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)

Devotional

Fear has a way of closing our hands. When resources feel scarce, the instinct is to hold tighter — to our money, our time, our energy, our attention. But God has always asked His people to hold their hands open, especially when it costs them something.

I think of a young nurse who volunteers at a women's shelter even during seasons when her own life feels uncertain. She isn't wealthy. She isn't free of worry about her own future. But she keeps showing up with whatever she has — her time, her attention, her presence — for women who have even less certainty than she does.

It would be easy to reason our way out of generosity right now. The world is anxious, and anxious people tend to turn inward. But Scripture consistently points us the opposite direction — not because our circumstances don't matter, but because generosity is one of the surest ways we keep our hearts from hardening into fear.

You don't need surplus to be generous. You need open hands.

Central Truth

Fear closes your fist. Faith opens your hand — and generosity, even in scarcity, keeps your heart soft toward God and others.

A Prayer for Today

Lord, don't let my fear about tomorrow close my hands today. Show me one person I can serve, encourage, or give to this week — not from my surplus, but from my faith. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

Where has fear made you close your hands recently — and what would it look like to open them, even in a small way?

Write It Down

Tomorrow: Day Seven — The Next Right Thing

Day Seven: The Next Right Thing

Scripture

“The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him. Though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.” — Psalm 37:23–24 (NIV)

Devotional

We spend so much energy trying to see the whole staircase before we're willing to take the first step. God rarely works that way. He tends to illuminate exactly one step at a time.

A country pastor once closed a sermon with a line that has stayed with me: “Sometimes God's will isn't hidden. Sometimes it's just the next right thing.” Not the five-year plan. Not the fully resolved future. Just the next faithful step.

I think of a young woman who spent years bookmarking a dream instead of pursuing it — until one ordinary day, she simply pressed submit on an application she'd been avoiding for far too long. Nothing about that moment was dramatic. It was just obedience, one small act at a time, and it changed the entire direction of her life.

You don't have to know how this season resolves. You don't need the whole staircase illuminated today. You only need to take the next right thing — and trust that the God who ordered your steps this far isn't going to abandon you now.

Central Truth

Faith rarely requires you to see the whole path. It only requires you to take the next right step and trust God with everything after it.

A Prayer for Today

Father, I release my need to see the whole plan today. Show me the next right thing — however small — and give me the courage to do it. Thank You for ordering my steps even when I can't see where they lead. Amen.

A Question to Sit With

What is one next right thing you've been avoiding — and what would it take to do it this week?

Write It Down

A Closing Word

If you've made it through these seven days, I want you to know something: showing up for your own healing, one day at a time, is its own quiet act of faith. You didn't need to have it all figured out to begin. You just needed to begin.

Wherever this season takes you next, I hope you'll carry this with you — winter is a season, not your identity, and the God who has walked with you this far is not finished writing your story.



An Invitation to Salvation

Perhaps you have reached the end of the seven days knowing you need more encouragement. You desire a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory, but God demonstrated His love for us by sending Jesus Christ to die for our sins. Jesus rose again, and salvation is offered by grace to everyone who places their faith in Him.

You do not have to make yourself perfect before coming to God. You can come honestly—believing that Jesus is Lord, turning toward Him, and trusting Him with your life.

A Prayer of Salvation

Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned and that I need Your grace. I believe that You died for my sins and rose again. I turn toward You and place my faith in You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive me, make me new, and teach me to follow You. I give You my life. In Jesus name, amen.

What Comes Next?

If you prayed this sincerely, begin talking with God each day, reading the Bible, and seeking a Christ-centered church where you can grow in faith and community.

Read for Yourself: Romans 3:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9.

Stay Connected

Beginning again doesn't end with Day Seven. Stay on this list for twice-monthly encouragement, behind-the-scenes updates from the Grace Covenant series, and early access to future devotionals, journals, and reader resources.

[Continue the Journey](#)

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