

# With Us

SEEKING COURAGE AND COMFORT  
IN THE LORD'S PRESENCE

9 Devotional Readings by Women  
Ministry Leaders from around the World



## DEAR WOMAN OF GOD,

*At Advancing Native Missions, we are honored to work with women ministry leaders in many countries around the world. For your encouragement and inspiration, we asked several of them to write short devotional readings. I pray that these testimonies, scriptures, and reflections draw you closer to God and refresh your heart as you read them.*



*To learn more about how Advancing Native Missions is reaching the nations through native Christians like the women in this devotional guide, please visit [advancingnativemissions.com](http://advancingnativemissions.com).*

*Blessings in Christ,*

*Krista B Darcus*

*Krista Darcus*

*Vice President of International Operations*





# Seek God's Presence

BY ELLEN, WHO LEADS A MINISTRY TO WOMEN FROM  
MUSLIM BACKGROUNDS IN EGYPT.

LUKE 9:28-32

*About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John, and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.*

**I**n Luke 9, when Jesus wanted to sit with the Father, he took his brothers with Him so they could see the glory from a closer and clearer place. What a privilege!

Peter, James, and John saw Jesus in the presence of the Father with his clothes and appearance changed. He was shining like the sun. They also heard the voice of the Lord Himself saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am pleased. Listen to him.”

And they saw Moses and Elijah. Certainly, the time of Christ’s meeting with Moses and Elijah was the most precious time for Moses and Elijah, more than all the miracles, prophecies, and victories they performed in the Old Testament.

Also for Peter, James, and John, this was the most precious time in their lives, even more precious than all the miracles they performed before or after the resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus also calls us and allows us to be very close to Him, enter with confidence, and behold His glory with an open face. His glory is more precious than signs, wonders, and miracles. Jesus descended from heaven not only to forgive our sins, but also to bring us close to our Heavenly Father and unite us with Him in a state of love, friendship, and partnership. The most beautiful love was Emmanuel, God with us. That means that God is manifest in us, united with us, and living in our souls.

# Grief and Hope

BY EMELYN, WHO LEADS A MULTI-FACETED  
MINISTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

PSALM 68:4–5

*Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the LORD. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.*

**H**aving been married for almost 28 years, I was dependent on my husband, and we were almost inseparable. Together we faced trials, difficulties, and challenges in our daily walk with God, in the family, and in our ministry.

In 2020, God suddenly took my husband home because of colorectal cancer, just a week after he was diagnosed. I suddenly found myself in a very difficult situation with his passing. Now I had to face everything alone. I didn't know how to make important decisions alone or assume responsibilities he formerly shouldered. I didn't know what to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. How could I handle everything—the needs for our daily living, our children, and the ministry? How was I going to start? I was so scared. I felt so alone.

Every night I cried to God for almost three months, feeling alone and lost. Grappling with my own deep grief and that of my children, I got comfort from the Word of God and His promises. Psalm 68 especially brought me to the realization that He is my everything—my husband, my partner, my provider, my guide, my protector, my defender, my all in all.

Our God is faithful to His Word. There are times in our lives when we encounter unexpected circumstances. We panic and lose focus. We become overwhelmed by the situation, forgetting that our God is in His holy dwelling watching over us with care. Through God's power and sovereignty pours His grace and mercy, His defense and protection on all those who especially need His help. God will never leave us nor forsake us.

# God's Mercy

BY SAFAA, WHO SHARES THE GOSPEL  
AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN IN TUNISIA.

JOHN 8:2-11

*The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. . . . [Jesus] said, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." . . . Those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"*

*"No one, sir," she said.*

*"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."*

**M**y darling, we see in this passage the grace of the Lord Jesus for this woman, whose sin was so great. In this scene, she finally sees her brokenness and also perceives the hypocrisy of her accusers, who have committed similar sins. We are given a glimpse into the injustice and cruelty of the human judiciary system that devalues such women and stands ready to humiliate and prosecute them for their sin. But we also see the grace of God, who does not judge her as the world does, when Jesus states, "Neither do I condemn you." God's heart is full of love, forgiveness, and compassion.

You can suffer daily feelings of self-loathing and guilt because of a past or ongoing sin. You need to know that this is the devil's plan to destroy your life. He wants you to be broken forever and to live with your buried shame and disgrace. Dear one, here is the good news: our Lord Jesus forgave you all of your past, present, and future sins when he gave his life for you on the cross! You are free from all sin and all condemnation because the blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient to justify you! Let us fortify ourselves every day with the Word of the Lord, and meditate on it. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to alert us to His pleasant and joyful presence, which gives us victory over our sins, foils the plan of the devil, and guides us in our journey onward. Be happy and be encouraged, for the Lord is with you!

# God Chose You

BY EUNICE, WHO LEADS A CHURCH-PLANTING  
MINISTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES WITH HER HUSBAND.

JOHN 15:16

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

**S**ister in Christ, God chose us to be saved. We are saved because of what Christ did. As Christians, our citizenship is in heaven. Our only passport to enter heaven is the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God that you and I are saved because we are chosen. God has a plan for us. I was born in a Christian home. Our family had to walk more than 6 miles back and forth to attend church. We were so poor, but I think we were rich spiritually.

God chose us to serve Him. He expects us to go and bring forth fruit. That means we have to grow. How do we grow? Prayer, Bible reading, and attending church services (Hebrews 10:25). Be involved. While growing, we are serving, and while serving, we are growing.

God challenges us to believe that He will answer our prayers. I was nothing before Him. I married a pastor in 1984. We served the Lord together. We experienced trials and financial needs, but our God is so gracious. He answered our prayers. Until now, we are active in the ministry because of His sustaining grace. Let's continue loving our Lord. Love your church. Love your coworkers and your family. Most of all, continue to love the lost. This is the best we can do in these last days. Keep on going for Jesus. To God be the glory.



# Peace in Struggle

BY BINTOU, WHO MINISTERS TO WOMEN, ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM MUSLIM BACKGROUNDS, ALL OVER WEST AFRICA.

ROMANS 8:38–39

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**D**ear sister in the Lord, this is a small message of encouragement regarding God's goodness and faithfulness. Yes, the Lord loved us more than His own life. His love for us has not changed; He is always good to us, and He remains faithful to His promises.

When I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, my life became very difficult. Some people around me said, "You are cursed! Because you left Islam, your husband chased you out of the home and your business is no longer working. You have to go back to Islam."

Despite everything they said, I was calm. I had peace because I knew who I believed in. These people were amazed at my tranquility. The Lord strengthened me and encouraged me in this difficult situation. He allowed me to endure and to persevere in Him despite the mockery, the insults, and the suffering.

Later I received the call to serve the Lord, and I struggled a lot with Him because I was not ready to give up my activities to live by faith with my two children. With God's help, I ended up accepting the call. Indeed, at the beginning it was difficult for us, but I always had peace, I never regretted committing to Him. The more I got to know Him, the more I loved Him. Over time, thank God, our situation improved. Thereafter, the Lord gave me a ministry vision that thrills me to this day, which encouraged me even more.

In reality, we are just instruments, it is God Himself who does His work through our hands. We must sincerely love Him for who He is, we must believe in Him despite everything, and we must be willing to let Him act in us and through us. Today I can testify that when we are patient and persistent with the Lord, we come to realize that He is always doing His part. He is truly good and faithful in the promises He makes to us. May God bless you and keep you in these difficult times.

# No More Math

BY SERGEJA, WHO SHARES THE LOVE OF JESUS AS ONE OF  
THE FEW FULL-TIME MINISTRY WORKERS IN SLOVENIA.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

*Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

**A**s people who work for God's kingdom, we are often inclined to numbers. Results! We want results that can be counted or measured—and a lot of them! But God's math is different than ours. Someone once said they had stopped “measuring if God has done enough in their life. God Himself is enough.” That was a Wow! moment for me when I heard it.

I have come to a point in my life where I want more of God. As I have drawn closer to God, one particular area in my life He has shown me is how I interact with people. I definitely want to shine in that area for Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 tells us to focus on encouraging and building up one another. What does that mean for me? No more math (I used to work in a bank)—just a sincere heart when I reach out to others, even when it's out of my comfort zone. That can mean either the richest or the poorest person, the most charismatic or the one everyone wants to avoid, the cutest family or the lonely older lady. There is freedom to give a hug and have a conversation with each of them.

# The Lord's Care

BY LINDA, A DOCTOR WHO LEADS  
MEDICAL MISSIONS TEAMS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*

**A**fter a year in the U.S., I returned to the Philippines in February 2018 for a short mission trip leading a medical missions team. While waiting for my flight at the gate, I got a call from the missions agency I was serving with. In the last-minute preparations, I had accidentally checked the box for medical coverage in addition to my travel insurance. I tried to uncheck the medical, but I couldn't for some reason. I was told I needed to pay an extra \$6 for the medical coverage. I answered, "I'm fine with it. Please just charge it to my account."

We did two medical clinics in a row for two weekends. On one of our lunch breaks, all of the team members went to have their ECG taken by our volunteer nurse. I was the last in line. My ECG results came out very abnormal. Everyone was concerned, and we prayed, but I told them, "I am just fine".

Two days later, I had my blood work done and was told to see my cardiologist ASAP. My heart wasn't functioning properly, and I needed an immediate procedure. The problem was that I didn't have the \$5,000 it would cost. My cardiologist, a Christian woman, prayed with me: "You are a faithful child of God serving Him all these years, I believe He will provide." On our way home from the doctor's office, I was teary-eyed, with mixed feelings of fear and anxiety. Feeling hopeless, I prayed and surrendered everything to the Lord. Then I remembered the insurance. In the next 30 minutes, insurance representatives assured me over the phone that all medical expenses will be covered! I was able to have an angiogram and a stent was placed to repair one of my heart arteries. Thank God, the procedure was a success. I was discharged from the hospital the following day, and the insurance company informed me that they would also take care of my return ticket to the U.S. I flew back two weeks later, first class with a cardiologist escort all the way!

Once again, God showed me His sovereignty. He is able to do above and beyond what we could ask for if we truly trust in Him (Ephesians 3:20).

# Trust in God's Plan

BY NINA, A MINISTRY LEADER AND CHURCH PLANTER  
AMONG THE ROMA PEOPLE IN CROATIA.

PROVERBS 16:9

*In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.*

**M**any times in my life things seemed like coincidences. Whenever I think of coincidence, I think of the story in 1 Samuel 9 where Saul, before he became king, by “coincidence” lost his donkeys. He went to find them, and encountered the prophet Samuel during his search. At the end of the story Samuel anoints Saul as the king of Israel. Coincidence or the perfect plan of God?

I started to minister among the Roma people because I was just helping out a Dutch friend with translation. Then I fell in love with the Roma people. Even when my friend decided that this ministry wasn't for him, I stayed and ended up as one of the church leaders in the first Roma church in Croatia. Coincidence or the perfect plan of God?

Something that God has been telling me for a long time is that I can have rest in Him. I can completely trust Him that He has a plan for my life and is leading me. I don't need to worry, even when I can't see much in front of me. At those times, I just need to do what is in front of me and rest in the knowledge that He will provide everything for the next step.

# Strength in Discouragement

BY CORA, WHO LEADS A MINISTRY TO ONE OF THE PHILIPPINES' MARGINALIZED TRIBES ALONGSIDE HER HUSBAND.

1 SAMUEL 30:6

*David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the LORD his God.*

I was stressed, distressed, and disappointed, and it was getting worse. The spirit of fear started creeping in my being. I lost interest in all things. I could not eat, and I could not sleep. I was depressed. Satan was using a powerful weapon in his armory: discouragement.

During this time, the Lord began to send me daily nourishment to strengthen my heart. He reminded me to take care of my body, which is His temple, with rest, healthy foods, and most of all, quiet time with Him. I realized I had neglected these. He nourished me with His Word every day. He taught me to wait and trust in God (Psalm 40:1–3). He reminded me that He is so faithful (Lamentations 3:23–24). He reminded me that the joy of the Lord is my strength (Nehemiah 8:10).

One morning I received a card from an acquaintance with “Fear not, for I am with you” (Isaiah 41:10) printed in big, bold letters on the front. I believe it was not a coincidence. During this difficult time, I also remembered the song, “You Are My Hiding Place,” and I listened to it every day.

Praise God, He delivered me from depression. He encouraged me to go again in His might and power and accomplish the vision He has entrusted to me. Like David, I found strength in the Lord our God.

As Corrie Ten Boom once said, “If you look at the world, you’ll be distressed; if you look within, you’ll be depressed; if you look at God, you’ll be at rest.”

# Advancing Native Missions


**Sharing the Good News  
of Jesus with People  
Who Have Never Heard**

Today, one out of three people in the world doesn't have access to a Bible in their own language, a local church, or a pastor. ANM's native missionaries are working in 112 countries to take the Gospel to them.

The kingdom is advancing, the church is growing, and countless souls are being saved.

*"... this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations ..."*





## What does "native missions" mean?

It can be extremely difficult and expensive for Americans to live and work as missionaries in many countries. That's why Advancing Native Missions works with Christians who are native to those countries.

These native missionaries already live in the mission field, speak local languages, understand local ways of life, and are accustomed to local living standards. That makes them incredibly effective missionaries to their own people.

They just need prayer and financial support to accomplish more for the kingdom.

To find out how you can support women serving in the world's most difficult mission fields, visit **[advancingnativemissions.com/women](http://advancingnativemissions.com/women)**.



[advancingnativemissions.com](http://advancingnativemissions.com)