

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: When God Encourages Before He Changes Things

Devotional

Have you ever been in a situation where you desperately wanted God to fix things, but instead of changing your circumstances, He simply met you where you were? That is exactly what happened to Paul in Acts 23. After a brutal encounter with the Sanhedrin, Paul sat alone in a Roman fortress. He had been rejected, threatened, and surrounded by enemies. And that night, God showed up. Not with a rescue plan. Not with a dramatic escape. Just with a word of encouragement.

God reminded Paul of what He had already done and pointed Him toward what was still ahead. He did not fix the situation first. He addressed Paul's heart first.

This is a pattern you will see throughout Scripture. Elijah burned out and hid in a cave in 1 Kings 19. God did not immediately send Him back into ministry. He fed him, let him rest, and spoke to him gently. God met the man before He moved the mountain.

Maybe you are in a hard season right now. Maybe you have been praying for a change in your circumstances and nothing seems to be shifting. Consider this: God may be doing something in your heart before He does something in your situation. He is not ignoring you. He is investing in you.

His encouragement is real, and it is enough to carry you through.

Bible Verse

"The following night the Lord stood by Him and said, 'Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.'" - Acts 23:11

Reflection Question

Is it possible that God is trying to strengthen something in you right now rather than simply remove the difficulty you are facing?

Quote

"God often will encourage your heart before He changes the circumstances. Too often we're looking at the circumstances to say, Lord, fix the circumstance. When the Lord says, no, let me first encourage your heart. Let's deal with your heart first. And then the circumstances will follow."

Prayer

Lord, help me to receive Your encouragement today instead of only looking for a change in my circumstances. Remind me that You are near, and that Your presence is enough. Amen.

Day 2: No Plot Can Stop God's Plan

Devotional

More than 40 men made a vow. No food, no water, until Paul was dead. The conspiracy was coordinated, it was serious, and from a human perspective, it looked like it might actually work.

But God had already spoken a promise over Paul's life. He was going to Rome. And no vow, no plot, and no number of determined enemies could change that.

This is one of the most encouraging truths in all of Scripture. Men can scheme, but they cannot override God's word. Circumstances can look impossible, but they cannot cancel what God has already declared. His promises do not bend under pressure.

Think about your own life for a moment. Maybe someone has worked against you. Maybe a situation has developed that feels like it has the upper hand. Here is what you need to hold onto: if God has spoken something over your life, no conspiracy can stop it.

This does not mean the road will be easy. Paul still had to walk through the threat. But the outcome was never actually in question, because God was already working behind the scenes in ways no one could see.

You may not see what God is doing right now. That is okay. He sees everything, and He is already moving.

Bible Verse

"Men may make their conspiracies, but God is the one building a testimony in your life." - Acts 23:30

Reflection Question

What promise from God are you holding onto right now, and what would it look like to trust that promise even when circumstances seem to contradict it?

Quote

"Man's plans do not stop God's promises. Oh, they may threaten, they may plot, but God's word to Paul in verse 11 is so important for everything we see played out here."

Prayer

Father, remind me today that Your plans cannot be stopped by the schemes of men. Give me the faith to trust Your word over what I see in front of me. Amen.

Day 3: God Uses the Unexpected

Devotional

Nobody would have written this into the script. A young boy, unnamed in Scripture, overheard a murder plot. He told Paul. Paul sent him to the Roman commander. And just like that, the entire conspiracy fell apart.

God used a child to save an apostle.

This is not the first time God has worked this way. He used a shepherd boy to defeat a giant. He used a servant girl to point a powerful general toward healing. He used a small lunch to feed thousands of people. Over and over, God chooses the unexpected person, the overlooked resource, the unlikely moment, to accomplish something only He could pull off.

Why does He work this way? Because when the outcome defies human logic, there is no question about who deserves the credit.

Maybe you have been waiting for a big, obvious solution to your problem. Maybe you have been looking for the powerful person or the perfect opportunity. But God might be working through something much smaller than you expect. A conversation. A phone call. A person you would never have considered.

Do not overlook the small things. God is not limited by what looks impressive to us. He is looking for anyone who will say, here I am, send me.

Bible Verse

"When the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul." - Acts 23:16

Reflection Question

Are there people or resources in your life right now that you have been overlooking because they seem too small or ordinary to make a difference?

Quote

"God uses kids. He uses anybody that will say, Lord, here I am. Send me."

Prayer

God, open my eyes to see the unexpected ways You are working around me. Help me not to miss what You are doing because I was looking for something bigger. Amen.

Day 4: Stand Still: Releasing Control to God

Devotional

There is a moment in every hard season when you realize you have done everything you can do. You have analyzed the situation from every angle. You have tried every option. And still, nothing has changed. That is an uncomfortable place to be.

But it might be exactly where God wants you.

Psalms 46:10 says to be still and know that He is God. The stillness being described is not passive. It is an active choice to stop striving, to release your grip on the outcome, and to trust that God is working even when you cannot see it.

Paul could not engineer his own escape from the Roman fortress. He could not outsmart 40 men who wanted him dead. He was in an "I can't" situation. And that is precisely when God moved in a way no one expected.

God's delays are not signs of His disinterest. His timing is not a mistake. When He is not working in the way you expected or on the schedule you wanted, it does not mean He has forgotten you. It means His thoughts and plans are higher than yours.

Today, consider what you need to release. What have you been gripping so tightly that you have left no room for God to work? Sometimes the most powerful thing you can do is simply let go and trust Him.

Bible Verse

"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" - Psalms 46:10

Reflection Question

What situation in your life are you still trying to control, and what would it look like to genuinely hand it over to God today?

Quote

"Be still and know that I am God. The stillness that he's talking about is, cease striving and know that I am God. Stop trying to figure it all out. Stop trying to analyze it so much. Just be still. You're not God. He is."

Prayer

Lord, I confess that I have been striving when You have been asking me to trust. Help me to be still, to release control, and to believe that You are working even when I cannot see it. Amen.

Day 5: Stand Steady: Your Story Is Not Over

Devotional

When Paul was sitting in that Roman fortress, surrounded by enemies and facing a death plot, it would have been easy to believe his story was over. But God had already told Him otherwise. You testified in Jerusalem. Now you must testify in Rome.

God did not just remind Paul of what was behind Him. He pointed him toward what was still ahead. The past was proof of God's faithfulness. The future was evidence of God's purpose. And the difficult present was simply the bridge between the two.

Your story is not over either. The difficulty you are walking through right now is not the final chapter. God is building something in you through this season that could not be built any other way. He has not abandoned you. He has not forgotten you. He is working behind the scenes in ways you cannot yet see.

Psalms 138:8 puts it beautifully. The Lord will complete what He has begun in you. His mercy endures. He does not start something and walk away.

So stand steady. Keep your eyes on Him through the uncertainty. Watch how He works it out. And when it is over, you will have a testimony that no one can argue with, a story that says clearly: my God is real, and look what He did.

Bible Verse

"The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands." - Psalms 138:8

Reflection Question

How might the difficulty you are facing right now be part of a larger story that God is writing, one that points others toward His faithfulness?

Quote

"Stand steady. Keep your eyes on the Lord through it all, watch Him work it out, and you will come away with a God moment testimony. A testimony that you can say, see, my God is real, and see what He does."

Prayer

Father, thank You that You finish what You start. Help me to stand steady today, trusting that You are still at work and that my story is not over. Amen.