



# *Held in Perfect Peace*

100 Devotions  
to Calm Your Heart

A Guideposts Devotional

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*(Plus 90 more Devotions!)*

# Closer to Grace

EDWARD GRINNAN

*Grace and peace be yours in abundance  
through the knowledge of God  
and of Jesus our Lord.*

2 PETER 1:2 (NIV)

I woke up this morning, my head full of worry. Nothing obvious was at the root of it. Just a generalized angst, pressure in my chest and behind my eyes, the soles of my feet slightly damp, my breathing shallow.

Who isn't stressed out these days? My friend, author and motivational speaker Jon Gordon, claims he's too blessed to be stressed. I wish I could say that.

My stress engine always seems to be idling, waiting for a reason to rev up. Work deadlines, the economy, politics, health issues, or just waiting in line at the grocery store.

Another friend says stress is a fundamental force of nature. Without it, the world would come to a dismal standstill. Nothing would ever get done. Society would crumble. We would be lost. Yep, stress is a great motivator.




But a constant state of stress is harmful. Researchers agree that prolonged stress levels contribute to just about every health condition you can name. That kind of stress is corrosive to the soul. It breaks us down and distances us from grace. Grace and stress are antithetical.

We all need reminders of that. I say the Serenity Prayer. That's what I did this morning. Nothing banishes anxiety like putting the focus on God and concentrating our thoughts on His love for us.

It also helps to have a golden retriever jumping up on your bed first thing in the morning and licking your chin. Did I mention my golden's name? It's Grace.

## *Let Us Pray*

Father, I am quick to worry, to forget Your presence in every moment of my life, in the midst of every challenge and joy. Help me stay out of my own head and remain in Your loving arms.



## Further Reflection

JUDE 1:2 (NIV)

Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

ROMANS 12:9-10 (NIV)

Love must be sincere. . . . Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

# Navigating Life

PENNEY SCHWAB

*Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation;  
continuing instant in prayer.*

ROMANS 12:12 (KJV)

I found the perfect anniversary card for you and Dad,” our daughter Rebecca said. The front featured a man driving and his wife in the passenger seat. She thinks they are lost. He says they are not. She wants to ask for directions. He refuses. She prays silently for strength while he prays silently for patience. Inside are the words “The couple who prays together stays together.”

My husband, Don, and I have been lost in Baltimore, Dallas, and other cities too numerous to list. We both have squeaky-clean driving records but don't trust each other's driving. I think Don drives too fast. He thinks I drive too slowly. He gets irritated when I nag because he's speeding or changing lanes abruptly. I get irritated when he says I'm impeding traffic and better speed up. But since we like to visit family and friends, we are stuck with each other. I won't drive in heavy city traffic, and Don gets sleepy on long stretches of interstate.

We'd argued during a recent trip to Colorado, then spent an hour hunting for our hotel. We arrived tense and upset, and it was obvious that traveling together meant we would have to make some changes. The next day, we bought a navigation system

with maps and clear verbal instructions, best route, and construction information. Don has slowed down (most of the time), and I'm trying to remain calm and silent. I'm keeping pace with traffic (most of the time), and Don isn't urging me to speed up. We're traveling—and praying—with more trust and peace.

## *Let Us Pray*

Dear Lord, thank You for a husband who prays with me and for me, even when he prays for patience while I'm praying for strength.

## Further Reflection

PSALM 19:14 (KJV)

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

MATTHEW 18:20 (KJV)

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.



# A Special Place

KIM TAYLOR HENRY

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.*

JOHN 14:27 (NIV)

There's a bench on a hillside by my home where I go, especially when I'm seeking comfort and peace, to talk to Jesus. I call it my "special place." From that spot I can see Pikes Peak in the distance, stately behind rolling hills, expanse of fields, and groves of trees. Sitting with Him, surrounded by nature, I feel peace.

The greatest delight of my trip to Israel was when I felt Jesus showing me His "special place" by the Sea of Galilee. Surely, this locale where Jesus chose to concentrate his ministry must have brought Him peace as well. It is called a sea, so I don't know why I pictured it as a small lake, but when I saw its size, its intense-green rock-strewn hillsides splattered with canary-yellow mustard plants, and its surrounding mountain silhouettes, I was mesmerized.

By the rocky shoreline is where it's said Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection. I wandered from our tour group to a place of solitude on a rock by the edge of the sea. Sunlight shimmered on its surface. Transparent water lapped its shoreline. I understood why Christ selected this spot to appear to them. It was, no doubt, part of His "special place"—the sea, the hillsides, the land, the mountains, the peace. After the torture of His execution and the miracle of His resurrection,



Christ didn't choose to return to the masses in Jerusalem or to the barrenness of the desert, but to this familiar spot. I could picture His tender smile as He stood watching His hapless disciples, telling them where to cast their nets, calmly cooking fish as they returned with their huge catch and recognized their Lord.

During and following times of trial, I choose to go to my special place. It felt good to know that Jesus had one too.

### *Let Us Pray*

Lord Jesus, thank You for the peace of special places.

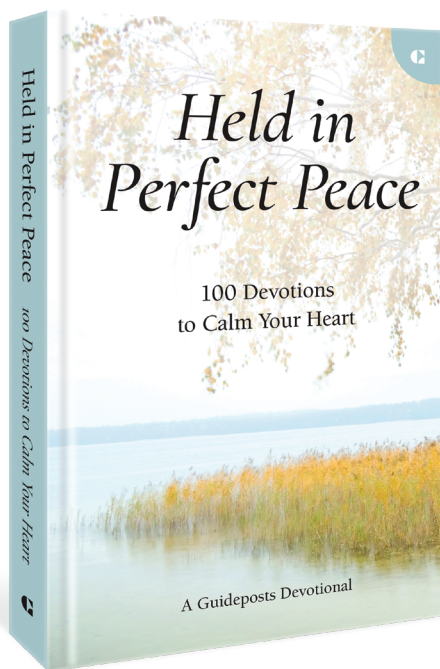
## Further Reflection

MATTHEW 15:29 (NIV)

Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down.

JOHN 21:4 (NIV)

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.



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