

## Mornings with Jesus Writer Guidelines

Welcome to Guideposts' *Morning with Jesus*. In addition to the general guidelines for Guideposts' devotionals that we have sent along, here are specific suggestions for a successful submission for *Mornings with Jesus*:

1. Come alongside the reader as a trusted friend and share how you were transformed, encouraged, or inspired. The most effective devotions allow readers to experience your takeaway or "aha moment" along with you.
2. Devotions take everyday happenings and ordinary moments and distill a spiritual lesson from them (they needn't be dramatic).
3. Remember that the devotions should be about Jesus; the devotions and "Faith Step" should use Jesus's name and focus on Him.
4. There's no "Jesus/God Band Aid" stuck on at the end of the text. To put it another way, the takeaway is something that evolves over the course of reading the story, and the reader is taken on a journey of discovery with the writer. The takeaway shouldn't be a surprise to the reader.
5. The devotions should be about things that have happened in the last year of your life (sure, this can include a memory of something that happened fifty years ago, but that memory should be connected to the lesson or insight you gained recently; they're not "survey" stories that look back at an entire chapter of life).
6. The devotions make one point and only one point.
7. They're about you. They may reference an historical or inspirational anecdote or person, but the point of the devotion is to illustrate how your life was changed or influenced.
8. Devotions are really specific—they are centered on distinct thoughts, feelings, instances, moments, scenes, conversations.
9. Although writing about your job or work circumstances is fine, please don't write about "writing or editing."
10. Each one can stand alone, apart from your other devotions and also apart from the book as a whole. (A devotion may complement another submission but is not a cliff-hanger.)
11. Write the "Faith Step" carefully. After you polish your piece, think how best the reader can "step out in faith" as it pertains to your text or the opening Scripture. The "Faith Step" is a very important component of the devotional entry, and they should be actionable, relatable, and tie in to the devotion or opening scripture.

## General Housekeeping Guidelines for your Submissions

- Use Times New Roman, 12 point, and 1.5 line spacing. All text should be flush left (no need to center the scripture or other text) and regular face (not italic or bold). Please do not title or “slug” your submissions by adding your name, page numbers or other information, including headers/footers.
- Please submit each devotion in its own Word document with an opening scripture (including version/translation); devotion text; Faith Step (the words "Faith Step" followed by a colon and the step); and your name (with no dashes).
- Please label the Word document so that we can refer to your devotion by number. For example, Barbara Smith would label her devotions Smith\_Barbara1, Smith\_Barbara2, etc.
- Please observe the word count. The total word count *with scripture*, devotion, Faith Step, and your name is 300 words max. (Please use dialog sparingly. Typeset dialog takes up a lot of space on a page.)
- If the devotions you submit contain any chronology concerns, or you were asked to write a series of devotions, please make clear the order in which the devotions should appear. For example, Barbara Smith’s Advent devotions would be labeled: Smith\_Barbara10\_Advent1, Smith\_Barbara11\_Advent2, etc.
- Please do not write about a specific holiday unless you were asked to do so.
- You may choose your own Bible verse; it must relate to the devotion it introduces. The three translations that our readers prefer are NIV, KJV, and NKJV. We encourage you to use one of these, but you are not required to. **Do not edit (delete part of) Bible verses in such a way that you twist the meaning of the original verse.**
- Use Biblegateway.com to provide accurate quotations. Please copy and paste to avoid errors.
- Capitalize Deity pronouns (Him, He, Me, My, His, You, Your).
- Please avoid overuse of exclamation points.
- As the editorial process begins, we will be using Word’s Track Changes and comments feature to communicate changes with each other.
- We are unable to accept previously published work, even if it has appeared only in a blog.
- When you deliver your devotions, please attach a current picture (we prefer a headshot 2 inches wide or bigger at 300 dpi resolution) and a short bio between around 150 and 200 words. We will be unable to process your payment until we have these.

Stephanie Thompson (the editor of MWJ) and I look forward to working with you and to reading your devotions.

Submit by email:

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