



In the Morning Light

Devotional

By **Jill Miller**

In the Morning Light

Words and music Jill Miller

Another sleepless night of worry, wondering when this will end
I know it's hard to trust my story when you're in the lion's den
But I see you in the dark
I have hidden heaven right there in your restless heart

In the morning light, my child, draw near
In the morning light give me your fear
Let my Spirit come and help you see
You have all you will ever need
In the morning light
In the morning light

Sunlight dances on the water as I gently call your name
I am holding you, my daughter, so let go of your pain
I have heard every prayer
Believe and trust that when life is hard, I am there

Chorus

Watch your worries disappear as you rest with me here
And taste my truth
Bring your struggles and your scars, come just the way you are
I'm waiting for you
In the morning light
In the morning light

When I wrote this song, I was moved by a beautiful sunrise. As I gazed on the water, I felt God's tender presence in a very real way. The picture on the cover is one I snapped on my phone to capture the beauty of the moment.

I was at my friend's cabin in South Dakota getting some much-needed rest, and God spoke to my heart in the sunlight dancing on the waves like diamonds. I was in a hard season, and this moment encouraged me to keep going. It was one of those precious times when God feels like he's right there beside you.

My prayer is that as you listen to the song, you will close your eyes and picture God singing the words over you and your circumstances. Picture him calling out your name and inviting you to draw near to him.

I hope the devotions I've included will help you as well as I take the lyrics a little deeper. My desire is that they will help you realize that you are not alone, God is waiting for you In the Morning Light!

Blessings, my friend!

Jill

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The Lion's Den

2020 felt a bit like a lion's den. Okay, maybe a LOT like a lion's den. We all felt surrounded by uncertainty, fear, disappointment, isolation and so many unknowns. And the hard part is none of this seems to have an end date with it. We wonder when, if ever, life will go back to any kind of "normal."

Let's be real, it's hard not to worry when everything feels crazy around us.

And in the midst of that chaos, the enemy prowls like a roaring lion. His one and only objective is to steal, kill and destroy. Steal our joy. Kill our dreams. Destroy our faith.

And just like a lion, Satan preys on our fear. The minute he smells it, he's ready to attack. He starts dropping doubts in our head, little whispers, "If God really loved you, would He allow that to happen to you?" Subtle lies, "You don't deserve to be happy because of your past." Destructive thoughts, "Who do you think you are? You aren't good enough to accomplish that."

Yet we serve a God who promises that he can and he will crush those lions:

**You will trample upon lions and cobras;
you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet!
The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me.
I will protect those who trust in my name."
Psalm 91:13-14 (NLT)**

It takes a lot of faith to trust God when we are in the middle of the lion's den. We have to be vigilant because it's hard to hear his voice over the paralyzing voice of fear.

Yet we can stand firm, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and choose to believe the truth that God does, indeed, protect those who trust and call upon his name. Just as Daniel was safe in the midst of those lions so long ago, we have access to that same protection. It's up to us to claim it and trust it.

God's Word is truth, and it tells us in the verse above that he will rescue us. When those lions come to attack us, maybe we just need to close our eyes and listen for his still small voice, reassuring us that we don't need to fear because he is right there with us.

Father God, thank you that you see us in the midst of our struggles. Thank you that you hear us, even when it doesn't feel like it. Help your voice of truth speak louder in our hearts than the voice of fear. Help us and enable us to trust in your protection in the midst of the lion's den. Amen.

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Heaven Hidden in Our Hearts

We dream about heaven. We wonder about heaven. We try to imagine what it will be like.

One thing is for certain, it will be more glorious than any of us can fathom!

Yet sometimes my dreams of heaven leave me feeling more and more disappointed with the reality of today. When life is hard, when I'm facing yet another battle and fear I won't survive, I simply long to be in my heavenly home.

Yet God promises us heaven here on earth. We read in a letter written by Paul:

**But we are a colony of heaven on earth as we cling tightly to our life-giver, the Lord Jesus Christ.
Philippians 3:20 (TPT)**

But how do we find that heaven here on earth? How can we possibly feel it in the midst of so much uncertainty in our world?

If you read Philippians 3 in its entirety, you will get a clear vision of how Paul suggests we do that. I encourage you to read it for yourself.

I came up with an acrostic that provides tools I've drawn from Paul's words as well as my own experience that I hope will encourage you. It's based on the word heaven:

Hide His Word in your heart
Enter into His righteousness
Attack the negativity with positivity
Victory is His
Experience oneness with Jesus
Never forget who you are – a child of the King!

Hide His Word in your heart implies that we, first of all, have to spend time in his Word. His Word tells us:

**For our spiritual wealth is in him, like hidden treasure waiting to be discovered—heaven's wisdom and endless riches of revelation knowledge.
Colossians 2:3 (TPT)**

Dive into his Word and find those verses that speak deeply to your heart, those hidden treasures, those words that feel like they were written just for you. Guess what, they were! Memorize them and hide them in your heart. When the enemy comes to call, you'll be ready!

(continued)

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Enter into His righteousness. Like Paul, we can choose to let our passion be to be consumed with Jesus and not cling to our own righteousness. Our righteousness comes from the righteousness of God, not us. And we can claim that righteousness because of the faithfulness of Jesus, not because of our works.

Do you realize the freedom in that one truth alone! We don't have to be perfect and never will be. We are made new by Jesus and Jesus alone. Let the striving cease!

Attack the negativity with positivity is a powerful, powerful tool. As you may have heard me say before, Pollyanna had a point! It does our soul good to fight back with positive thoughts when we are feeling blue. "Laughter is the best medicine" is so true. Find something that brings you joy and do it!

Victory is His. We need to remember that we are not alone in this battle. God is always with us. We view our situations from our very limited perspective. We can't help it. It's what we know.

But read the stories in the Bible and remember how things that seemed impossible were transformed into examples of God's incredible strength and victory. I think about the parting of the Red Sea, the valley of dry bones being brought back to life, and all of the incredible healings we read about in the life of Jesus.

It helps me when I stop in the midst of struggles to realize that God is viewing my situation way differently than I am. He sees the end result; he sees the victory waiting on the other side of it, which helps me trust him in the midst of the mystery.

Experience oneness with Jesus. Have you ever sat still and pictured Jesus right beside you? I am a big advocate of solitude and silence, and it has totally changed my spiritual life. One of my favorite places for this is Trinity Heights where I sit literally at the feet of a huge statue of Jesus. I love the visual!

I've complained about being alone a lot and about my cancelled schedule; but honestly, I need solitude at times. I definitely need silence. We all do because our world is incredibly noisy. When we take the time to enter into his presence, when we experience oneness with Jesus, he provides peace that we can't find anywhere else.

Never forget who you are – a child of the King! You, my friend, are a masterpiece! You are fearfully and wonderfully made! Even when it feels like the world doesn't see your gifts and talents (and you don't either) God does. You are exactly who he created you to be!

Father, thank you that your desire for us is to experience heaven right here on earth! I pray you would open our hearts and help us find the treasures you have hidden in our hearts. We trust that you want the very best for us always. Amen.

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How We Start Matters

How we start things can make all the difference in the world. Let's say we want to take a trip to California. We could simply get in our car and start driving west, not following any sort of map but only our sense of direction.

If we choose that route, I'm sure we would encounter lots of detours and closed roads along the way. We would get there eventually, but it definitely would not be the fastest route to our destination.

A better plan, and one most of us would choose to follow, is to start with a map and a destination in mind.

To me, that's what starting my day in God's Word is like. It gets me on the right path from the beginning. It helps me see my destination with more clarity and purpose. It keeps me from running into detours.

Oh, it isn't perfect, by any means. I have plenty of days when I get off course. I have days when I wonder where in the world I'm headed. I have days when I get lost in the distractions and lose my focus. But I can say with all honesty that days I start with Him are always better than days that I don't. And when I find myself rushing out the door, too "busy" to have my quiet time, I miss it. I really do.

It's funny, what started out as something I felt "compelled" to do in order to grow in my faith has now become something I truly "desire" to do because of the positive impact it has had in my life.

At each and every sunrise you will hear my voice as I prepare my sacrifice of prayer to you. Every morning I lay out the pieces of my life on the altar and wait for your fire to fall upon my heart.

Psalm 5:3 (TPT)

What a beautiful picture this Psalm gives us. We lay out all the pieces of our life before him, we surrender, and then we wait. We wait for his Holy Spirit, his fire, to come into our hearts.

With this vision in mind, maybe instead of telling ourselves morning devotions are something we "should" do, we need to change that word to "get" to do. We get to spend time learning about God's incredible love for us. We get to spend time in quiet and peace before we enter the day at breakneck speed. We get to accomplish more in our day because God will supernaturally make it happen when we give him the first fruits of our time.

I've seen it again and again. How we start things matters. Let's start it with Jesus!

Father, thank you that your mercy is made new every morning. Thank you that you meet us in our quiet times with you. Help us trust that you will bless that time and make us more productive when we give the first fruits of our time to you. Amen.

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All We Need

Needs and wants, it's so hard to tell them apart sometimes. The world tells us we need so many things, the latest, greatest phone, a new car, time away in some exotic location, the latest fashion trend. The list goes on and on. Everywhere we turn we are bombarded by marketing for things we simply "can't live without."

Especially living here in the good old USA, we think we "need" things like that really cool new pair of jeans, but in reality do we really? I mean really. More than likely we have jeans in our closet that we've never even worn, so do we "need" them? When I'm honest with myself, the answer is usually a big fat no!

And I have to admit, I've been there in that place of wanting WAY too much in my life.

But if 2020 did nothing else, I think it taught most of us a great deal about needs and wants. I know it did me. I realized, as my schedule and means of making a living got shut down, how very little I truly needed, materially at least. Having that great new pair of jeans seemed pointless when there was no place to go.

And in the midst of the shutdown, God did a transformation in my heart. He opened my eyes to see all that I already have. And truth is, I have way too much. I'm guessing you do as well.

As God turned my heart and my mind more and more to him, I realized again and again that all my needs are met in him. When the world felt out of control, I had peace knowing God was still very much in control.

When I felt alone, I felt his presence deeper than ever before.

I learned that none of the earthly things matter. They really don't. In the end, what I need is a Savior. And guess what, I already have that.

What I need is forgiveness, and I already have that as well through the blood of Jesus Christ.

What I need is mercy, and I get a brand new dose of that every single morning.

What I need is an eternal home, and that's waiting for me on the other side.

It doesn't take my longings away. I still want things, that's for sure. But God has given me a new perspective on needs and wants. And quite honestly, most everything I think I need is nothing more than a want.

Father, thank you that you give us what we need...YOU! Help us overcome our selfish desires for more and more, desires that lead us so far away from you. Open our eyes to see and appreciate all that we already have right here and right now in your perfect, unending love. Amen.
