

hope
your
heart
needs

52 ENCOURAGING REMINDERS OF
HOW GOD CARES FOR YOU

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Introduction

God is the strength of my heart.

Psalm 73:26

“How are you?”

“I’m fine.”

It’s the answer we all give. Often what we really mean is, “I’m a little tired. A bit overwhelmed. Longing for something more.” In this world, our hearts grow weary. We want hope, joy, peace, and purpose. Surely all of this is around the next corner, we tell ourselves. If we hurry, if we try hard enough, then we’ll find it.

One morning I curled up under a cream-colored blanket that felt like the edge of a cloud. I turned on the lamp by my bed and sipped tea from a red

cup with a little chip in the rim. I didn't want this day to be like so many before. I wanted to know the answer to the restlessness in my heart. I needed a real solution.

I did an internet search. I texted a friend. But on this occasion, neither of those would do. I reached for my Bible then and flipped through the pages. I began to notice verses about who God is and how he loves us. And suddenly I came to a turning point: I realized what my heart needed wasn't a simple answer to a problem. No, I was looking for, longing for, a Person.

We all are.

Someone bigger than us. Stronger. Able to handle everything. Someone who will care for us, fight on our behalf, and extend grace to us always. Someone limitless and loving, beyond our imagination, and right there in the intimate details of our lives—always the same and yet forever doing a new thing in and through us.

"I already know God," we might say. And, yes, that can be so beautifully true. But thinking we know him completely is like believing we have

held every grain of sand from all the shores of the world in our hands. No matter how much we love him, however deep our faith goes, there is always so much more. This is a wonder and a gift. With every new discovery, our hearts are filled and freed, strengthened and helped, restored and empowered.

Or maybe God is still brand new to us. We feel a bit shy around him, like someone on a first date. We want to know more, but our knees are knocking and our heart is pounding. Maybe we've been hurt by religion or don't feel good enough or have a thousand reasons why we want to stop reading and walk away. If so, that's absolutely okay. This is a come-as-you-are book, because that's the kind of God we'll get to know on these pages.

The God who scattered stars like diamonds across the velvet of the universe, the keeper of every sparrow, the maker of us all is inviting us to draw closer to him. He is the place where our hearts can go on the hard days and the happy ones, in the highs and lows, when we are sad or

frustrated or downright giddy. He is what we have been searching for all along.

No amount of words could ever even begin to contain all of who God is. What's on these pages is only a sliver. But understanding more of God's character and how he loves us changed my life in beautiful, powerful ways. As you begin this journey, I'm praying it will do the same for you.

We don't have to settle for "I'm fine." Someone is whispering to us, inviting us, showing us in every moment, "I am God. I love you. You are mine."

XOXO
Holley

ONE

Beginning and End

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 1:8

Today, 353,000 babies will be born.¹ All those new lives coming into the world with a cry and a bundle of potential. Eyes blinking into the light, feet kicking, hands grasping. Hair the color of wheat and coal and chocolate and flame.

God will be there for all those beginnings, like an artist watching an unveiling of the canvas. He

knit them together in their mother's womb (Ps. 139:13). He was there for your birth too. Close your eyes for a moment and think of it. The God of the universe watched over your coming; he welcomed you into this world.

Today, 151,600 people will die.² They will step from this world into what's beyond. There will be tears and mourning. Goodbyes that are a gentle letting go after a long life and others that feel like an early wrenching. And God will be there for all those endings too. Not a single sparrow falls apart from his knowing (Matt. 10:29). How much more true is that of us?

The 7.4 billion of us who are not arriving or departing on this day will go about our business all over this world. We'll turn off alarm clocks or quiet the rooster. We'll pour the coffee or tea. We'll go off to work in an office or a field. Maybe we'll change a newborn's diapers or change the channel on the television in the new retirement home. We'll worry. And dream. Hope. And doubt. We'll feel happy or sad or tired or all of those. And God will be there for all of that too. Every second of our lives.

He was there before we were created. He spoke the world into being as the light-bringer, star-scatterer, and breather of life into the first man's lungs. He will be here long after we are gone, ashes to ashes and dust to dust. He is the God of the past, present, and future. Ours and all of history's.

This means we are never alone. We never have been. We never will be. There will never be a second when we are out of his sight or his care. In everything we have ever faced, he has been there. And in whatever is coming, he will remain.

God is not just *the* beginning. He is *our* beginning. He is our end. He is our everything in between.

*Beginning and End,
you are the Alpha and Omega, the start
and the finish. You are the reason I am here.
You will care for me every day of my life,
then take me home to be with you forever.
Thank you that you will be with me always;
nothing can ever separate us. Amen.*