

The grace of our Lord
overflowed for me
with the faith and love
that are in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:14

This book is a gift to

from

date





IMMEASURABLY

More

100 Devotions

ON GOD'S EXTRAVAGANT GRACE

DEB BURMA



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INTRODUCTION

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory. Ephesians 3:20–21, NIV

Immeasurably more.

Immeasurably more than all we ask.

Immeasurably more than all we imagine.

God is able to do immeasurably more . . . by His power at work within us. To Him be the glory!

(Did your jaw just drop too?) The One who created the universe and sent His Son to save you is the One who works within you. “For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

The Lord works in infinite measure beyond all you ask in prayer . . . beyond your imagination. (Let that sink in.) He can do infinitely more than anything you can measure, and He chooses to work through you, His forgiven, chosen child in Christ.

Trust that God is mightily at work in you. In what ways does He provide immeasurably more? He gives you a limitless measure of His grace, love, power, purpose, peace, and more.

I can’t wait for you to receive these affirmations of every good gift He gives to you in overflowing measure.

Imagine all that God can do . . . through you!

To Him be the glory.

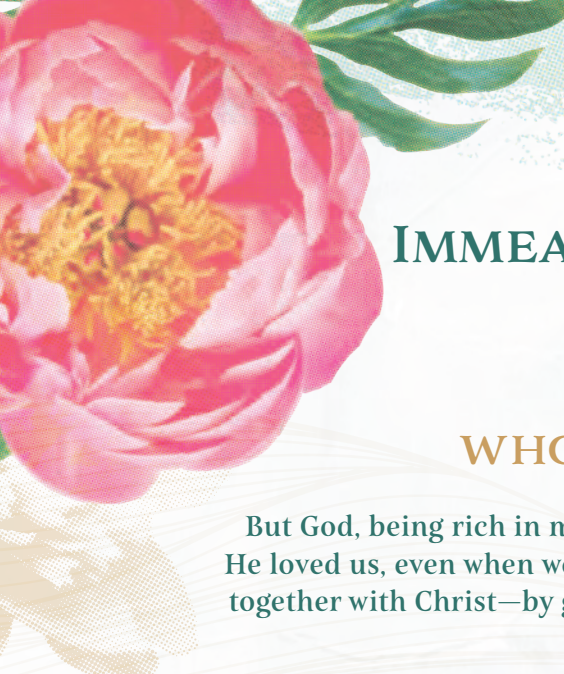
Deb Burma

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

I invite you to sit with your Savior. Curl up with your Bible and your favorite writing utensils. Lean in to learn, receive, and rest—alone or with a friend. *Immeasurably More* is a relational, conversational, richly scriptural devotional journal created for you . . . and it works in small group study settings too. Following every five or ten devotions, you can meet weekly or biweekly to review and discuss Scripture and the topics, along with your highlights and takeaways.

In addition to the daily devotional content and Bible passages, you will find a thought-provoking journal prompt,* followed by journaling or drawing space and a guided prayer. Notice that each prayer ends with “. . .” to encourage you to continue your conversation with the Lord, praying in Jesus’ name.

*Allow the journal prompts to guide your personal devotion time, or choose to write or draw as the Spirit leads you, following your time in the Word.



IMMEASURABLY MORE

Grace

WHO GETS GRACE?

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. Ephesians 2:4–5

What is grace and who gets it? What I understand as a grace period is when I have a few days between the statement date and when my account balance incurs additional charges. I get what it means to walk gracefully with good form and light feet. I know what to do when someone asks me to say grace before a meal. But do I “get” grace in the richest sense of the word? Do I understand divine grace, the grace of God, defined as undeserved, unearned favor? How can it be that He gives it to me freely, though I don’t deserve it?

Sin did more than distance you and me from God. It severed us from Him completely. We were without hope, dead in our sin (Ephesians 2:1, 12). But God “made us alive together with Christ” (Ephesians 2:5), saving us by His grace through Christ’s death and resurrection. Why would the Father choose to do such a thing? Because of His *great love* for us. While I struggle to wrap my mind around this great gift, I receive it by faith.

By His grace, time and again, Jesus has done immeasurably more through His forgiven followers than we could ask or imagine. As we take a glimpse into Scripture, we see His grace in action:

♥ *Grace* saved an adulterous woman from her captors . . . and from her sin (John 8:2–11). “Jesus stood up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And

Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more'" (vv. 10–11).

- ♥ **Grace** met a repentant disciple for breakfast on a beach, then reinstated him to minister to God's people (John 21:1–19). "[Peter] said to [Jesus], 'Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep'" (v. 17).
- ♥ **Grace** called murderous Saul out of darkness and into Jesus' piercing light (Acts 9:1–19). "'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise . . . you will be told what you are to do'" (vv. 4–6).

Did you hear Jesus' voice as He spoke to the adulterous woman? to Peter? to Saul (later known as the apostle Paul)? Do you hear His voice above your own or above those around you who may condemn you for your particular sins? Because you believe in Christ Jesus, you are no longer condemned (Romans 8:1). You "are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

While we don't know what came of the forgiven woman, we know Jesus freed her to face the future in faith. Peter and Paul were chosen and emboldened by Jesus to carry the Gospel into the world. By the same grace, Christ calls us, also forgiven followers, and He chooses to work through us too.

While it might be hard to understand God's divine grace, who gets grace? We do!

JOURNAL

Is it difficult for you to wrap your head around grace in its richest meaning? If so, why do you think that is? We may not fully "get" grace, but we get grace: it's ours in Christ! Journal about what that means to you.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for revealing Your grace to me in Jesus as I hear You in the Gospel, and as I humbly receive it from You . . .



HAPPY GOOD FRIDAY!

Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, . . . He was buried, . . . He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

I couldn't beat the blues, but I knew that if I made myself get out of the house, face the sunshine and strong Nebraska wind on that spring day, I would feel better. As I walked into the wind, I started spewing all my frustration and woes to God. I listed several ways that I was failing Him and failing the people around me. I kept circling back to the same thoughts: struggles with certain sins and my failure to move forward or follow through with commitments. I was stuck in the yuck of my poisonous thoughts. But then my cries turned to confession because I knew that the Lord hadn't given up on me. And I knew my sorry heart was just that—sorry. Repentant. (Praise the Lord! The Spirit was moving in me, even on this battle-the-blues day!) As I continued to take *everything* to God, receive His forgiveness, and allow the sunshine to flood my face, I almost missed my friends from church driving by me, trying to get my attention.

You see, it was Good Friday, and the neighborhood children were out of school. These three siblings and their sweet mama waved at me as they pulled into their nearby driveway. They were arriving home from afternoon worship and a grocery run. All of them in turn ran toward me for a hug, hollering, “Happy Good Friday!” on the way. They spoke excitedly of the Run for the Risen Son 5k we were all participating in the next day, and their mama told me that one of them had drawn multiple pictures of the crosses next to an empty tomb. They chatted excitedly, telling me that Easter was coming, and the tomb would be empty!

For the remainder of my walk, my spirits were lifted. My heavy heart was buoyed, and I knew this encounter was not coincidental.

God knew what I needed more than I did, and His answer to my prayer was immediate on that good Good Friday. Had my soul been particularly

heavy that day, making me all the more mindful of the sins for which Christ chose to die? of the righteousness that is mine by faith?

[Jesus] Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

I continue to be wowed by God's intimate knowledge of our needs and His saving love for all who believe. Does your heart need to be buoyed by way of His Good News for you? Picture me waving to you today, hollering, "He is risen!" By Jesus' wounds you have been healed.

JOURNAL

What helps buoy your heart when it's heavy? Could walk-and-talk time with the Lord lift your spirits? Praise the Lord as you journal today; He knows your need and He has Good News for you!

PRAYER

Savior Jesus, by Your wounds I am healed. I praise You for saving me, for hearing every prayer as You walk with me too . . .



ALL OR NOTHING

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who
are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

I have been known to avoid spaces when they're cluttered because I am distracted by the things that make up the mess and by what they represent: incomplete tasks. I am dismayed by the sight, which leads me to walk in the opposite direction, sometimes giving up on a task entirely. Take my kitchen, for example: when it is mostly clean, I can see clearly how to whip it back into shape. When it's a mess, the goal seems so far away. Overwhelmed, I don't know where to start, so I walk away.

I have an all-or-nothing personality, and I'm not proud of it. I can either be all-in or hands-off about social commitments, work responsibilities, and, yes, household chores. Some parts of my life are in good order, others are messy. Some relationships and responsibilities get messy because I can't give them proper attention, and I'm tempted to give up on them. When something isn't going how I believe it should, I start avoiding it, even if I love it. I procrastinate. Then I catastrophize the situation, certain I've fallen short, let others down, or worse. What if I am a failure?!

Wait! Is this how Jesus sees me?!

Sometimes, life is messy, relationships are messy, and my house is messy. But that doesn't mean I must declare that I am a mess—a failure. Except that—reality check—apart from Christ, I *am*. However, because I am found in Christ and redeemed by Him, I am no longer condemned by my sin (see Romans 8:1). Jesus can take any one of my messes and transform it into a message—to me and *through* me to others. He can do immeasurably more by ***His miraculous work in me***, by His grace!

What if I consider the things I *am* doing well—in the less-cluttered spaces—and give myself some grace?

Have you found yourself at either of these extremes: feeling good about what you are doing and feeling like you're beyond hope? When you or I fail

in any area of our life, Jesus knows. And He doesn't leave us, even if we fail to do our part in daily conversation with Him. He is all-in for you and me. Always. He knows our hearts (and our status) concerning every area of our lives. He holds every piece together (Colossians 1:17), even as He holds us.

Do you avoid cluttered spaces in your life? If so, why do you think that is? What things make up the clutter and what might they represent? In what areas of your life are you procrastinating, if any?

Praise the Lord for His forgiveness in Christ! He meets us where we sit in our struggles, and He covers us with compassion as we rest in His grace and His embrace. The only all-or-nothing that matters is this: I offer nothing for my salvation; Christ has paid it all!

JOURNAL

Resting in God's grace, write about your clutter and choose just one or two things from your list, whether relationships or responsibilities, and give them your attention. The next time you find yourself in this physical or emotional space, there will be one or two fewer procrastinated priorities creating clutter. Give yourself some grace too.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for meeting me where I am, with compassion and perfect understanding. In You, there is no condemnation; I rest in Your open arms . . .



BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF GOD'S GRACE?

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

What was I thinking?! My cousins and I had a youthful and short-lived fascination with matches and the ability to strike them and create fire. Poof! Such power. Such fun. There was no telling our parents. And no remorse . . . that is, until my father later warned me that one childishly lit match could burn down the farm. Gulp! Did I dare confess my former fascination and subsequent misbehavior?

Can you recall a time in your childhood when you did something you knew was wrong but you got away with it . . . and enjoyed it? Maybe only later did you feel remorse for the poor decision you'd made or the wicked thing you'd done. And maybe you were afraid to come clean, to approach your parents in apology, because you were sure that what you'd done was so awful, they wouldn't want to forgive you.

Could those be the thoughts of the prodigal son in the parable Jesus told (recorded in Luke 15)? He was sorry for every wicked thing he had done but wondered how he could hope to approach his father, knowing he was no longer worthy to be called *son* (Luke 15:19). Imagine his surprise and overwhelming joy when he drew near to his childhood home and saw his father running toward him *with open arms*, with a heart fairly bursting with compassion and grace for his beloved son (v. 20).

Jesus' parable reveals the extravagance of our heavenly Father's grace toward us! Despite the many ways we've sinned, from childhood to this very day, our Lord makes us worthy to be called His children because of Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice. Repentant, we can approach God's throne of grace with confidence (Hebrews 4:16). He knows when we are sorry. He runs to us, arms open wide, and forgives us, no matter what sin we've committed or

IMMEASURABLY MORE *Grace*

how badly we've messed up. We don't have to fear that our sins have surpassed the bounds of God's immeasurable grace for us in Christ Jesus.

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your forgiveness of _____ from my past.

Father, please also forgive me for _____ today.

As we stand in the shadow of Christ's cross, it's easier to extend grace to others, offering the same forgiveness we freely receive. Maybe a loved one is afraid to come clean to you. Embrace her with open arms, thanking God for the immeasurable extent of His grace and for the same extent of His power at work in you, a conduit of His boundless grace.

JOURNAL

Read Luke 15:11–32, the parable of the prodigal son, and journal your initial takeaways. Write about a time you behaved childishly and later felt remorse. Were you afraid to come clean? To whom can you extend God's grace with open arms today? in the days ahead?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your saving grace in Jesus . . .



SING A NEW SONG

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

I had an awful fight with someone I thought was my friend. Over and over, I recalled her hurtful words. I rehearsed my replies, and although I didn't say the words aloud, the responses I wanted to give her demanded my full attention. Just like that, in a brief moment, I had allowed bitterness to take root, and it was growing and causing trouble where she was concerned. God's commands convicted me:

See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled. (Hebrews 12:15)

My bitter thoughts mingled with the sour notes of my rationalization for feeling this way. The resulting mixed melody played like an old, warped LP record, spinning around and around with a distorted sound. With each replay I felt worse. I remembered the Lord's command to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5), and God's Word convicted me by the Spirit again:

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:31–32)

“As God in Christ forgave you.”

God has forgiven me for much more, and He has an incomparably different refrain playing. Do you hear it? Oh, “the immeasurable riches of [God's] grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7). He

can produce grace and kindness in me by His power, enabling me to hand out the same grace I've received so freely, unearned and undeserved. By His great big grace, He can do through me all that I cannot—and would not—on my own. Immeasurably more than I could muster. May the new song that I sing *glorify Him!*

I pray that I tune in to His words of grace and turn up thoughts that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8).

Does bitterness try to take root in you? Try this: play God's Word on repeat; even one verse will do. A memorized morsel of God's truth works wonders when your mind is tempted to wander. Sing it aloud, if that helps, when sour notes threaten to surface. Here's a great place to start: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). May you be an instrument of God's grace!

JOURNAL

Confess bitter notes you have played on repeat, allowing them to take root in you. Forgiven in Christ, sing a new song, tuning in to the words from Philippians 4:8 above, and choosing one of these qualities for the theme of your song.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, by Your power, produce repentance, grace, and kindness in me, enabling me to hand out Your grace as I sing a new song . . .