

Reflections from God: 365 Bible Verses for Every Day of the Year, offers daily verses and reflections that share the timeless messages and deep wisdom of the Bible.

REFLECTIONS FROM GOD:

**365 BIBLE VERSES FOR EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR ~ALONG WITH~ DAILY
CONTEMPLATIVE REFLECTIONS TO INSPIRE, GUIDE, AND BRING HOPE**

By Karen Smith

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365 Bible Verses for Every Day of the Year

REFLECTIONS *from* GOD

Daily Contemplative Reflections to
Inspire, Guide, and Bring Hope

KAREN SMITH

TESTIMONIALS

“For ages, God’s people have turned to scriptures and spiritual writings that speak words of consolation. Reflections from God invites us to do just this: to deeply listen to God’s word; to renew ourselves with daily prayer and contemplation; to hear the voice of hope in our days. Enjoy this collection of encouraging verses, selected from the prayer life and faith-filled journey of the author.”

Carla Orlando

Spiritual Direction Services Ignatian Spirituality
Center, Coordinator

Seattle Pacific University, Instructor

“Do you desire to spend time using scripture verses to understand how God is speaking to you each day? If you do, this book offers you samples to stimulate your own wisdom in applying how God is speaking to you. The twelve themes chosen by Karen Smith will fortify you in your spiritual journey

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and increase your desire to pray daily. God is speaking directly to you.

Lucy Wynkoop, OSB

Co-author with Christine Valters Paintner of
*Lectio Divina: Contemplative
Awakening and Awareness*

“Reflections from God is a beautiful and much needed book. It shows the author’s deep love of the Bible and her deep, prayerful engagement with Scripture over the years. In reading and praying with this devotional you will explore a treasury of some of the most inspiring verses in the Bible. And more importantly you will learn how to read the Bible prayerfully, listening for the Word of God. You will learn how God can speak to you personally through Scripture. Keep this lovely book handy, on your night stand or your coffee table, as a source of daily hope and inspiration.”

Paul Rietmann, author of *Jesus and Buddha
Meet in Stillness: A Beginner’s Guide to
Mindfulness Meditation and
Contemplative Prayer*

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INTRODUCTION

My love of the Bible started in my mid-twenties when I participated in a five-year course through an organization called Bible Study Fellowship, which explored different books of the Bible. I immensely enjoyed reading for the course—and at the same time, I found great comfort and peace reading the Bible at night. It quickly became one of my favorite bedside table books. The Bible continues to be a book that guides my days and nights with wisdom, inspiration, and hope.

One day, shortly after starting Bible Study Fellowship, I purchased a small leather notebook with the intention of writing a daily journal. That idea never came to fruition; God had different plans for that leather notebook. Another idea came to mind and I started to write down my favorite Bible verses to have and reflect upon, a practice that began eight years ago.

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I continued to grow deeply in my faith, getting involved with a contemplative meditation practice called Contemplative Prayer. This practice, derived from ancient monks and inspired by Jesus, calls for followers to sit with God in silence. Contemplative Prayer helps to open and consent to God's presence and action within us. Consequentially we develop a loving relationship with God and feel God's Divine love. As I sat in stillness and emptied myself of the cares and distractions of the world, I grew deep in

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communion with God. It is a wonderful practice, one that has become an important part of my life.

A few years later, I connected with a woman in my Contemplative Prayer group who taught me a spiritual practice called Lectio Divina. In this practice, one chooses a passage of the Bible and follows with four actions: Read, Reflect, Respond, and Rest.

I welcomed the mornings with a short Bible passage, and I would carry a verse or verses in my heart throughout the day. Some days, a particular incident would illustrate a direct unfolding of the verse; mostly, it was God speaking to me in my heart. I would respond and rest with the passage at night and write down my reflections. It was this ritual that led me to reflect and ultimately write one for every day of the year.

One evening, as I was writing, I realized the practice of Contemplative Prayer had opened my heart to God's love in my inmost being. Lectio Divina had given me a method to reflect upon and hold these verses. As a result of these two practices, my reflections had become a true gift and blessing from God.

It was then I heard God's quiet whisper in my heart and soul, telling me: "These are not just for you anymore. These need to be shared with others." It was not just a thought, but a loving command.

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Years passed and my life looked so much different. No longer married, and proudly watching my kids launch their adult lives in other cities, I decided to sell our family home and move to the bustling core of Seattle,

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leaving behind the quiet island where I had both grown up and raised a family. I then embarked on a two-year course to become a Spiritual Director, under the wise teachings of the Benedictine Sisters at the Priory in Washington.

Impossible to predict was that an even greater change would come: a global pandemic. There was much fear and uncertainty, and how we did just about everything changed. The one thing that remained constant for me, was writing down verses in that small leather journal. In that time of quiet stillness, and being alone, I gained a deeper openness to God. There was no noise to drown out His voice. Is this part of what God was trying to tell us, to listen and be still? Would out of this new life come a renewed understanding of ourselves, our world, and how we were living? As I continued to collect verses and reflect upon the Bible, I came upon a verse that was quite significant to me.

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.”

Romans 15:4

That verse affirmed to me why I was writing this devotional: so that through the teachings and words of the Bible, we can be inspired, guided, and have hope. Here I was, in a new age, resonating with a verse thousands of years old. Every unexpected turn of my lifetime has brought me back to the everlasting truths in the Bible.

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Reflections from God came to me through God so that I may share it with you. These hand-selected verses are steeped in traditional values, yet relate to the contemporary world, centered around twelve timeless themes: Love, Joy, Hope, Trust, Faith, Obedience, Humility, Fortitude, Peace, Protection, Knowledge, and Guidance.

Some themes may be easier to sit with, like love and joy; others may be more challenging, like fortitude and trust. Reading these Bible verses daily is a way to grow in knowledge and understanding of God's word; they are a window into God's heart. However you respond to the verses, open yourself to what God is trying to tell you, and in stillness, you may hear it.

We are all simply human, taking this life one day at a time in God's grace and mercy, and He will meet us where we are in our journey. God gave us these Bible verses so that we may get through the complicated times, whether in our most difficult seasons or our most joyous milestones. Life is beautiful in all its complexity and simplicity, if each day is taken with the Creator of it all.

VERSES

January 1

Romans 15:4

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

Hope

The Scriptures teach us, guide us, and bless us, for they instruct how to live, grow, and face challenges in our lives. The words that have come down through the ages teach us not only how to live in this world, but how to thrive in this world. They give us hope, love, and so much more—a true gift from God.

January 2

2 Peter 1:5-9

For this very reason make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith

Faith is not only knowing the Lord, but growing in the Lord. When we grow in faith, goodness, self-control, and perseverance, we are getting to know Jesus and all that he wants for us. Walking through this life with these qualities means walking through this life as someone continually seeking Jesus.

January 3

Matthew 6:33

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.

Obedience

God wants you to put Him before all else. He knows what you need better than you do, and when you seek Him first you are seeking what is truly important. His love, grace, and goodness are all you need, and all your desires will follow. Seek Him first, and let the rest of this life on earth unfold into the beautiful life He has in store for you.

January 4

Galatians 5:22-23

The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Love

The fruit of the Spirit comes from living with God. These fruits in our lives maintain us living in God's constant love. Through living a life with Him in prayer and love, all these wonderful fruits start becoming apparent in our lives, and out of their abundance we can bless those around us.

January 5

John 4:18

There is no fear in love but perfect love casts out fear.

Love

We need to live and move from a place of love, not fear. It is God's way, a peaceful and joyous way. How do we overcome fear and doubts in our lives? We fill our hearts with so much love that there is absolutely no room for fear. Be in constant prayer and thanksgiving for God's love, for it is the ultimate blessing.

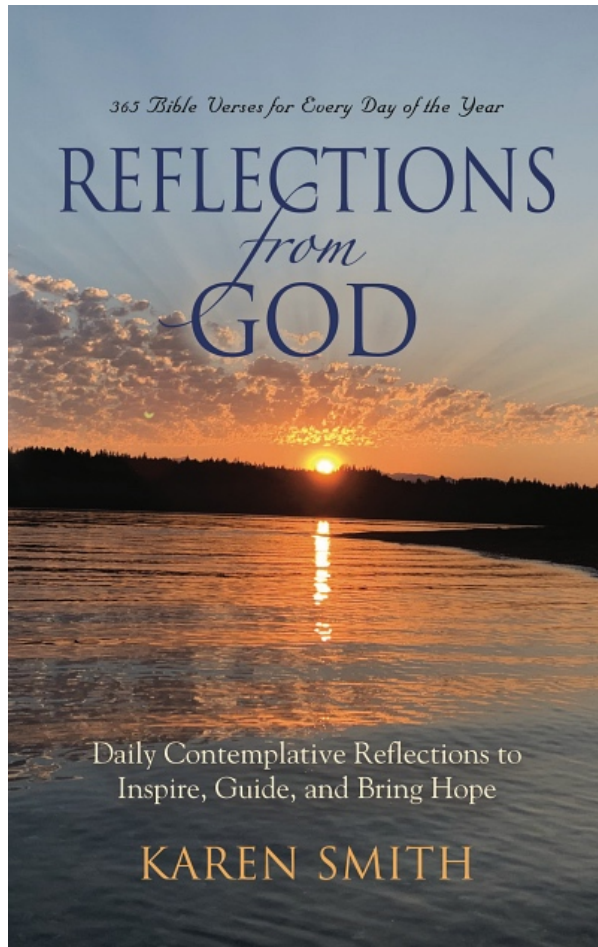
January 6

John 14:23

Jesus replied, anyone who loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make a home in him.

Obedience

Listening to and following God's teachings is essential to our being. The Lord wants to come to us, to live in us and to make His home in us, but most of all He wants to love us. He created us so we are all worthy of His love, and wants to bless us abundantly with it.



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