

FEARLESS FAITH

**DEVOTIONS FOR
COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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FOREWORD

It's with great pleasure that I greet this set of devotions, unique in that they arose from the Wisconsin Lutheran College academic community. I will always have a heart for this place, not only because of my 12 years as a regent, but because Time of Grace's media ministry really arose out of WLC.

If you want to have a conversation with agnostics and atheists, you'll find them in a university. I've heard people say that they went into college a believer and came out without their faith. Some of my friends aren't very religious either. And yet I've heard a few of them say that they wished they could believe.

Where does faith come from? How does no faith become some faith? How does a weak faith become a strong faith? The Bible tells us that "faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). If you are interested in growing your faith, you can expedite the process by increasing your exposure to God's words. It's that simple.

These devotions are a tool for you. Each day this school year you'll find a story or insight from our human story, a word from the Word, and a suggestion of what to do with it. If your idea of Bible study is to wait until you find large blocks of time each week for it, you may never get started. Here's another way: read a little bit every day until it becomes a treasured habit, your best time of the day.

May God grow your faith through these devotions, and may they help you be inspiration and light for others in your life.

Pastor Maule Jeske

INTRODUCTION

“It’s a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there’s no knowing where you might be swept off to.” ~ J.R.R. Tolkien

I love this quote from the *Lord of the Rings*, and I believe it is fitting for the life of a college student. College is an adventure. If you are reading this book, you are either stepping into the unknown for the first time, are in the midst of your journey, or perhaps you are approaching a new adventure of life after college. The purpose of this devotion book is to help you not lose your way as you battle the doubts, fears, and temptations of college.

These devotions were written by college students and others who truly understand the struggles that a college student goes through. Beginning in August and ending in May, all of these devotions are brief and to the point, for as a college student, I truly understand the busy lifestyle. It is my hope that through their stories and God’s Word you are able to stand firm and strong in your faith throughout college.

This project has certainly been an adventure for me! It was an adventure that began at the end of my junior year of college when I received a scholarship that required a senior project. It is only right then that I thank Gary and Sandra Greenfield, as without their generous gift this project may have never been born. I would also like to thank the many authors, editors, advisors, and others who contributed to the project. Without their support and help, this project would never have existed. Finally, I would like to thank Time of Grace, for without their partnership this project might have never been published.

To God be the glory!
Jacob Werre
Wisconsin Lutheran College
Class of 2015

AUGUST
MAKE A GOOD BEGINNING

August 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR?

Colossians 4:5 *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.*

Most people think that the new year starts in January. That's when most people get a new calendar, make resolutions, and look toward the future. For the average college student, however, the new year starts in August. For four or more years, this is the time when everything is in transition and there's opportunity to make changes. Daily routines include new people and a new schedule. Students are also challenged to step outside their comfort zones.

With the tumult of change happening everywhere at the start of a new school year, it's very important to remember our primary role as Christians: to love God and to love our neighbor. We always have a choice in how we interact with others, how we spend our time, and who we spend it with.

As the new school year starts, let's evaluate to see if any adjustments are needed: Who are these outsiders that Colossians 4:5 talks about? I'm meeting many new people—are they outsiders? Am I an outsider?

The fact is that we all feel like outsiders at some point. We all struggle in our own way. However, as Christians, we can build each other up and support each other. Earlier in Colossians 4, St. Paul tells us to devote ourselves to prayer and to pray for each other so that we can clearly share God's message in our words and in how we live our lives.

PRAYER Dear heavenly Father, please watch over me, whether I'm an insider or outsider. Send your Holy Spirit to work in my heart so that I may live to serve you. Amen.

August 2

NO WORRIES

Philippians 4:19 *My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*

What if people don't like me? Do I have the right schoolbooks? What if I can't find my classrooms? Did I pack everything? These are a few of the many anxieties that are present as the school year is about to start. I remember my freshman year, when I moved from Arkansas to Wisconsin and knew nobody at college. One of my worries was that no one would be my friend and I would sit alone at lunch or in the classroom.

I've learned that we don't need to worry about these things when entering a new year of college. The apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:19 that God will take care of all our needs. Paul wrote this to the Philippians, who had given him an abundance of gifts. Paul was reminding them that God would provide for them just as God had provided for him through their gifts. And the greatest gift that God has provided for us is the gift of his perfect Son, who was sent to die on a cross for us.

Once I came to college, I realized there was no need to worry about having friends. Yes, sometimes I sit alone at lunch or in the classroom, but God has provided me with plenty of friends. The next time you're worried at the start of a school year, whatever the worry may be, remember that God is always there providing for what you need.

PRAYER Dear God, thank you for providing me with all the things I need in life, especially your Son. Please help me to not worry as I get ready for the school year and to understand you are always there for me. Amen.