

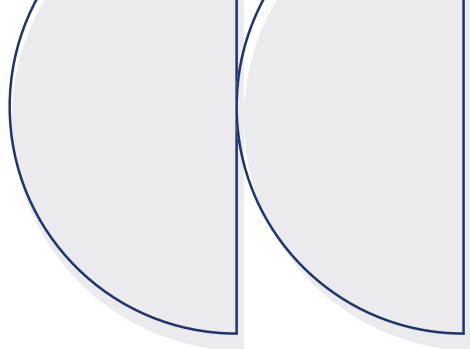
DAY 6

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

John 8:12 NLT

Have you ever tried to find your way around a dark room? It’s really hard to do, right? Well, life can sometimes feel a lot like that! Remember this truth when life feels uncertain: Jesus is the light of the world. That light is what we celebrate every year at Christmas! And when we choose to follow Jesus, He lights our way so we don’t have to stumble around in the darkness.

Today, make a point to notice the various lights in your life—the sun, a flashlight, the lights in your home. When you see them or use them, thank God for providing you with the ultimate light of Jesus to help you through life.



DAY 7

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.
Luke 2:14 NIV

One of the best things about the Christmas season is that it gives us the chance to stop and reflect on the joy of Jesus coming to Earth. When we read about that first Christmas in Scripture, we remember what the gift of Jesus really means to us. So this week, work to memorize Scripture from that story!

Turn on your favorite Christmas song and let it play. As the song goes on, try to write this verse as many times as you can before the music ends. Try to write it more and more by memory each time you start!

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN
everyday faith.

SHAKE IT UP / WEEK 1

MIDDLE SCHOOL

DAY 1

Yes, the Lord has done amazing things for us! What joy!
Psalms 126:3 NLT

How many things would you say are amazing? Is it amazing to have fun with friends? Would you say your favorite meal is amazing? Or getting Christmas presents and having winter break are amazing? Whatever it is, we usually consider things to be amazing because they bring us joy. Well, throughout history, people have recorded in the Bible time and time again that we can be filled with joy because of the amazing things that God has done for us. There is no greater joy than that!

What amazing things has God done in your life? Take a moment to write a few down and consider how they’ve brought joy to your life. Then, thank God for bringing you joy through the amazing things happening in your life.

DAY 2

For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.
Zephaniah 3:17 NLT

We hear the word “joy” a lot during the holiday season. The presents, the music, the time off school, the decorations, the celebration of the gift of Jesus to the world—it’s all the stuff that makes Christmas full of joy. But while that’s the stuff that brings us joy, have you ever thought about what brings God joy? God gets the greatest joy out of each one of us! God delights in us. In other words, to God, we’re the thing that makes the Christmas season, and every season, full of joy.

Think about all the things that you think God might find delightful about you. Then, make it a point to celebrate the things about you that give God great joy.

DAY 3

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14 NIV

The best kind of friend shows up when we need them most. When things don't work out with your crush, when you find out you're getting new step-siblings, when you don't make the team—that's when friends show up to help us get through it. Christmas is a reminder that, in the same way our friends show up for us, Jesus showed up for us thousands of years ago. Jesus was God's way of showing up right when we needed God the most. Jesus came to be the friend that loves us all no matter what. And who doesn't need a friend like that?

Today, say a prayer, talking to God just as you would to a friend. Thank God for sending Jesus to live among us and be the friend we all need.

DAY 4

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people." Luke 2:9-10 NLT

There's usually a limit to the way good news works. Think about it! A cupcake brings joy to the person eating it. A surprise vacation brings joy to the family traveling. A snow day brings joy to an entire school district. During the first Christmas, an angel brought good news that was different. It was good news that had the potential to bring great joy to all people. It was the good news of Jesus. That means your family, friends, and even strangers you see on the street can all be impacted by the good news of Jesus.

Who is one person you know that could use some joy in their life this week? Find a way to share the good news of Christmas with that person.

DAY 5

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. Luke 2:9-10 NLT

Written by Anders, age 18, from Arvada, Colorado, USA

Did you know the phrase "don't be afraid" is written in the Bible 365 times? I believe that's a daily reminder that no matter what we're facing, God is right there next to us, helping us conquer the day.

After Jesus had been born, an angel appeared to tell them this news—because they had been waiting for Him to arrive and save them for so long! I don't know about you, but if an angel appeared to me for any reason, I'd probably be scared at first. But the first thing the angel said to the shepherds was this: "Don't be afraid!" The angel knew they didn't need to be afraid because the news they had

was good news that would bring great JOY. The news that Jesus had been born!

If you're going through a situation that seems terrifying, remember that God's plans for you are for your good and that through Jesus, you can choose joy today.

Remember it this way: Jesus Over You (JOY). Jesus is watching over you, He loves you, and He's over every problem that you encounter. Trust Him and choose JOY because He chose you first.

Right now, take two minutes and ask God for courage to choose joy in a situation in your life that doesn't really feel happy or joyful right now.