

30
Days to
Becoming
a Woman
of Prayer

Stormie Omartian



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For I know the thoughts that I think
toward you, says the LORD,
thoughts of peace and not of evil,
to give you a future and a hope.
Then you will call upon Me
and go and pray to Me,
and I will listen to you.
And you will seek Me and find Me,
when you search for Me with all your heart.

JEREMIAH 29:11-13

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HOW CAN I MAKE MY LIFE WORK?



We are all trying to make our life work. And while we don't always know for sure when it's working, we definitely know when it's not.

When your life is working, that doesn't mean everything is perfect. It means you are in a place of peace with God, and you know without a doubt that you are in His hands and He will not desert you, leave you hanging off a cliff, or fail to be with you in challenging, difficult, or tough times. When your life is working, you have a deep and abiding certainty that things are going to work out for good in your future, no matter what is happening today. That means even when something goes wrong, you know you have access to a power that can make it right again. That power only comes from one source—God. And He has certain specifications for tapping into it. When we live according to those specifications—the way He wants us to live—our life works.

We all desire stability and consistency in our lives. It's not good enough to live by chance or luck. That is too unpredictable. We want to know we can count on having the ability to make right choices. We will never have the peace we desire if our life is not progressing well because we didn't have the wisdom to make good decisions. We want

to be able to avoid doing anything stupid that will bring undesirable consequences. We want to have an ongoing awareness of our purpose and a sense of hope about our future. But where do we get that sense of purpose, hope, peace, wisdom, stability, and consistency? It comes from God. In order to achieve this in our lives, we must connect with God in a deep and powerful way. We cannot enjoy freedom, wholeness, or true success without this vital connection.

What Is True Success?

You were not created to live in bondage, brokenness, or failure after failure. You have been put here to live a life of God-given power, purpose, and accomplishment. God wants you to live in true freedom, true wholeness, and true success.

True freedom doesn't mean freedom to do whatever you want. It means being liberated by God from anything that keeps you from doing what *He* wants. It means being free to become more like the Lord every day so you can live the life He created you to live and become all He created you to be. It means getting free of the restrictions, fears, false beliefs, and negative emotions that keep you from moving in to all God has for you.

True wholeness means having all the brokenness of your life put back together in a lasting way that allows you to become a whole person. It doesn't mean you are perfect, but rather that the *Lord's perfection* can shine *in* you and work *through* you—not only for *your* benefit but also for the benefit of others. When anything in your life is broken, God can mend it and make it like new again. The presence of God's holiness can make you whole.

True success is the kind of success *God* has for you. His ways are different from the world's. Too often when people think of success, they envision being rich and famous. Or being at the top of whatever they do. But true success is not about wealth, fame, and worldly accomplishment. True success is knowing who you are in the Lord and never violating that. It's trusting that God has a good future for you, no matter how things *appear* at the moment. I've known too many wealthy,

famous, and accomplished people who were miserable because they chased after a selfish dream of their own making. I have witnessed the emptiness of a life lived totally for oneself, and there is nothing truly successful about it. That doesn't mean wealth, fame, and accomplishments are all bad. If you are doing what God has called you to do and the Lord blesses you with those things, then they are good. And you can enjoy that kind of success as long as you are using part of what God gives you to help others.

True success doesn't mean you never have problems. It means whenever you go through a difficult time you have a deep sense that God is with you and will bring you *out* of it or *through* it successfully. It means you see the hand of God in your life, and you acknowledge His presence and His touch with a grateful heart.

True success means you have an understanding of the ways of God and the heart of God, and you find great pleasure in honoring Him by living according to His laws and His ways.

True success means living in close contact with God throughout each day and finding everything you need *in* the Lord and *from* the Lord. It's having a deep inner peace because you know God is on your side and always there for you. It's believing God is greater than anything you face and trusting that His power can positively affect every situation that threatens you. It's knowing in your soul that no matter what problem comes along, God has a solution, a way out, or a way through. It's unwavering faith that your prayers are heard by God and He will answer—in His way and His time. It's sensing the love of God in your life and being able to extend it to others in the manner He wants you to. It's trusting that God has the answer to every question you have, and so you stop obsessing over your questions and start trusting His answers.

True success is becoming who you were made to be—who you really are—and accepting that who you really are is *good*. This knowledge frees you from having to constantly compare yourself to others and always feeling that you come up short. It liberates you from the tyranny of images and lifestyles depicted on TV and in films, magazines, and books that can make you believe you are failing if you don't live

up to them. Measuring your worth by those standards will turn your world upside down from what it is supposed to be. God has so much more for you than that.

True freedom, wholeness, and success can only be found when you are living a praying life. A praying life means staying close to God and praying about everything. It means listening to Him speak to your heart and into your life. It's walking so close to God that He can keep you away from danger and guide you where you need to go.

How Do I Get Close to God?

The way to get close to God and appropriate His power in your life is through prayer. Prayer is the means by which we communicate with God. It is the avenue through which we tell Him our fears, desires, and needs. Prayer is the way we quiet our soul and mind and let God speak to us. It is through prayer that we worship God—giving Him praise for who He is, and telling Him how utterly grateful we are for all He has done for us.

In prayer we intercede for the people and situations around us. In prayer we praise God for all He has done. And we thank Him in advance for all He *is* doing and *will* do for us in the future. When we pray, we can sense our relationship with God growing stronger, and we feel our love for Him and our dependency on Him deepening. The more we pray, the more we can see His hand of mercy, grace, and love guiding us daily. The more we pray, the more we realize that we cannot live without Him and His power.

The key here is coming to the realization that we cannot make life work on our own. We need the power of God. We must have the saving, redeeming, delivering, healing touch of the Lord because we need to be saved, redeemed, delivered, and healed. And good luck trying to do any of this on your own. Let me just save you the trouble of learning the hard way that luck isn't going to do it for you. Your life is not going to have love, peace, joy, fulfillment, power, healing, restoration, and transformation without the Lord. The reason I know this is true is

because I have been there and done that. All my attempts to make life work on my own nearly killed me.

I had a childhood of abuse at the hands of a severely mentally ill mother. When I was able to get out on my own, I nearly overdosed on drugs and drank way too much alcohol. I became disillusioned by many wrong relationships and tried to cope with paralyzing fear, anxiety, and depression on a daily basis. Living a cover-up life of laughter on the outside and gut-wrenching emotional pain on the inside, never knowing when disaster would strike, being afraid to go to bed because of what horrible thing could happen in the night, and waking up with dread because I didn't think I could make it through another day—this is not a life that works, believe me! My life works now because of what God has done and *continues* to do in me and in my circumstances.

Does this mean my life is perfect and I never have problems? I wish! But the answer is no. I live in the same fallen world you do. I have the same enemy attacking me just as he does everyone else who doesn't go along with him. I've been close to death so many times I have lost track of the number. I have troubles like everyone else. But I have also been saved, rescued, set free, transformed, and made whole. What God has done for me, He will do for you. He is not a respecter of persons. He doesn't respect me any more than He does you. He has the same love, mercy, peace, grace, power, healing, hope, restoration, redemption, and true success in life for you too. It all happens as you get close to God in prayer.

Knowing What Your True Needs Are

You need to frequently be reminded of who God is and who you *are* and *can be* in Him.

You need to take charge of your thoughts and emotions, and seek to be delivered from anything that imprisons or restricts you so you can live in the freedom and wholeness God has for you.

You need to be deeply impressed with the knowledge of all Jesus accomplished on the cross so you are not continually wearing yourself

out struggling to make something happen in your life that has already been accomplished.

You need to always follow the leading of the Holy Spirit so you can know God's will and be where you are supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to do.

You need to understand, recognize, and receive the gifts God has for you so you are not always striving for what He has already provided.

You need to know God's rules for life and be able to secure His help in fully obeying them.

You need to be free of guilt and able to maintain a heart of humility and repentance.

You need to receive God's forgiveness whenever you miss the mark He has for you and be able to extend forgiveness to others when they, too, miss the mark.

You need to have the fear of the Lord in your heart every day so you are in right relationship with Him, and then He will take away all tormenting fear from your life.

You need to be able to see and appreciate your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit so you can learn to care for it properly.

You need to experience God's love every day and be able to share it with the people He puts in your life.

You need to be free to wholeheartedly give to God and to others in the way He would have you to do.

You need to know God as your Healer and grow in faith that He can bring healing to you and to those for whom you pray.

You need to find breakthrough in your life through the godly discipline of fasting and prayer.

You need the ability to take control of your mind and not be tossed to and fro by lies of the enemy, who always tries to make you believe that his lies are the truth and God's truth is a lie.

You need to resist negative thoughts and emotions, and stop believing lies about yourself.

You need to speak words that bring life, and be able to seek the truth in all situations.

You need to move in the power of God and not live an overwhelming life of powerlessness in the face of difficulties.

You need to be rid of destructive relationships that not only don't add to your life but tear it down.

You need to recognize who your enemy is so that you can resist him and not assist him.

You need to be strong enough to turn away from all temptation to do anything that is not glorifying to God.

You need to learn to pray without ceasing so that you can enjoy emotional peace and contentment.

You need to surrender your life to God and live in a manner deemed holy by Him.

You need to grow in faith and not be tormented or restricted by doubt and instability.

You need to be able to unflinchingly stand strong in all you know of God, no matter what is happening.

You need to be the kind of person who never gives up hope, regardless of how hopeless things seem, because your hope is in the Lord.

If you have a desire for any of these things I have mentioned above, then what you need is more of the Lord in your life. This book will help you to find that life-changing closeness with Him. It will steer you toward God and His Word and help you discover more of who He is. I pray that as you read it—perhaps one chapter a day, praying the prayer, implementing the suggestions, and reciting the biblical truths related to the subject at the end of each chapter—within 30 days you will sense that your relationship with the Lord has grown deeper and you will see that God has provided everything you need in order for your life to progress in a positive way. Don't feel you have to complete it in 30 days, however. I just know that a lot of you type A's like to do that. Speed is not what is important. Go at your own pace and spend as much time as you need on each chapter. I have placed some pages for personal notes at the end of the book. If in your reading you come across something God is

nudging your heart about, you can use those pages to record your thoughts or prayers.

The following 30 chapters give you 30 ways to pray. I could write a book on each chapter because there is so much to know about every subject, but what I have given you here is still enough to be life changing. Don't allow the brevity of the chapter to minimize the importance of that subject to your life. If you grasp these 30 ways to pray for your life, you will be living a life of balance, purpose, freedom, wholeness, and true success. You will be living a praying life, a life dedicated to drawing close to God and communing with Him every day—a life that works.

Stormie Omartian

KNOW WHO YOUR FATHER IS

The whole point of living a praying life is to be close to God and to have a deep, solid, and unshakeable relationship with Him. A praying life allows you to be solidly aligned with the Lord by communing and communicating with Him throughout each day. This means not only knowing *about* God, but truly knowing *Him*—or at least as much as He can be known on this earth.

Knowing God starts with the *desire* to know Him and then *seeking* to know Him. From there it becomes a matter of wanting *more and more* of Him in your heart and in your life. The focus isn't on the praying. The focus is on the *One to whom you are praying*. Prayer is the means by which you deepen your relationship with God.

Knowing God fully takes more than a lifetime. It takes eternity. But God is a God who can be known here and now. In fact, He *wants* us to know Him. He wants us to be well acquainted with the many different aspects of who He is. Three distinct aspects of God, which are the foundation of knowing Him, are God the *Father*, Jesus the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*.

You may be thinking, *I already know that*. But I thought the same thing until I found out how easy it is to *think* we know and yet miss

dimensions of knowing God that we forget, overlook, or fail to see. Or we focus on one aspect of knowing Him to the exclusion of the others. Because this is so important, the first three chapters of this book are devoted to these three vital aspects of our one true God.

The Importance of Knowing God as Your Heavenly Father

Knowing God *as* your heavenly Father is different than simply being aware that God *is* your heavenly Father. One of the reasons people are bound up, broken, or experiencing a sense of failure about themselves and their lives is that they don't know God *as* their heavenly Father.

I know a man who felt he would never be able to fully understand who he really was because he had never known his father. That young man's father had been tragically absent from his life, and now—even well into adulthood—he struggled daily with the pain and loss of that relationship. An entire piece of his life was missing, and he felt that lack every day as he tried to reconcile his past with his present and future. He knew who his father was, but he had never known him *as* his father.

I believe the same is true for all of us with regard to our *heavenly* Father. We know God is our heavenly Father because the Bible tells us so. “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:18). God desires that relationship with us. But do *you* know without a single doubt that God is a father who loves you, values you, cherishes you, watches out for you, provides for you, protects you, takes away your hurt, and restores you the way a good father should? Without this knowledge deep within your soul, you will struggle with how you think God sees you.

Children who *know* they are loved by their father act differently than those who *doubt* that they are loved or, even worse, *know* that their father doesn't care for them. The ones who *know* they are loved develop better and faster than those who *don't feel* loved. This is common knowledge. And it is just as important that we—as adults—understand the love our Father God has for *us*. In order to do that, we have to know Him better every day.

When you truly acknowledge God *as* your heavenly Father, you will

have taken the most significant and foundational step toward finding the freedom, wholeness, and true success God has for you. When you come to know who your heavenly Father really is, then you can better understand who *you* really are. The good news is that you don't have to live in ignorance of who your heavenly Father is because He not only *can* be known but *wants* to be known by you.

When Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, He said, "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray, 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name'" (Matthew 6:8-9). He proceeded to give them what we call the Lord's Prayer. Jesus instructed the disciples to first establish their relationship with God as their heavenly Father. What that means for us is that we, too, need to begin our prayers by acknowledging God as *our* heavenly Father. If you want your life to work, begin each day by saying, "Thank You, heavenly Father, for this day."

The foundation of your entire relationship with God is that you are His son or daughter. That means you are dependent on Him for everything, and because He is your Father, you can trust Him to provide for you and protect you. After all, isn't that what a good father does?

Too often, however, people have a distorted image of God as a father because they had (or have) a bad or nonexistent relationship with their earthly father. If you felt unloved, abused, distant from, or abandoned by your earthly father, you may project those feelings onto God as well. But God is not distant or abusive. He loves you and wants you to love Him. He wants you to be with Him and to trust that He is with you. He is never too busy for you. He will always take care of you. He will never abandon you. He will not leave you or forsake you. He knows what you need (Matthew 6:8). He gives good things to His children who love Him, seek after Him, and ask of Him (Matthew 7:7).

Being a child of God means knowing you are part of a large family and you have a place with Him and that family for eternity. In the meantime, because you are His son or daughter, God will guide you, provide for you, protect you, and give you an important position in the family business.

Healing the Relationship with an Earthly Father

What was your relationship like with your earthly father? Can you see any way that you may have projected onto God some of the feelings you have had toward your father? This will be especially apparent if you did not—or *do* not—have a good relationship with your earthly father.

If your father was gone a lot or just never there for you, you may feel God won't be there for you when you need Him most, either. If your earthly father was emotionally detached, abusive, or stern, you may feel that your heavenly Father will be distant, unloving, or cold. The relationship you had with your earthly father can affect the relationship you have with your heavenly Father more than you realize if you don't take steps to keep that from happening.

If your earthly father was *far* from perfect, know that your Father God will never be *less* than perfect. If you were ever made to feel like a failure when you made a mistake, you may think God is always disappointed in you too. But your Father God is not like an earthly parent. He will never have expectations *of* you that are too high for you to meet. He does expect a great deal *for* you, however. He expects you to have the life of freedom, wholeness, and true success He has for you. All He asks *from* you is that you love, trust, and obey Him, and that you depend on Him for everything.

While you cannot control what your earthly father *did* or did *not* do in your life, you *can* control your response to that now. And it starts with forgiveness.

My mentally ill mother was very abusive when I was growing up. Even when her mental illness was later diagnosed, that knowledge still didn't take away the years of abuse I suffered at her hands. Once I became a believer, I learned that if I wanted to live in the freedom, wholeness, and true success God had for me, I had to forgive her. That didn't happen instantly. It happened a step at a time as I prayed for God to help me forgive her completely. And I eventually did.

In addition to that, I also had to forgive my dad.

I never consciously realized I had any unforgiveness toward my dad

until my Christian counselor and mentor, Mary Anne, told me that God had revealed this to her. Even after I met with her about it, I didn't believe it. My dad never abused me, so I had a hard time receiving this. Mary Anne said, "Just ask the Holy Spirit to show you the truth."

When I was alone, I asked God to show me the truth about what Mary Anne had said. And I was totally shocked when He instantly revealed how much unforgiveness I had toward my dad for never rescuing me from my mother's insanity. He never unlocked the door to the closet my mother often put me in for hours on end as punishment. He never rescued me from my mother's physical, emotional, and mental abuse. Because my father had not come through for me as a child, I had a hard time trusting that my heavenly Father would come through for me as an adult.

When I confessed my unforgiveness toward my dad, I sobbed away a lifetime of uncried tears and resentment I had held within my heart. I discovered that only God's love and healing power can unearth things so deeply buried within us that we don't even realize they are there, and He can free us from them.

The freedom I felt after confessing my unforgiveness toward my father was pronounced. The most noticeable difference was that I sensed the love of God powerfully in my life as I had never felt it before. Forgiving my earthly father set me free to love him more, and to love and trust my heavenly Father more as well. After that, I saw my life open up to the love of God in ways I had previously not been able to do.

In order for you to have a solid foundation in the things of God that will determine where your life goes and what happens, and in order to have the freedom, wholeness, and true success you want, you have to forgive your earthly father for all that he *did* or did *not* do *to* you or *for* you. Your relationship with your earthly father may have been much better than mine or it may have been worse. Whatever it was, ask God to show you if there is anything, with regard to your relationship with your father, that needs to be forgiven or mended.

I am not saying that if your father was abusive or absent you have to go find him so you can talk to him in person. Some fathers will be

receptive to that and some won't. Your decision about that is between you and God. Your father may not even be alive now. Whether he is living or not, forgive him for any way he failed, hurt, or disappointed you. The freedom of forgiveness I experienced toward my dad happened with just me alone with God. He can meet you where you are right now and do the same for you. If there are any bad feelings in your heart toward your father, bring those to God and ask Him to take all negative feelings and memories away, and heal you of any hurt associated with them.

Even if you think your earthly father couldn't have been a more perfect dad, ask God to show you if you are projecting any wrong or incomplete ideas about what a perfect father is onto the Lord. God may show you something about Himself that you didn't realize.

Your heavenly Father can heal you, mend your brokenness, and bring life to places in you that you thought were dead. The truth is, you can never experience the peace, freedom, restoration, wholeness, and true success God has for you without recognizing and acknowledging God as your heavenly Father. When you can truly accept God as the greatest father imaginable, it will positively affect every area of your life.

Find Out Who Your Heavenly Father Really Is

In the Bible, God is revealed by the many names He is called. I believe those names are there to help us better understand the many different aspects of God's character. They help us to know who He really is. We cannot move into the life God has for us without this knowledge.

The list of names below will help remind you of aspects about God's nature that you may have forgotten, overlooked, or perhaps have not known. God has revealed Himself in this manner because He wants you to know and trust Him in every way possible. In understanding Him by these names, and calling Him by these names, you invite Him to become that to you.

I have written this brief list of the names and attributes of God as

a short prayer for you to say. It's a way for you to acknowledge God as the many aspects of who He is and help you to know Him better.

“Heavenly Father, You are my *Restorer*. You restore all that has been taken, destroyed, devoured, or lost from my life” (Psalm 23:3).

“Father God, You are my *Deliverer*. You set me free from anything that keeps me from the life You have for me” (Psalm 70:5).

“Heavenly Father, You are my *Redeemer*. You redeem all things in my life” (Isaiah 63:16).

“Father God, You are my *Strength*. When I feel weakest, that's when You are strongest in me” (Isaiah 12:2).

“Heavenly Father, You are my *Guide*. I acknowledge you in all I do, knowing that You are directing my steps” (Proverbs 3:6).

“Father God, You are my *Counselor*. You teach me all the right things to do” (Psalm 16:7).

“Heavenly Father, you are my *Peace*. When my life provides little peace, I can still find peace in You” (Ephesians 2:14).

“Father God, You are *Immanuel*, the God who is with me. You are always close and never distant. I am grateful that You never leave or forsake me” (Matthew 1:23).

“Heavenly Father, You are my *Strong Tower*. You are a covering of protection for me when I turn to You” (Proverbs 18:10).

“Father God, You are my *Hiding Place*. I can hide myself in You whenever I am afraid and facing more than I can handle” (Psalm 32:7).

“Heavenly Father, You are my *Wisdom*. When I need wisdom about anything, I can go to You, and You will give me all the understanding I need” (1 Corinthians 1:24).

“Father God, you are my *Everlasting Father*. You are my Father forever, and not just until I can figure things out on my own” (Isaiah 9:6).

These dozen names are just a fraction of the many names of God, but they will provide a good foundation from which you can spend the rest of your life uncovering all of who God is. And you will love the process, because the more you know of God and the more you acknowledge Him in your life, the closer you will grow to Him.

God is your heavenly Father, who will guide, protect, and counsel you. He will deliver, restore, and redeem you. He will give you strength, peace, and wisdom. He will be with you always, so you can run to Him whenever you need a place to hide. “Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth” (Psalm 124:8).

Knowing God as your heavenly Father is the beginning of freedom, wholeness, and true success in life.

⇒ PRAYER POWER ⇐

Heavenly Father, I thank You that You have given me the right to become Your child (John 1:12). I am privileged and glad to receive all You have promised Your children. Help me to live in Your love and comprehend the depth of Your care and concern for me. Take away any barrier that keeps me from fully understanding what it means to trust You as my heavenly Father. Help me to take on a family resemblance, so that I have Your eyes, Your heart, and Your mind.

Lord, show me any way in which I need to forgive my earthly father. Heal anything in my heart that has caused me to see You

through his failings. Forgive me if I have judged Your perfection by his imperfections. Show me what I need to see, and help me to completely forgive.

Thank You, Father God, that when I need hope, You are my *Hope* (Psalm 71:5). When I am weak, You are my *Strength* (Isaiah 12:2). When I am weary, You are my *Resting Place* (Jeremiah 50:6). When I need freedom, You are my *Deliverer* (Psalm 70:5). When I want guidance, You are my *Counselor* (Psalm 16:7). When I need healing, You are my *Healer* (Malachi 4:2). When I seek protection, You are my *Shield* (Psalm 33:20). When I am going through a difficult time, You are my *Stronghold in the Day of Trouble* (Nahum 1:7). Thank You for being my heavenly Father and the answer to my every need.

In Jesus' name I pray.

⇒ WORD POWER ⇐

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me.

PSALM 27:10

As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

JOHN 1:12

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

MATTHEW 6:26

When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your

Father who is in the secret place; and your
Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

MATTHEW 6:6

Behold what manner of love the
Father has bestowed on us,
that we should be called children of God!

1 JOHN 3:1