



Single
And
Fulfilled!

7 Day Biblical Reading Plan
For Single Women



How can you experience more peace as a single woman despite the challenge of today's relationship focused society?

The devotions that follow are written by single Christian women, who understand the unique struggles of being single by either circumstance.... or by choice.

This 7 day reading plan from *Fulfilled: The NIV Bible for the Single Woman* will help you focus on joy during singleness.

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Day 1: Think on These Things

Within your temple,
O God,
we meditate on your
unfailing love.
Psalm 48:9

I want to be quiet enough
to hear
his voice.
– Kathryn Hillen

A single, divorced or widowed woman often has time alone. How she chooses to fill that time can enhance or worsen her lifestyle. In today's society we can seem more connected and more isolated than ever before. Cell phones, texting and social media keep us constantly connected with everybody, and yet those same outlets isolate us from the people closest to us. On one hand, solitude and quiet have seemingly disappeared as our electronic devices intrude on our minds. On the other hand, focusing on those devices separates and isolates us from each other, even in the same room.

As discerning, Bible-reading women, though, we can note that the Scriptures are full of admonitions to be still, be silent, be at rest and, above all, keep our minds on things above. Finding verses about God's incredible, unconditional love for us and memorizing them so we can access them at will during quiet times will do wonders for our souls.

In God's wisdom he included many words in the Scriptures about resting in him. The psalmist advises us to meditate day and night on God's great faithfulness and never-ending love. Who wouldn't feel refreshed after minutes or even hours of ruminating on the Father's sweet promises? We can be confident that we are his chosen and adopted spiritual children and that he finds great pleasure in taking care of us.

In your meditation or prayer time, focus your thoughts on someone whose plans for you are even greater than you can think or imagine (see Jeremiah 29:11). That "someone" is your heavenly Father. Thinking about and resting in his wonderful promises will surely make your experience more glorious than anything else you can do.

Father, fill my every spare moment with thoughts of you and your love for me. I want to ponder your Word and your glory in my heart all day long.

Vicki P. Graham

Day 2: We're All in This Together

⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:46-47

People are yearning to discover community. We have had enough loneliness, independence and competition.

- Thea Jarvis

You have probably heard the adage “There is strength in numbers,” and whether you accepted it or tossed it aside in favor of independence and competition, the fact is, we need each other.

No matter how fiercely independent we are or how much we’ve learned to trust our own instincts to survive in this world, that was not God’s plan. God designed us for fellowship with each other. He gave us the Church, and we are to love and support one another in community so that we can thrive. He placed us in neighborhoods or workplaces or families. He knew that facing each day on our own would not work.

Think about the best teams, clubs, organizations and even churches you have ever joined. What drew you in? What brought joy to your heart? Most likely your joy came from developing a sense of belonging, a sense that you and others are in this life together. Strength resides in the bonds you make in each relationship, each group and each embrace. God knows that, and he encourages you not only to find your strength in him but also to share life experiences with those who are there for you when you cannot easily face things on your own.

As Christi Mary Warner put it, “A true friend is one who knows all about you and likes you anyway.” That kind of acceptance yields strength for all you do. Be sure to keep your heart open to friends who embrace you as you are and help you tap into the strength within you. The blessings to you will be immediate.

Dear Father, thank you for the gift of friends who connect me to you and strengthen my life in every way.

Karen Moore

Day 3: Help From Above

So we say with confidence,
“The Lord is my helper; I
will not be afraid.
What can mere mortals
do to me?”
Hebrews 13:6

He hath never failed thee
yet. Never will His love
forget.
- Amy Wilson Carmichael

I remember having trouble with long division. In class things seemed fine, but homework was hard. So over time I developed an “I’m stuck” routine. I would pick up my book, stomp toward our small kitchen and slump down at the table that had just been cleared from dinner. When my mother turned around from the last of the dishes, I would groan out one sad, single word: “Help”.

Do you remember asking someone to help you with homework? Can you recall a time when you learned something new? Whether it was long division or piano fingering, most of us have had people in our lives who were there, ready and willing to help until suddenly, silently they would leave us on our own. And there we would be (amazingly!) doing it all by ourselves. Somehow, they knew when to let go.

Few of us ever asked our parents or caregivers to let go; better to have them walk us through and give us constant, direct aid. But in letting go, parents gave us something better: They gave us pride. They gave us a sense of personal accomplishment. And they gave us the empowerment that comes only from meeting the world on our own.

Are you worried that God isn’t next to you for the long division? Are there challenges you don’t think you can meet on your own? Fear not. God is here to help. God will show the way and teach you all you need to know. You can always expect help from above. But you can also expect that God alone knows best when it is time to let go, even if you don’t feel ready.

Loving God, help me remember that you know me best. You know when to help and when to let go.

Emily Odean

Day 4: Who Am I Now?

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
1Corinthians 15:58

When we tire of well-worn ways, we seek for new. This restless craving in the souls of men spurs them to climb, and to seek the mountain view.
- Ella Wheeler Wilcox

A widow received a complimentary trip to a prestigious resort in the rolling hills of Texas. The woman enthusiastically embarked on this solo venture. It was the first time she had driven long-distance by herself. But her life was punctuated with first-time experiences. This would be a pleasant one.

The hotel bell captain recommended that she drive to Mount Bonnell to see a panoramic view of the city. She had a fear of heights, but since it wasn't Mount Everest, she was determined to accept another challenge. When she made it to her destination, there were 100 steps from the parking lot to the panoramic view. Could she make it? She'd had a double knee replacement, but the doctor had assured her that her titanium knees were ready for anything. So she started the climb. A person coming from the top saw her exhaustion and encouraged her, "Don't stop! The view is worth the climb."

Several months later she met a friend who was also a widow. Her friend asked her, "Do you think our husbands would recognize us now?"

Both women agreed that their men would be amazed by their changes, new goals and accomplishments. Both women had chosen to become better instead of bitter. Now one is a radio talk-show host and the other is an author. Both are Bible teachers traveling the country. They are vibrant, single, mature women. The journey hadn't been easy, but the renewed attitudes and lofty aspirations had been worth the climb.

Keep climbing through uncertainty and difficulty. Don't stop! The view is worth the climb. Father, may I have a deeper assurance that you never change and that you will never leave me or forsake me.

Sheila Bailey

Day 5: Single and Satisfied

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.
Philippians 4:12

Do not limit the limitless God!
With him, face the future unafraid because you are never alone.
- Lettie B. Cowman

He is the guest at weddings, yet is never the groom. Children are naturally drawn to him, though he has no child of his own. He feels normal sexual desires, but his spiritual purpose keeps him pure. He snubs the social norms, yet confounds rulers with keen insights.

He is a content, confident man knowing who he is and what he wants, yet experiences intense times of loneliness and longing. Who is this unmarried man?

His name is Jesus, Jesus the Christ, Son of the Living God.

Throughout his earthly life, Jesus sidesteps the discontentment that defines so many singles. This discontentment is rooted in unrealistic expectations—that marriage and sex are necessary for happiness. However, God endowed his Son—and every other person who has ever lived—with three inner needs: love, significance and security.

You may think you need a mate to feel deeply loved, to feel truly significant, to feel completely secure. But these false assumptions are merely set-ups for a lifetime of disappointment. God alone is your true Need-meeter. He longs to satisfy your deepest inner needs in ways no human being ever could.

As a single woman—for whatever period of time—realize that your singleness has not caught God by surprise. He has a divine plan and purpose for your life—now. As you continually surrender your will to his, he will conform you to his character.

This is his perfect will for you . . . this very day.

Merciful Lord, help me to become like you. May I live with a heart of contentment—focusing on what I have, not what I don't have; looking for what I can give, not what I can receive. Thank you for being my heavenly Need-meeter. Secure my heart in your love now and forever.

June Hunt

Day 6: One Day at a Time

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:34

The present is the ever moving shadow that divides yesterday from tomorrow.

In that lies hope.

- Frank Lloyd Wright

“Each day has enough trouble of its own”—now there’s an understatement! Do you wake every day wondering what catastrophe is awaiting you? Perhaps it seems as if disasters and troubles have taken numbers and are standing in line just waiting to bombard your life, and the people who could help have left on permanent vacation.

The wonderful old song “One Day at a Time” offers the best solution for handling the struggles of life: “Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do.” After all, that’s the only way life can be lived—one day at a time.

Think about it: It’s impossible to live in yesterday because yesterday is gone. You can’t get it back, no matter how appealing that may seem. The happy memories of yesterday are yours to keep and treasure, but that time has elapsed, and you must move on.

It’s also impossible to live tomorrow because it has not yet arrived. In truth tomorrow will never arrive because when it comes it is no longer tomorrow. In one tick of the clock it has become today. Tomorrow is like a marvelous butterfly—beautiful to behold but illusive to capture.

Are you trading the rewarding moment of today for a fading picture of yesterday or the unpromised dream of tomorrow, perhaps to escape today’s reality? If so, you may be missing God’s blessing for today—his carefully wrapped present that can only be opened one day at a time.

Live in the moment! Celebrate today while it is still today. It is the dream you looked forward to yesterday, and tomorrow it will only be a memory—so make it a sweet one.

Father, thank you for today and the blessings that come with it from you. Help me use this day to your glory.

Mary Hollingsworth

Day 7: Thankful In Spite Of...

Give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is
God's will for you in Christ
Jesus.
1Thessalonians 5:18

Gratitude makes sense of
our past, brings peace for
today, and creates a vision
for tomorrow. - Melody
Beattie

You think you've got problems? Yes, you surely do; we all have our own set of problems, some worse than others. But during World War II, Corrie ten Boom faced more difficulties than I can even imagine when she was confined with her sister in Ravensbruck, one of the most notorious Nazi prison camps in Germany.

One special problem Corrie and her barracks mates faced was a terrible infestation of fleas. The fleas were thick and biting, a very real health issue. (Just think of how aggravating one flea is to your pet and multiply that by thousands.) But while most women would have whined and complained about their circumstances, Corrie thanked God for the fleas.

How could Corrie be grateful for fleas? Because of the horrendous fleas, the cruel prison guards would not enter the barracks. So Corrie and her sister were able to conduct uninterrupted Bible studies with the other women, bringing many of them to Christ. They were focused on the bigger picture—souls over fleas. They knew that God had not forgotten them—he had blessed them with fleas!

What are the fleas in your life? Unruly teenagers? Financial stresses? Pesky relationships? You name them. Whatever they are, be thankful for a God who is bigger than your difficulties, a God who sees the whole picture of your life, not just this irritating moment in time. Learn to thank God for his blessings in spite of your current problems. Be grateful that he has not forgotten you. And, yes, be thankful for your fleas, because they may well be opportunities in disguise.

Father, thank you for seeing my whole life from womb to tomb and for blessing me with whatever you know I need to guide me ultimately to you, fleas and all.

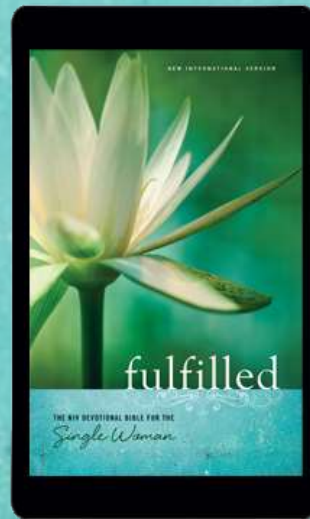
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