

DAILY INSPIRATION
FOR EMBRACING YOUR PURPOSE,
POWER, AND POSSIBILITIES



TONY EVANS
CHRYSTAL EVANS HURST
**KINGDOM
WOMAN**
DEVOTIONAL

FOCUS[®]
ON THE
FAMILY

TWO-IN-ONE BOOK SAMPLER

DAILY INSPIRATION
FOR FULFILLING YOUR DESTINY



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MAN**
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KINGDOM WOMEN LISTEN TO GOD

*Listening to God's voice is the secret
of the assurance that He will listen to mine.*

—Andrew Murray

Do you feel as if a kingdom woman was *someone else*? Have you *wanted* to be her but felt you weren't faithful enough or determined enough? Take heart: That voice in your head whispering, "You're not enough . . ." is *not* God's voice! Rather, your heavenly Father encourages, "You can do this." He confirms, "You're not alone." And He offers, "Let's do it together." Like the father who smiles on his daughter, who prepares her to be all that she's been made to be, God is encouraging and equipping you to thrive. As you begin this series of devotions, listen for that voice.

Listening to God's voice mutes the lies that disparage the value of kingdom women. Listening to God rejects a culture that says "Women are weak and powerless." It contradicts the thought "Women are second class." It refutes the misconception "Women must be subservient to men."

The kingdom woman recognizes the devil's lies and deactivates them with the truth of God's Word.

APPLICATION

1. What specific ways has the enemy tried to convince you that you're "not enough"? In contrast, what does the voice of God say about your value and your mission?
2. Today, what is the Scripture you will hold in your heart to prepare you to face the challenges of this day?

PRAYER

God, today I disagree with the enemy's lie that I am inferior, that I am not enough. I stand on the truth that You have equipped me with everything I need to be a kingdom woman. Amen.

KINGDOM WOMEN ARE CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

*No one can make you feel
inferior without your consent.*

—Eleanor Roosevelt

A kingdom woman is created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:27). You were tenderly fashioned by God and are entirely worthy. Though the enemy will tell you that you are *not enough*, in Him, you *are already enough*. As you grow to become the kingdom woman God made you to be, the most important accessory in your spiritual purse is the truth of what God says about who you are. This truth is the deepest reality about who you are and dispels the enemy's lies.

This isn't to say that the kingdom woman is perfect. She doesn't live a life free of cares and concerns. She still faces the same challenges and temptations as other women. But she still puts on her cute red stilettos one at a time! By agreeing with God's vision of her, she lives into the reality of who God has made her to be. Each morning

she chooses to fulfill her role as a woman of purpose. Satan has no power over a woman who disagrees with his schemes. He cannot make her feel inferior. In fact today, kingdom woman, he'd better watch his back.

APPLICATION

1. In what ways have you felt you don't measure up as a kingdom woman?
2. How does God see you and every kingdom woman? How are you made in His image?

PRAYER

God, this day I will see myself as You see me—a kingdom woman formed in Your image. Help me to understand fully what that means and empower me to fulfill Your purpose. Amen.

THE STORY THAT IS TRUE

Every man's life is a fairy tale

written by God's fingers.

—Hans Christian Andersen

Some of the earliest stories our parents read to us, as children, were fairy tales. Whether the nineteenth-century Grimm brothers versions or the twenty-first-century Disney versions, stories of noble princes and princesses who battle evil captured our hearts and minds and imaginations. They touched something inside of us that longed for *our* lives to make a difference, to matter.

In the kingdom Jesus ushered in, we have become players in the story that continues to unfold. We are not laboring mice who stitch a dress for the princess. No, in the kingdom of God, we are the *actors*. The movers. We are the ones who exercise authority in the name of the King.

When we pursue justice, on behalf of the poor and marginalized, we exercise dominion. We do it when we welcome a stranger or befriend

a sinner. We do it when we teach others what God is like.

Allow your life to be written by the fingers of God, confident that you've been created and called to rule with Him. There is one *Lord God, Yahweh*, Master and Ruler. As you position yourself under His authority, you are equipped to live out your unique purpose as a kingdom woman.

APPLICATION

1. When you were a girl, or now as a woman, what was your favorite fairy tale? In it do you hear echoes of God's story?
2. How will you, as a kingdom woman, exercise dominion this week by serving as an agent of God's rule?

PRAYER

God, You are the one true Ruler of all. Help me hear Your voice that calls me to partner with You and give me courage to respond faithfully.

SHE IS NOT SOMEBODY ELSE

After all, where is this woman—who is this woman—who regularly and consistently positions herself under and operates according to God’s complete rule over her life? Oh, I know, she must be my neighbor.

—Chrystal Evans

When you think about living as a mighty kingdom woman, do you share Chrystal’s suspicion that “she” is someone else? If you do, you might also assume that she’s the woman who sits next to you at church. She’s the church mother who’s been widowed forty-two years and whose faith in God’s provision has not waivered. She’s the woman who stitches her children’s fine clothes. She’s the one who does not struggle with temptations to drink or overeat. Whoever she is, she’s *someone else*.

Satan is clever at dragging us off course, isn’t he?

We get in a bind both when we fall for the temptation to think *more* of ourselves than we should and also when we think *less* of ourselves than we should! When we do, we agree with the

enemy's deception. Chrystal confirms, "I'm so glad I don't have to aspire to be anyone else other than that woman God wants me to be."

Beloved kingdom woman, you are God's workmanship. You are not meant to serve like the woman who sits beside you in church or like the one who sings solos in the choir or like the pastor's wife from another church in town. You are meant to rule according to the unique gifts and strengths and calling which God has given to *you*.

APPLICATION

1. Are you ever tempted to believe that the kingdom woman is someone *other* than you? Who are some of these women in your life?
2. God has entrusted you with particular gifts to build His kingdom. What are they? How can you use them in your life today?

PRAYER

Father God, I confess that, too often, I don't look upon other women rightly and I don't see myself as You see me. Give me Your vision to live as a kingdom woman.

A FUNNY LITTLE WORD

God calls the first woman ezer—a name that is used most frequently in the Old Testament for God himself.

—Carolyn Custis James, *Half the Church*

If there is one word that could describe the focal point of a kingdom woman's life, it would be *Christlike*. A second word that identifies the ministry of a kingdom woman is the Hebrew word *ezer*. The funny-sounding little word used in Genesis to identify the first woman, traditionally translated into English as “a suitable helper,” has guided many a kingdom woman's and ministry in the church.

As English speakers, we think we know what a “helper” is. A helper is the child who delivers a note from his teacher to the principal's office. A helper is the preadolescent who prepares dinner before her parents return home from work. A helper is the maid or gardener hired to do the dirty work no one in the household wants to do or has time to do.

In Hebrew, however, *ezer* means something categorically different. It challenges our ideas

about a woman being a weak helper because it means *strong* helper. By naming the woman as an *ezer* helper, God identified her with His own nature! God's *ezer* character is as the one that faithfully defends the weak (Psalm 33:20). God as *ezer* rescues the poor and needy (Psalm 70:5). God's people placed their confidence in the certainty that their help, their *ezer*, was in the name of the Lord (Psalm 124:8). The *ezer* is not a weak helper at all. Rather, the woman who identifies herself as *ezer* is one who is mighty in power!

APPLICATION

1. In your own family, were women viewed as weak individuals or strong ones?
2. Does the biblical description of woman, identifying her—identifying you!—with God's mighty power, change the way you understand yourself today?

PRAYER

Yahweh, You are a mighty Helper to those in need. You are the ultimate Ezer who rescues and redeems. Make me more like You.

TURNING THE WORLD RIGHT-SIDE UP

*[Where] did your Christ come from? From God
and a woman! Man had not'ing to do with Him.*

—Isabella Baumfree

Isabella Baumfree may just be the most powerful kingdom woman you've never heard of. Born into slavery in New York, "Belle" escaped to freedom with her infant daughter in 1826. Together they found shelter with the Van Wagener family, who paid off Belle's owner, securing her safety. Belle came to know the Lord and became a devout Christian with an itinerant speaking and preaching ministry. In 1851 she addressed the Ohio Women's Rights Convention where she delivered her now-famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman?" *Now* you know who the kingdom woman is! She is the famous preacher, teacher, evangelist and abolitionist Sojourner Truth, who said, "If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again!"

Against all odds, Sojourner Truth did not accept her culture's definition of "woman." Rather, she was instructed and informed by the Word of God. In the face of innumerable hardships, she allowed herself to be transformed by God's purposes for her life.

Do you believe that God has called and equipped you to move in power like He did Sojourner Truth? While He will not call you in exactly the same way, He does call you to exercise the unique gifts which you have been given within your sphere of influence. Through Christ in you, God is turning this world right-side up again.

APPLICATION

1. What types of messages do you imagine Isabella Baumfree heard in the early 1800s about what it was to be a woman?
2. What is the obstacle in your own life that God is inviting you not only to overcome but to empower others to overcome as well?

PRAYER

God, thank You for the witness of Sojourner Truth, as well as the mighty army of kingdom women who have marched to the beat of Your drum. Give me courage to follow!

UNLIKELY HEROES

*Kingdom women throughout the Bible
saved lives and nations.*

—Tony Evans

Shayne Moore, living in the suburbs of Chicago, was the average American “soccer mom.” (In other parts of the country, this would be a “hockey mom” or “basketball mom”!) She baked cupcakes, drove a minivan, and washed uniforms. In the midst of her normal life, however, Shayne’s eyes were opened to a world in need. And Shayne’s eyes *stayed* open. While her kids were at school—and when they were underfoot!—she began advocating for those trapped in the web of poverty, HIV-AIDS, and human trafficking. With her laptop and cell phone, she responded to God’s call by making a few of her own and writing books (*Global Soccer Mom* and *Refuse to Do Nothing*), on behalf of the ones God loves.

Too often we shortchange God and ourselves by assuming God will choose to work only through the powerful people in this world. We reason, “Deborah was a judge. Esther was a

queen. Mary was divinely hand-picked by God!” The truth is, though, that God uses women like Shayne, ones who fold laundry and punch timecards and serve at church, to save lives and save nations. God uses women, mothers, wives and single women—young and old—to rescue a world in need.

APPLICATION

1. Who are some of the more well-known and noteworthy modern women to whom you can point and affirm, “God uses *that* woman”?
2. Now, who are the ones less heralded, whom God has called to use their particular gifting to build the kingdom? Are you one?

PRAYER

God, I believe that I am among the kingdom women whom You have chosen to bless this world You love. Use me to show Your saving grace, today.

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A Kingdom Man Seeks Priceless Treasure

*The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure
hidden in a field . . .*

—Jesus (Matthew 13:44)

I love the Indiana Jones movies. Who doesn't? Indiana Jones was all man. Here was this archaeologist spending countless hours, days, weeks, months, and sometimes even years in search of valuable artifacts. Of course he faced perilous obstacles along the way. Indy had difficulties, resistance, and dangers to overcome. Yet he always made it. And in the end, he always uncovered his treasure.

Along a similar line are the *National Treasure* movies, starring Nicolas Cage. Cage's character, Benjamin Franklin Gates, lived in pursuit of clues that would lead him to what he was seeking. Again, he faced danger, adversity, deprivation, and even, at times, disaster. Yet everything was worth it when he, like Indiana, got the treasure.

Jesus speaks of a treasure. And He calls it the kingdom

of God. He says that this kingdom is an unusually valuable treasure for which absolutely nothing should stand in the way. In eschatological terms, the kingdom refers to the millennial reign of Christ when He will return to run earth from Jerusalem for His thousand-year reign. Yet in the here and now, the kingdom has also been set up for us through kingdom principles, covenants, responsibilities, privileges, rights, rules, ethics, coverings, and authority.

A treasure is worth fighting for. A priceless treasure, like this one, is worth everything you have.

APPLICATION

1. Who is your favorite movie character? What about him inspires you?
2. How would your current life play out on the big screen?
3. What treasure will you fight for today? How?

PRAYER

God, give me a vision of Your kingdom and the strength to pursue it like a treasure hunter. Amen.



A Kingdom Man Aims for the Goal

*You are never too old to set another goal or
to dream a new dream.*

—C. S. Lewis

My son Jonathan is a big guy. In the NFL, he's taken downs with some of the best players. But he wasn't always that big. I remember him asking me to come down to the gym and watch his five-foot-three frame dunk the basketball. He had been practicing for months.

Jonathan grabbed the ball, dribbled, and dunked. I offered only abbreviated congratulations. Then I turned to the athletic director and pointedly told him to raise the basket back up to where it belonged. Impatient to grow taller, Jonathan had lowered the goal.

“Raise the basket, Jonathan,” I said. “And try again.”

He did. And he didn't make it. But he kept trying—and, in time, he made it.

Men, God has a standard. He has a goal. His kingdom

is that goal. Yet so many have lowered His standard only to congratulate themselves for being able to dunk the ball. The results of this lowered standard, though, affect us all. It shows up in our country. In our culture. In the economics of our world. It only takes a cursory glance around our homes, churches, communities, and globe to uncover that many men have missed the goal to live as a kingdom man.

That must change.

We must raise the standard to where God originally placed it. We must define manhood as God intended it to be. We must discover what it means to be a kingdom man.

APPLICATION

1. In what areas have you lowered the goal?
2. Are there any pursuits or possessions that have distracted you from the standard of God's kingdom?
3. What scripture can serve as your reminder to pursue God's kingdom today?

PRAYER

God, today I commit to pursue Your goal, Your standard, Your kingdom. Refocus my vision and strengthen my determination. Amen.



A Kingdom Man

*The difference between a successful person
and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack
of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will.*

—Vince Lombardi

When a kingdom man's feet hit the floor each morning the devil says, "Oh crap, he's up!"

When a kingdom man steps out his door, heaven, earth, and hell take notice. When he protects the woman under his care, she can do little to resist him. His children look to him with confidence. Other men look to him as someone to emulate. His church calls on him for strength and leadership. He is a preserver of culture and a champion of society to keep out evil and usher in good. A kingdom man understands that God never said a godly life would be easy; He just said it would be worth it.

A kingdom man takes to the field like a football player erupting from the tunnel, in an explosion of fire, ready to dominate all opposition that arises. A kingdom man zeros

in on one purpose only—advancing the kingdom for the betterment of those within it, which glorifies the King. He pursues this at whatever personal cost.

Anyone who has played or followed football knows that victory does not come just because you want it. Victory is earned through sweat, guts, and blood—a win often comes only through sheer determination. It comes to those who know that purpose is far greater than pain.

APPLICATION

1. How would you describe your purpose?
2. What action can you take today to better the lives of those around you?
3. What steps can you take today to persevere in the battle?

PRAYER

*God, forgive me when my body and spirit grow weak.
Fill me with perseverance, no matter how great the pain.
Amen.*



A Kingdom Man Follows His Rule Book

You've got to be right or wrong. I love the satisfaction when you are right—and the agony when you are wrong.

—Ed Hochuli, NFL referee

Football is a man's sport. In it, passion, strength, and power fuse with precision and skill as two teams face off in an epic display of force and will. Yet a third team is in this conflict: the team of officials. Their commitment and allegiance belong to a different kingdom called the NFL office. This kingdom supersedes, overrules, and sits above all others.

From the League office, the officials have been given a book. It holds the governances, guidelines, rules, and regulations by which they are to manage the events on the field. If an official's viewpoint overrules the book, superseding the kingdom to which the official is obligated, the official will no longer rule. Once an official leaves

the book, he demotes himself to the status of a fan and becomes illegitimate in terms of authority.

Men, you have received instructions from the League office in heaven. You have been given the Book under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. To rule well, to bring order to the chaos in this war called life, you must align your heart and mind with God's sovereign instructions and guidelines. You must sharpen your ear to the call of your Commissioner. You must hide His book in your heart to rule well according to His purposes.

APPLICATION

1. What are you doing to know your rule book?
2. How can you restore order to your domain, rather than add chaos?
3. How will you align your heart with God's Word today?

PRAYER

Great Commissioner, align my head and heart to Your Word today. Shape me to Your standards and enable me to bring order as Your official. Amen.



A Kingdom Man Is Prepared

For 42 years, I've been making small regular deposits in this bank of experience: education and training.

—Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger

In January 2009, birds flew into the engines of US Airways Flight 1549 immediately after the plane’s takeoff from New York’s LaGuardia Airport. Both engines shut down. The only option was to ditch the plane in the Hudson River. Doing so without accruing fatalities was unlikely—even for a veteran pilot and flight instructor like Captain Chesley B. Sullenberger III.

Yet Sullenberger took charge of the realm for which he was responsible. While passengers cried out, Sullenberger kept the plane just high enough to clear the George Washington Bridge and performed a perfect textbook ditching. All souls survived in the “Miracle on the Hudson.”

Captain Sullenberger had never guided a violently vibrating, 80-ton piece of metal onto the water’s surface

before. But he had spent his career learning aircraft maneuvering inside and out. His previous 19,000 hours of flight time were uneventful, but they had prepared him with the skills and mind-set to rule the realm of his plane well, rather than his plane ruling him.

Men, the mastery of your kingdom under God's authority demands wholehearted preparation. Some moments may appear uneventful, but each is an opportunity to administer order, authority, and provision to your domain. Each day provides a choice to align your life under God's authority, to exercise and sharpen your leadership, to prepare. When chaos enters your kingdom, you will be ready.

APPLICATION

1. When has chaos taken you by surprise? How will you be ready for it next time?
2. Who is counting on you to come through when it counts?
3. How can you prepare today?

PRAYER

God of Miracles, draw my heart to discipline. Give me Your vision of purpose daily. Prepare me. Amen.



A Kingdom Man Makes the Right Choice

*What were the little ones like? Little
grasshoppers, springs full of life.*

—Lenny Armstrong

On a cold April 2011 day, a twenty-five-year-old mother posted an apology on Facebook, called her mother, grandmother, and father to say good-bye, loaded up all four kids in her van, and drove into the freezing waters of the Hudson River.

Neighbors say the father of the three younger children had pounded on her apartment door screaming threats for over thirty minutes earlier that day. This wasn't the couple's first altercation.

Some people may blame this young mother for her actions. Her actions were horrific. But a shared blame for a woman who takes her own life and her children's directly following a volatile situation from the father also belongs to the man.

One hundred fifty-five people survived an airplane crash landing on the Hudson because one man operated with responsibility in his realm. Four people died in the icy grip of the same river because one man—perhaps several—did not.

As a man, you are a leader by position. You are ultimately responsible for those within your domain. You can lead those in your care to safety, or you can drive them to a place of chaos. But to rule well is not a call that you make one day and then forget about. Ruling well is a lifelong skill forged through faithfulness and dedication. A kingdom man chooses daily to give his all to rule well.

APPLICATION

1. How have you recently led those in your care to safety?
2. How have you led those in your care to chaos?
3. What step can you choose today to lead with responsibility, wisdom, and consistency?

PRAYER

Lord, forgive my failures to lead well. Reveal the steps to turn my best intentions into consistent actions. Amen.



A Kingdom Man Brings Freedom

*The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, / Because
He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the
poor. / He has sent Me to proclaim release
to the captives, / And recovery of sight to the
blind, / To set free those who are oppressed.*

—Jesus (Luke 4:18)

The inmates at the prison I visit came from different cultures, backgrounds, generations, and experiences. But most also came from a fatherless home or a home where the father was absent, neglectful, or abusive.

Society's problems are not just society's problems. They are the church's problems. They are our problems.

Virtually every adult social pathology has been linked to either fatherless homes or homes with a father and/or husband who was absent, abusive, or neglectful. Roughly 70 percent of all prisoners come from fatherless homes. Seventy-one percent of all high school dropouts come

from fatherless homes. In suburbia, many fathers have gone “missing” through divorce, neglect, or overindulgence. Many fathers put careers over families, or they love the golf course more than their kids.

But there is freedom in God’s kingdom. Jesus proclaimed as much early in His earthly ministry, reading from the prophet Isaiah in the temple, “He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,” (Luke 4:18). Men, this begins in our own manhood, in our kingdom identity, in our lives, in our families, and in our domains. A kingdom man finds freedom under the authority of his heavenly Ruler and carries it into the lives of those under his influence.

APPLICATION

1. How have you been held captive? How has Christ set you free?
2. Where in your domain can you be more present?
3. To whom in your realm of influence can you bring kingdom freedom?

PRAYER

God, bring healing freedom into my life. Make me a source of healing and liberation to those in my domain. Amen.