

# 12

DAYS OF  
*Eternal  
Gifts*

*a devotional  
journey of  
treasuring the gifts  
we can never buy*

Elisa Pulliam



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*because His gifts are eternal*

## *A Note from the Author*

In September 2012, I penned in my journal the words that lay the foundation of this 12 day devotional study. The Lord pried open the eyes of my heart to see the many ways I've shut Him out, and with the gentle hand of a loving Father urged me to live with His presence dwelling full with in my soul. These words, which are displayed in a my home, remind me each day to **Let Him In**. But. I still have much to learn. Will you join me on this journey of discovering God's eternal gifts?

# *Introduction*

Shopping lists. Laundry. Christmas cards. Bills. Cookie Exchanges. Final Exams. Christmas Caroling. Picking up kids from college. Secret Santas. Mop the floor. Black Friday specials. Doctor's appointments. Women's Christmas Tea. Soup kitchen. Nativity programs. Homework. School programs.

## **But where does Jesus fit into our holiday rhythm?**

Our December calendars are jam-packed with traditions and festivities, squeezed into already too full schedules. Survival requires finding an extra five hours a week to keep up with the commitments, and in the process maintain our sanity and sweetness. I don't know about you, but I'm not that good! I can't stop the clock!

When the schedule leaves no time to breathe or reflect, I become simply irritable. That, my friends, is not how I want to experience this holiday season. So, I'm going to do something entirely different. I'm going to put my eyes on the Lord. I'm going to focus on hearing Him, seeking Him, finding Him, and needing Him more than ever before.

It means I'm going to pass on some of the holiday commitments and put off some chores until January. I might not do Christmas cards and the stockings might be a little less full. Yes, my house might get a little bit more dusty and the kids might need to pick through the clean laundry baskets for their clothes. Because I'm going to chose to slow down to make room for Jesus this Christmas.

## **I don't want my inn to be so full that He gets turned away again.**

Without our manager-child, there would be no Christmas. I can think of no better time to treasure the gifts I can never buy, 12 eternal gifts.



## **Will You Join Me?**

This is a journey you have the privilege of taking with the Lord, as you invest precious time reflecting on each portion of Scripture and related gift. The devotional is designed to be interactive. Print it out and use the space between the questions to record your answers and bring life to your faith.

# Day 1

*Let my spirit fill you.*



## **1 Corinthians 3:16**

**“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?”**

God longs to fill us with His Spirit. It is a gift He gives us by faith in His holy Son as our Lord and Savior. It is a gift that began before the beginning of time, came to earth in a miraculous manager birth, and manifested in our lives through the cross of Christ, bringing about the fulfillment of the Scriptures and giving us access to eternal life.

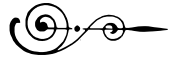
The gift of God's spirit dwelling within us is where our life really begins.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. Do you *feel* the dwelling of the Holy Spirit? Why or not?
2. What could be blocking the presence of Spirit working in your life? Think sin. Then repent.
3. What would it look like for the Spirit of God to lead you through this Christmas chaos?
4. Is the gift of the Spirit one you'd like to share throughout this Christmas season?

# Day 2

*Let my word satisfy you.*



## **Matthew 4:4**

**Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”**

Jesus promises us that the Word will bring complete nourishment to our lives. Food alone will not sustain us, nor will anything we grab at and shove inside our bodies -- anything from people to fads, false promises of prosperity to TV specials proclaiming the best new gadget to make life easier. Nothing satisfies. Not titles or degrees. Not plans nor earthly pursuits. Only the Word has the ability to satisfy an earthly soul until eternity. Nothing can compare to the gift of Scripture. Nothing can compare to Jesus, who is the Word.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. What in your life is bringing you false satisfaction?
2. What steps can you take, today, to rid this "other than" satisfaction from your life?
3. Are you making time for the Word to fill you up and nourish your soul?
4. Consider making the most the **More to Be [Immersed Challenge](#)** resources to help you stay in the Word.

## Day 3

*Let my living water refresh you.*



### **John 7:38**

**“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”**

Have you ever been so parched that the roof of your mouth feels like cotton candy? After a super salty slice of pizza, do you find yourself craving a tall, ice-filled diet coke to quench your thirst?

**We know what it means to be physically thirsty.**

**But do we recognize the signs of being spiritually thirsty?**

God, in his extravagant grace, offers to fill us with streams of living water. Streams that never stop flowing. Living water that purifies our souls and bodies, from the inside out. But this incredible [gift](#) only comes through faith in Christ as Lord.

Constant. Living. Water. Refreshing. Our. Lives.

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. Are you thirsty today?
2. Is it time to turn back to the living water to refresh your soul?
3. What is standing in your way?
4. How can you share this gift with others, today and in this coming new year?



# Day 4

## *Let my love surround you.*



### **Psalm 32:10**

**“Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.”**

Love. It is something we desperately need and often demand. We want to be loved. And sometimes we want to give love. But do we know what it means to be surrounded by love?

God's unfailing love surrounds us, IF we put our trust in Him. We can't earn His love. We can't buy His love this Christmas time. It doesn't show up on Black Friday and Cyber Monday in limited quantity. God's love doesn't sell out. Nor does it disappointment. His love never fades away. It doesn't come with term limits or conditions. His love doesn't boast and is not proud nor jealous nor self-seeking.

The Lord offers us the gift of His all-surrounding love. Like a child's hands stretched out for the gifts under the tree, we reach up toward our Father in Heaven and say "Yes, I receive this gift of love. Surround me. I know you're enough for me. I trust you with my life, my all, my everything."

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. Praise God for the gift of His Son by faith!
2. Confess the ways you've resisted trusting God.
3. Ask the Lord to fill you with a deeper sense of His love surrounding you today.

# Day 5

## *Let my forgiveness heal you.*



### **2 Chronicles 7:14**

**“...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”**

Forgiveness is a precious gift, not only from the Lord but also one we give to others. But this is one gift that is often misunderstood, for the one forgiven isn't the only one blessed. The one who forgives will also find healing in the depths of her soul.

Forgiveness is not forgetting. Quite the contrary. Forgiveness is about acknowledging a wrong doing -- a sin -- and the pain it has caused, personally and unto others. When we seek the Lord's forgiveness, we are acknowledging that we've come up short, committed a sin, or walked away from a right choice in place of a wrong one. When the Lord forgives us, He chooses to give us a clean, new slate to begin anew. He says,

**"Yes, I know you did this. Yes, there are consequences. But because of my grace and mercy, you will not continue to pay for the offense. I will give you a new beginning, without holding your past against you."**

The process of forgiving others is all about moving forward without a hook of bitterness dragging your offender into the future. It is trusting God to have final judgment on the one that caused your wounds, knowing that nothing you do or say could ever be as powerful or fair as God's response. Forgiving someone doesn't ever require a response from them, either. You can forgive right here, right now, without the person who wounded you ever owning their stuff. Your actions are independent of their response. Choosing to forgive is about obeying God, not feeling better. Each time those "offended, resentful, angry, bitter" feelings rise up again, it is another time to get with Jesus and forgive again.

To seek forgiveness and offer forgiveness requires humility but promises healing. In that place, flat out before God and honestly inventory your heart and life, God heals wounds deep as He transforms your life with His grace.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. Up to this point, would you have defined forgiveness as forgetting?
2. How can this new perspective on forgiveness change your feelings and behavior toward God and others?
3. When was the last time you got down on your knees, face bowed humbly before God and sought forgiveness?
4. Who do you need to forgive in your life today, for a past or even present offense?
5. Take time to journal about the wounds and bound up bitterness in your heart. Lay the people and circumstances that come into your mind before the Lord. Seek His forgiveness and extend it to others.

# Day 6

*Let my grace transform you.*



## **1 Peter 5:10**

**“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”**

Grace.

God is grace.

God gives grace.

Grace. His freely given unmerited gift of love. It is truly extravagant and incomprehensible. Can you even get your mind around it?

And yet, this thing called grace, which we really do not understand, has the power to transform our lives.

He who is grace calls us to glory in Christ, because of the grace poured out upon us in Christ. What a circuitous state we find ourselves in. And that same grace, which allows us to experience suffering, also restores us, makes us strong, and able to remain steady in the face of more suffering.

Grace.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. What do you think of God's grace?
2. How are you walking in it and into it this day, season, and coming year?
3. What would it look like to extend God's grace to someone else today?

# Day 7

## *Let my mercy undo you.*



### **Micah 7:18**

**“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.”**

Mercy.

Like God's grace, it is an indescribable gift.

Mercy is...

1. compassionate or kindly forbearance shown toward an offender, an enemy, or other person in one's power; compassion, pity, or benevolence
2. the disposition to be compassionate or forbearing
3. the discretionary power of a judge to pardon someone or to mitigate punishment
4. an act of kindness, compassion, or favor

Mercy is when God holds back His wrath from the place of love giving us the chance to see His face and respond to His grace.

Mercy is when we know what we did warrants discipline and consequence, and instead God responds with a gentleness undeserved and a tenderness that draws our heart toward Him.

Mercy.

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. Can you think of a specific time in the last month in which you witnessed or personally experienced God's mercy? How did that affect you?

2. How is God's mercy a delight, both for Him and for us?
3. In what way are you able to show mercy to those around you?

# Day 8

*Let my purposes direct you.*



## **Psalm 33:11**

**“But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.”**

It is so easy to forget that our lives are in God's hands and ordered according to His purposes, especially as we live in a culture that encourages us to dream our own dreams, plot our own course, and define our own purpose.

From the time we are little girls, we're asked "What do you want to be when you grow up?" instead of "So, can you imagine what God might want to do with your life?" By high school, we're urged to find the perfect college and by the time we're sophomores, we're bearing down under the pressure to declare a major. Yet, do we ever stop to evaluate our God-given gifts and talents? Do we pause long enough, or often enough, with our parents, to pray about where the Lord intends to use us in His kingdom purposes?

**We're a people consumed by the idolatry of self and satisfaction, rather than His sovereignty and sacrifice.**

But praise God, even in the midst of our sin, His purposes still prevail. His plans stand forever. His heart determines our outcome. What we experience as heartache, He uses for our sanctification. What we come up against in trials, He uses to refine our character. What we know as blessings, He uses for His glory.

One of the greatest gifts God gives us is that He is in charge of our lives. His plans and purposes trump ours. Forever.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. What were your plans for college and career and beyond?
2. Did it play out how you intended?
3. How has that been a blessing, on way or the other?

4. As you look forward, what do you think God's purposes, not just plans, are for your life?
  
5. Take time today to talk with the Lord about His plans and purposes, and intentionally give up yours!



# Day 9

## *Let my plans delight you.*



### **Psalm 138:8**

**“The LORD will work out his plans for my life— for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever.”**

It is so easy to get caught up in our plans, especially during the Christmas season. The invitations to parties and school announcements about performances trickle in each day only to be queued up on the calendar. With each additional commitment, we have to plan every other hour more intentionally in order to leave room for the laundry, meals, homework, and practices. We think we've got it all figured out and then our great master holiday season plan falls apart.

*A child comes down ill on the way out the door to do some Christmas shopping.*

*A friend's mother passes on and the wake is scheduled right for the same night of the cookie exchange.*

*The car was running just fine, until you bumped into that rock rushing out of your friend's driveway.*

*The credit card bill didn't get paid on time because the check got lost in the mail.*

*And hubby announces he'd like to have a little party right after Christmas before New Years.*

Plans. No matter how many we make, they never seem to go according to our master design. But they always go according to His! God is never surprised by the turn of events in our lives. He saw them coming long before we ever turned the corner onto the unexpected. Our days, hours, minutes are forever in God's hands, past, present, and future.

He knows that ill child needs our attention, but moreover that we need to take a night off from the running around. He knows we love a cookie exchange, but it doesn't quite compare to the loss of a mother, does it? He knew we were driving too fast, and used that rock to remind us to slow down...thwarting an even worse bump that would have happened without this God-intervention. He was well informed about the check arriving late, which wasn't anything other than a moment to exert some self-control and experience some overdue humility. And he knew hubby wants *that* party, which will be a perfect way to get out of self-absorption and into relationships that matter.

God's plans are perfect even when they are imperfectly perceived. What a gift to treasure this Christmas time!

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. How much planning have you been doing this Christmas time?
2. Do you see the effect of God's sovereign rescheduling?
3. How can you recenter your focus on the Lord each day in order to recognize His plans playing out instead of yours?

# Day 10

## *Let me. Let me in.*



### **Ephesians 3:16-18**

**“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ...”**

God wants in.

He wants a permanent place in our lives.

He wants His roots to go down deep and gird us strong.

He wants to dwell in our hearts. Because of our faith. That's all. His gift.

But we resist.

We run.

We hide.

We hold back.

We erect walls papered in "to do" lists.

We squirm from His touch, uncertain what to do with His [grace](#).

We wrench away from His discipline, unprepared for His [mercy](#).

We strive after the love of another, while He waits for us to receive [Him](#).

We seek refreshment from the world, instead of His [Son](#).

We're a mess. It breaks His heart.

But He loves us, as is. And He is waiting, patiently for us to let Him in.

To let Him in more than we did when, by faith, we confessed Jesus is Lord.

More than when we fill our religious duty by going to church on Sunday.

More than when our Spirit is filled with fleeting holy praise as we raise our hands in worship.

More than when our ministry madness is done for His glory.

More.

He wants to dwell.

Within our hearts.

Constantly.

Consistently.

Will we give God a precious gift this Christmas by receiving His holy presence in our lives, in every moment of every day?

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. How are you running, hiding, rejecting, holding back?
2. What do you think about give the Lord the give of your whole self this Christmas?

# Day 11

*Let me rule. Let me reign.*



**Psalm 67:4**

**“May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth.”**

**Exodus 15:18**

**“The LORD will reign for ever and ever.”**

**Psalm 47:8**

**“God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.”**

As we listen to the news, take a look around our communities, and hear the trials facing many of our friends and family members, it is easy to wonder if God is actually still on the throne. Is He really ruling this world? Did His reign begin before time? Will it continue beyond eternity?

Yes.

I know so, because God says so in His word. And I believe the Word is true, because I've experienced His attributes playing out in so many other ways in my life. [I can testify to His redemptive power.](#) He changed me. He change my life. He changed my children's future.

Although I wonder about earthquakes and cancer, and fret about finances and my children's future, I know that God is in charge, not only in this world, but in my heart. He's turned my feelings into faith steps and my rebellion into redemption.

God rules.

And He continues to rule, even if we don't see it or know it firsthand, He is offering the gift of His marvelous reign over our lives. Imagine what life would be like otherwise.

## ***Reflection Questions***

1. How do you feel about God's rule and reign?
2. Are you letting Him in?
3. Why or why not?

# Day 12

## *For my glory.*



### **Psalm 29:2**

**“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.”**

Glory. It means "very great praise, honor, or distinction, renown." To give God the glory due His name is more than simply saying, "Oh, thanks God. I really appreciate this or that or how you [fill in the blank]." To give God the glory due His name is an act of worship to the Lord in light of the splendor of His holiness.

Giving God glory must be intentional, reverent, purposeful, and authentic. In a humble position, bowed before the King of Kings, we posture ourselves both to worship and be used. In hands outstretched, prepared to receive His works and plan, His forgiveness and grace, His mercy and love, we offer holy praise unto His name for all of it.

What a beautiful story of the Gift-giver giving us the ability to gift it again.

### ***Reflection Questions***

1. Have you receive the gifts God has given you?
2. What are you doing to treasure them this Christmas time?
3. How can you gift give back to Him?
4. How can the overflow of these gifts touch others, today, practically and purposefully?

**put your eyes on me**  
hear me seek me find me need me  
let my **spirit** fill you  
let my **word** satisfy you  
let my **living water** refresh you  
let my **love** surround you  
let my **forgiveness** heal you  
let my **grace** transform you  
let my **word** undo you  
let my **purposes** direct you  
let my **plans** delight you  
let **me** let me **in.**  
let me **rule** let me **reign.**  
**for my glory**



## About the Author

*Ephesians 3:7 NLT*

*By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.*

Elisa Pulliam is a lifelong mentor, ministry leader, speaker and life coach, passionate about encouraging and equipping this generation of women to impact the next generation with relevant Truth.

After more nearly twenty years mentoring teen girls coinciding with leading women's ministries, Elisa is in tune with the struggles of teens, twenty-somethings and today's women. Having lived a life apart from God, marked by a legacy of dysfunction and a long season of rebellion, Elisa understands the power of the Cross. When she met Jesus as her Lord and Savior during her junior year in college, her life radically changed, and her life calling soon emerged.



Elisa's deepest desire is to facilitate life transformation in others by offering practical, easily accessible and biblically sound resources to touch the heart, mind and soul. She shares her insights, teaching materials, and mentoring resources at [More to Be](#), and offers life coaching through [elisapulliam.com](http://elisapulliam.com).

When the Lord provides the opportunity, Elisa thoroughly enjoys speaking at women's events and for groups of teenagers, especially at [Redefining Beauty Events](#). She connects with her audience through storytelling as she shares her personal experiences in the context of biblical truth. Teens, twenty-somethings, and Christian women respond to her messages, because she is transparent and doesn't hold back from tossing in a good bit of humor as she unravels life lessons.

Elisa's counts it pure joy to be Stephen's wife, who is not only her best friend but has been Christ-with-skin-on to her for more than 18 years of marriage. She also considers it a privilege to train up her four children (ages 9 through 15), and admits that they have taught her the most about love, affection and total forgiveness.

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