

Emmanuel, God With Us

God has a beautiful plan for your life. And He wants to lead you each step of the way. That is why one of the names of God, Emmanuel, means “God with us.”

God wants to be intimately involved in our lives. He wants us to know His voice and follow Him.

In fact, He wanted to be with us so strongly that He sent His Son, a part of Himself, to physically walk the earth. That baby in the manger was God, and He is still with us today. He’s our hope for change.

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When I think about the person I am today, I am amazed how God has changed me—and I’m so grateful for the ways He allows me to help others now. There were times when I came very close to giving up along the way. But God was faithful to be with me, help me and keep me going on those days.

I know that apart from Him, I can do nothing. However, in Him, I have everything I need to live the abundant life He gives me in Christ. It is the same for you. You can all have the strength and confidence to keep going because of what Jesus has done for you ... *because God is with you every day*. God really cares about you—a lot.

Have you noticed that when God speaks to your heart, He only has caring and encouraging things to say? He never asks us, “Why aren’t you more like this person?” or, “When are you ever going to amount to something?” That’s because in Christ, *God sees you as perfect*.

Many people don’t realize God sees them that way. In fact, if you have ever been hurt or rejected, you may have thought God

is mad at you and doesn't really listen to your prayers.

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But that is not true. The fact that God sent Jesus is proof of that. Jesus came, He lived, He died and He rose again so we can have a real relationship with our Father God. He did it all for *you*.

In Christ, you are His own special child. God decided to adopt you because it gave Him joy, as it says in Ephesians 1:5 (NLT), "God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure."

You can't earn or buy His love. It is simply a gift He wants you to receive because you are so dear to Him—you are His child! Romans 8:38 (NLT) tells us, "Nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love."

I encourage you to be bold enough to believe that God let Jesus come to earth and go through everything He went through just for *you*—because you're that precious and valuable to Him! Take a step of faith and believe that God loves you intimately, He has a great plan for your life, and His promises are true.

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Joyce Meyer is a New York Times best-selling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including “Battlefield of the Mind” and “Overcoming Every Problem” (FaithWords). She hosts the “Enjoying Everyday Life” radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit .

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