

MAC BRIDGES / KENZ DURHAM

**FOR
WHEN
I'M IN MY
FEELS**

*A PRAYER &
REFLECTIONS
DEVOTIONAL*

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Hiiii, we're Mac and Kenz, the voices behind this book. We are best friends, kingdom dreamers, and probably a lot like you. We are so honored to be the ones taking you on this journey all about your feelings. Throughout this book, we will be sharing personal stories and diving into Scripture with you.

Mac Bridges is an ex-country singer from a small town in North Carolina. You probably have the wrong impression of her already because she dresses more like Beyoncé and you'll never catch her with a guitar. On the real tho, she's an incredible speaker and leader. She will fire truth at you even when you aren't ready to hear it. She's confident, strong-willed (8 on the Enneagram), and loyal. Just picture a golden retriever, pit bull mutt and you've got Mac!

Kenz Durham is everybody's best friend, ultimate hype girl, and prayer warrior. If you ever meet her, be sure to ask her to show you her speed walk—it's very impressive. Even though she's not a touchy-feely hugger, she always makes sure that everyone in the room feels included and seen. Don't be surprised by her savvy business skills and her ability to bring the house down with a fire prayer. She's a textbook 7 on the Enneagram and is sure to bring a good time no matter where she goes.

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Have you ever found yourself in your feels?

Like woaah, today I am feeling _____. Am I ever going to stop feeling this way? Or is this how I define myself now? Does God even care about my feelings?

Friend, you've come to the right place. This devotional is a place for you to come as you are to feel all the things, then encounter more of Jesus's love, grace, and goodness in light of what you're feeling.

Feelings were never meant to be ignored, suppressed, or pushed aside. You don't have to be ashamed of them! Every core feeling—hurt, lonely, sad, anger, fear, shame, guilt, and joy—have been created by God as an invitation for you to know Him deeper.

That means no matter what you're feeling at this very moment, He can handle it and wants you to bring it to Him. Because even when you don't feel it, God is doing an important work in your life.

So let's get in our feels together, so that we might encounter the beautiful richness of His loving kindness.

HOW TO USE

This devotional contains forty days of content, divided into sections based on eight core emotions. You can complete the devotions in order or out of order based on where you find yourself in your feels. There might even be days when you find yourself going back to ones you've already completed. That's totally okay, too! No matter what day you choose to do, you will always find the same three elements: Scripture, Devotion, and Prayer.

SCRIPTURE

Here's your chance to get in God's Word and let His truth speak to whatever feeling you are learning about or dealing with that day. We will always encourage you to take it a step further by opening up God's Word for yourself and reading the verse inside the context of the chapter (or if you're feeling extra motivated, the entire book of the Bible).

DEVOTION

In each devotion, you will see our real-life examples and stories tied to the truth found in Scripture to help encourage you and embrace whatever feeling you find yourself facing that day.

PRAYER

There are three prompts at the end of each day to fix your eyes on your heavenly Father, to posture your heart before Him in prayer, and to give you a safe space to cry out to Him with your honest feelings. This is the part where you truly begin to live out the truth you learned that day.

SECTION 1

HURT

Hurt is the lump in your throat, the ache in your chest, or the tears glossing over your eyes. It's the admission that something or someone has left you in pain. We all experience it differently, but if we look deep enough, it's woven throughout Scripture and through all of our stories and experiences.

Maybe it was a relationship that ended abruptly, a friend who seemed to move on without you, an invite to that spring break trip you didn't get, a parent that abandoned you, or the feeling you can vividly remember when you overheard someone saying something about you that cut deeply.

Perhaps in this moment, all of those hurtful memories from your past that you've done such a good job of tucking away, pushing aside, or looking to the bright side of are

all starting to bubble to the surface. You might be tempted to close this book and never pick it up again. (Ahh, please don't do that! Hang with us.) Can we challenge you to stay, to bravely keep reading, and to be more honest with your hurt than ever before?

Remember that saying from your childhood, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me"? Can we all agree that this is a lie? Words hurt. Rejection hurts. Breakups hurt. Criticism hurts. Mean comments on the internet hurt.

So many of us have been taught to run from our hurt, cover it with a metaphorical band-aid, and simply toughen up. But just like when we ignore physical pain, our emotional pain when neglected doesn't go away, the pain only gets



worse. It starts to morph into other nasty symptoms like resentment, betrayal, and bitterness. It might even lead you to start hurting others around you as a way to cope with your own pain.

But there is good news. The beautiful thing about hurt is that when we are willing to admit it and bring it before the Lord, He invites us into the most beautiful thing— healing. He's the BEST doctor for our hurting hearts! His medicine is peace, hope, trust, reconciliation, and joy.

When we drink deeply of the gifts that only He can offer in our hurt, we can begin to heal.

God is your healer—Jehovah Rapha. He can do for you in your pain what you cannot do for yourself. You don't have to ignore the hurt that you're currently feeling. You don't have to tie it up with a pretty bow. You don't even have to dry your tears. You simply have to take that hurt to the safety of God's presence and reach out your hands to be healed in His loving arms.

WHEN I'M FEELING BETRAYED

Mac

“The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”

John 13:2-5, NIV



The truth is that betrayal hurts. It’s one of those feelings that leaves you second guessing everything, questioning everyone, and running for the hills to make sure that no one can ever hurt you again. Maybe it was a friend who said something horrible behind your back, a family member who didn’t show up for you, or someone you loved that chose somebody else over you.

Have you ever thought about the fact that our Jesus knew what it was like to feel betrayal? Judas, one of the twelve disciples that Jesus chose to walk more closely to Him than anyone on earth, was the very person that handed Him over to the authorities to be crucified in exchange for thirty pieces of silver. This was the ultimate betrayal. The life of Jesus in exchange for some pocket change.

John 13 depicts the happenings that took place right before Jesus’s betrayal. Jesus was gathered with His disciples in an upper room within the city gates of Jerusalem. We find out that Jesus knew Judas was going to betray him, but what does He do in response? Jesus gets on His knees, kneels before Judas, and washes his feet.

Have you ever thought about how powerful it is that the very night of Judas's betrayal is the very night that Jesus took on the most humble posture possible through the washing of His betrayer's feet. Jesus could have skipped over Judas. Jesus could have waited until Judas left; instead, Jesus showed the ultimate display of love in the face of the ultimate betrayal.

In verse 3, we see the "why" behind Jesus's choice. Jesus didn't lower Himself into a posture of humility from a place of weakness, but rather from a position of all authority and confidence in His Father. It was His confidence in the love of the Father that led Jesus to this beautiful display of authentic love despite the feeling of deep betrayal.

Jesus in His humanity wasn't immune to the feelings of hurt and pain that came as a result of the betrayal of somebody close. He knows what it's like to feel betrayed, so we can trust Him in our own feelings of betrayal. Because of this trust, let's be like Jesus, who in the face of our deepest betrayals, looks to our Father's acceptance. Let that assurance lead us into a Jesus kind of love where we can find healing even from our deepest feelings of hurt and betrayal.

Spend some time talking to God about any feelings of betrayal you've been experiencing.

Meditate on the heart of Jesus shown in John 13:2-5 to exhibit love to the very person who was to betray Him.

Ask for the Father's love and acceptance to be poured out in your heart in the midst of your feelings of betrayal.

WHEN I'M FEELING RESENTFUL

Mac

“Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.”

Ephesians 4:31-32

For nearly two years, I couldn't get this one conversation out of my head that I had with my best friend. Even though we had mended the friendship and I had forgiven her face-to-face, in the quietness of my heart, I held it against her every chance I got.

That is called the sneaky feeling of resentment.

Resentment is one of those emotions that can quietly slip under the radar while slowly but surely poisoning your heart. There are probably things from each of our pasts that we've tried to sweep under the rug, act like they don't bother us, or claim that we've moved on, but internally, we just can't seem to let them go.

Our culture loves to cancel, cut toxic people out, and place boundaries around those who have hurt us. Sometimes, this is the healthiest choice, but it is often just an excuse for us to hold tightly to our feelings of resentment.

Ephesians 4 calls us to a different path—one that is countercultural and incredibly difficult to embark upon. Verse 31 straight up says to let all bitterness—a synonym for resentment—be removed from you.

Did you happen to notice that the writer Paul says *all* bitterness? Not 90 or 99 percent, or letting that one really terrible thing someone did or said that one time slip through the cracks. We are called to empty all resentment out of our hearts, minds, and mouths, and that includes any anger, wrath, shouting, slander, or malice that might go with it.

Instead, we are to replace it with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness that stems from the undeserved kindness we've received from Jesus, who went to the cross for our forgiveness and healing while we were still broken sinners.

Spoiler alert: you do not have the power to release resentment on your own. However, when you draw near to Jesus and receive His kindness, the power of the Holy Spirit will transform and compel you to extend that same forgiveness towards others.

Resentment refuses to reconcile and always places the blame somewhere else. But when we live out of the overflow of the grace and mercy we've received from Jesus, we're able to forgive others and move towards a countercultural type of healing.

Confess any resentment that has been quietly stewing in your heart.

Reflect on the undeserved kindness and forgiveness you've received in Jesus as shared in Ephesians 4:32.

Ask Jesus to lead you toward reconciliation and healing with any person or situation you've been feeling bitterness toward.

WHEN I'M FEELING BROKENHEARTED

Kenz

*“The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and rescues them
from all their troubles. The LORD is near the brokenhearted;
he saves those crushed in spirit.”*

Psalm 34:17-18

Psalm 34 was written from a broken heart. David, the psalmist, was defeated by life's circumstances. His friends turned their backs on him, he had to leave his home out of fear for his life, he was exhausted, and the journey had been long. He wrote this Psalm while in a literal cave with a bunch of other desperate men.

I'm sure there is a part of you that can relate to David right now. Maybe you aren't in a cave and maybe you haven't lost complete hope, but there's a good chance you feel flat-out broken—like your heart is in a million little pieces on the floor and you don't know how to put them all back together again.

Oftentimes, when we have a broken heart, we think that God is far away or like He might have walked away from us. But that's not true at all. As this Psalm declares, it's in our brokenness that He is most near to us. It's when we are weak that He is strong (2 Cor. 12:9).

God shows up right in the middle of the mess. He is our light in the darkness. He gets down low with us, holds us in His arms, and guess what? He will never leave us. There's not a moment in time when He will change His mind, walk away, or love you any less. He is always there and will never leave.



As David and these men were sitting in complete darkness together, they began to sing these words in the Psalm over themselves and their circumstances. I can imagine their eyes got a little brighter as they sang, and despite the darkness of the room, their spirits felt light again. But more than anything, I imagine Jesus being so present with them just as He is with you in your brokenness right now. And guess what? His loving presence is the best place to be.

So will you look up and cry out to Him? Will you acknowledge His presence in the room? Will you let Him embrace you in your brokenness?

Take a few moments to picture Jesus sitting beside you in your brokenness, then begin to let Him hold you and every little piece of your broken heart.

Read the Scripture from today over your brokenness and let the hope of these words renew your spirit.

Allow the Lord to simply sit there and hold you. There's no agenda, nowhere you have to be, simply experience the beauty of His presence and His embrace.

WHEN I'M FEELING REJECTED

Kenz

*“For I know the plans I have for you”—this is the LORD’s declaration—
“plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future
and a hope. You will call to me and come and pray to me,
and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you
search for me with all your heart.”*

Jeremiah 29:11-13

What is your first response when you experience rejection? Ninety-nine out of a hundred would probably say that we run away. It’s in the midst of rejection that you start to build walls in your heart in an attempt to not get hurt.

It’s the moment you block that person on your phone. The moment you rip up that letter and throw it in the trash. It’s the moment you indulge in your favorite dessert, hibernate at home, and numb the sting with the latest Netflix series.

Rejection is just plain awful. It hurts and we want nothing to do with it! But God extends us an invitation in our rejection. Do you see it there in the Scripture?

Yes, He promised the Israelites plans for “well-being, not for disaster,” but there are some stronger promises in the verses that follow that we can cling to today.

“I will listen.” “You will find me.”

What we don’t see is anything about running away from God or hiding in the darkness. It’s the opposite.

“Call to me.” “Come.” “Pray to me.” “Seek me.”

When we are faced with rejection, our first response should be to turn toward God and surrender every piece of our heart to Him. Because while we will always be at risk of receiving some form of rejection from another human, God will never reject us.

He won't turn His back on you when you call out or seek Him. He will always be there, and you can find Him anytime with open arms.

Don't run away from the One who will never turn His back on you or change His mind about you. It's okay if you don't believe that He has plans full of hope and well-being for your future. He can handle your doubts, your questions, and your hurt. Not only can He handle it, but He wants you to bring it all to Him.

Surrender your rejection to the Lord today. Let Him have all of your hurt, then wait for Him to respond. He is here for you, and guess what?

He is never leaving!

Talk to God about the rejection you've experienced recently or past rejection that you've run away from.

Meditate on the truths found in this Scripture and how it might bring you hope.

Lean into the arms of the Father, ask Him the hard questions, and listen for His voice.

WHEN I'M FEELING OFFENDED

Kenz

“You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you, don’t resist an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to the one who asks you, and don’t turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Matthew 5: 38-42

I have a love-hate relationship with this passage of Scripture. I mean, if you know Jesus, you know He’s kind of a straight shooter and will never give you a fluffy, feel-good kind of answer. But this one, well, this just hits home.



Offense takes on a few different forms. It’s the friend that didn’t show up for you when you needed her the most. It’s the moment your mom criticized the decision you made or the way you acted. It’s the guy that commented on your weight in a season when you were already struggling to see the beauty in yourself. It’s the invite you didn’t get, so you’re left at home alone on a Friday night.

Offense hurts!

And when we are offended, everything in us wants to crumble inside. But once we crumble, we just get mad, right? We want justice—to make those who hurt us feel what we feel, because we’ve convinced ourselves it’s the only way we’ll feel better.

But Jesus tells us to love those who offend us. To look past the offense and seek forgiveness. That's kind of a hard truth to swallow, huh?

But Jesus is empowering us in this truth to step into sacrificial love—a love that makes no sense, a love that's undeserved, a love that has no strings attached, a love like our Father's love!

All throughout His life, people rejected Jesus, didn't believe in Him, and made false accusations against Him. He was made fun of, left out, uninvited, and dismissed by even His closest friends. But at the end of His life, Jesus did something that made no sense. He died and gave His own life for the very people that spit on Him and crucified Him.

Jesus is calling each of us to that same kind of “this doesn't make any sense” love. But when we choose to love someone who has offended us, even when it feels like the most illogical decision, we are beginning to understand more of the gospel and Jesus's love that was poured out for us.

Talk to the Lord about the offense you are experiencing. Be honest with Him. Be mad with Him. He can take it all and is a safe place to be.

Reflect on this Scripture and how God might be calling you into sacrificial love. What stands out to you the most?

Ask the Lord for the words and courage to approach this person or situation with a sacrificial love.