THIS IS MY SUITCASE

A 14-DAY DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY

Volume 1

Living a life of surrender, calling and obedience unto the Lord.

JOSIE ROGERS TOBYA

PROLOGUE

We all want our life to have meaning. And the truth is—it does. We are here on purpose and for God's purpose.

Yet so often, we don't know how to truly find that purpose. God promises us:

"Call to Me and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know."

Jeremiah 33:3

As we continue to seek Him, He allows us to find Him. And as we knock, the door will be opened.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Matthew 7:7

It's not just about seeking the hand of God for the blessings of God—whether for your family, your work, or your ministry—but about seeking Him to know Him. Through the revelation that comes from walking with Him and knowing Him, you begin to make Him known.

Whatever stage of life you're in right now—whether you're in school, in your career, an empty nester, single, or married—it doesn't matter. God wants to use your life to glorify Him.

That begins by simply being with Him and allowing His Word and His truth to change you from the inside out.

This devotional is based on my own early life experiences of following the Lord and the many ways He has led me—from seasons of preparation to important decisions, from lessons in discipline to

learning surrender—and how all of it prepared me to move overseas as a full-time missionary, beginning in the Amazon jungle.

This devotional focuses on that portion of my story—those early years of learning to hear His voice, obey His leading, and trust His timing. My prayer is that as you walk through these pages, my story will inspire you to follow the Lord wherever He leads, whatever He asks, and at whatever cost.

As you go through these reflections, let God prune you as the vinedresser does. Let Him do His work in you—the work only He can do when you give Him full access to your heart.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26

Josie Rogers Tobya

Reflection Prompt

Before beginning Day 1, pause and ask the Lord to prepare your heart for this journey.

Reflection

"Lord, what season of preparation are You walking me through right now?"

"What do You want to teach me as I walk with You in these next fourteen days?"

DAY 1 – SAYING YES IN PERU

Scripture

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"

Isaiah 6:8

Observation

I was seventeen, kneeling in worship on my very first mission trip to Peru. The moment was quiet and sacred—and in it, the Lord spoke clearly to my heart: "This is what I am calling you to for the rest of your life." I didn't know what that meant. I didn't have a plan. But I knew it was Him, and I said yes.

Application

God doesn't wait for us to have everything figured out. He looks for a willing heart. My yes that day became the door to a lifetime of adventures with Him. Sometimes He just needs us to kneel, listen, and say yes.

Life Bridge

You may not be called to travel across the world, but you are called to obedience. Your yes might mean forgiving someone, serving in your local church, or trusting Him in a new area. Every yes opens the door for Him to lead.

Prayer

Lord, You have my yes. I don't need to know all the details. Just speak—I'm listening. Lead me, and I will follow.

Reflection Questions

1. What has God been asking you to say yes to recently?
2. What fears have kept you from fully obeying Him?

3. How can you make room to listen for His voice this week?

Take a Step

Today, pause to say yes to God again—out loud and from your heart.

DAY 2 – WHEN GOD ASKED ME TO LAY IT DOWN

Scripture

"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart."

Psalm 37:4

Observation

When I was seventeen years old, I was pursuing music. I was taking voice lessons from a professional opera singer and planning to make it my career. But during prayer, the Lord said, "I want you to lay that down because I have a different calling for your life."

That was difficult, because I thought music was the only gift I had. I couldn't see any other area where I was gifted, so laying it down meant trusting God completely. But I did. I laid down my plan and pursuit of becoming a professional singer to find out His calling for my life.

Application

True delight in the Lord means letting go of our own agendas so He can shape our desires into His. What begins as surrender becomes fulfillment when our dreams align with His will.

Life Bridge

Maybe God isn't asking you to give something up permanently, but to trust Him with it. When you place your dreams in His hands, He often reshapes them into something greater than you imagined.

Prayer
Lord, I choose to delight in You. Place Your desires in my heart and teach me to follow Your plans above my own.

Reflection Questions
1. What area of your life has God asked you to surrender?
2. How has fear or self-reliance kept you from trusting His plan?
3. What would it look like to truly delight in Him today?

Take a Step
Write one dream, plan, or desire you're willing to place in God's hands today.

DAY 3 – HE SPOKE IN THE SILENCE

Scripture
"Be still, and know that I am God."

Psalm 46:10

Observation
One Sunday morning in church, our pastor invited us into a moment of stillness—to simply listen. In that quiet, God spoke a single word to my heart: "Argentina." I didn't have details, only one word.
For four years I prayed for Argentina without knowing why. Later, while helping lead a youth drama team during Bible school, I co-led a mission trip to Argentina with the parents of one of the teens, who was also an instructor at my Bible school. Seeing the fruit of my prayers come to life changed their lives—and mine.

Application
God doesn't always give us the full plan. Sometimes He speaks one word at a time, and when we obey, the meaning unfolds.

Life Bridge

You don't need the whole map—just the next step. When you obey the small nudges God gives, He'll reveal more as you walk.

Prayer

Father, quiet my heart. Help me treasure every word You give and respond in faith to what You say.

Reflection Questions

1. When was the last time you slowed down enough to listen to God?
2. What might He be trying to whisper to you in this season?
3. How can you create more stillness in your daily life?

Take a Step

Find ten minutes today to be silent before God. Bring no requests—just listen.

DAY 4 – FAITH ISN'T EMOTION — IT'S DIRECTION

Scripture

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."

Romans 8:14

Observation

After returning from a short-term mission trip to South Africa, I was so moved that I wanted to sell everything and move there immediately. I even started telling people, but deep down I knew that wasn't the Spirit—it was emotion. The Lord reminded me that years earlier He had told me to complete my three years at Rhema Bible Training College. If I had gone on my own, I would have been outside His will. So I

submitted my heart, my call, and my desire to the Lord's timing. That obedience was building endurance.

Application
Passion can stir us, but only the Spirit can lead us. Obedience keeps us grounded in His will.

Life Bridge
Sometimes our emotions shout louder than His whisper. When that happens, pause. Ask, "Holy Spirit, is this You or just me?" Direction from God always carries peace, not pressure.

Prayer
Holy Spirit, lead me beyond my emotions. Teach me to follow Your voice with steady obedience.

Reflection Questions
1. When have you mistaken emotion for God's direction?
2. How can you better discern between excitement and true leading?
3. What step of obedience is He asking you to take today?

Take a Step
Write one area where you need to wait for His timing instead of rushing ahead.

DAY 5 – OBEDIENCE IN THE WAITING

Scripture
"Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord."

Psalm 27:14

Observation

At the beginning of my third-year missions training, God spoke to me not to go to the mission field after graduation but to go home and serve my home pastor. It was a season to learn, submit, and grow before being sent out. But I resisted. I wanted to go to the nations, not home to Arizona. Because of my disobedience, the finances never came in for my internship. Everyone else went on their trips, but I couldn't. When I finally surrendered, peace returned. Then God opened a completely different door for me to do my internship in Brazil rather than Guatemala—a few months later—and it all worked out to His glory. That moment became the path that eventually led me to the Amazon.

Application

Obedience isn't rushing ahead—it's trusting His timing. What looks like a delay is often preparation.

Life Bridge

Waiting seasons refine us. When nothing seems to move, God is often strengthening the foundation so what He builds later can last.

Prayer

Lord, Thank You for loving me enough to close doors until my heart aligns with Yours. Teach me to trust Your timing completely.

Reflection Questions

1. What does waiting look like for you right now?
2. How can you use this season to grow instead of grumble?
3. Where might God be protecting you through delay?

Take a Step

Spend five minutes thanking God for every "closed" door that actually protected you.

DAY 6 – EMBRACING CULTURE, EMBRACING PEOPLE

Scripture

"To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

1 Corinthians 9:22

Observation

While in Manila, I was offered balut—a duck-embryo delicacy. Everything in me hesitated, but I knew love meant saying yes. Missions isn't comfort—it's compassion. Later, I traveled alone to another city to connect with missionaries who had a Bible school. When I arrived, they said, "Josie, you arrived on the perfect day—we've had a twelve-hour brownout!" I laughed, realizing God was preparing me for future seasons—teaching me to live with joy even when things were uncomfortable.

Application

God uses every experience to shape us. Missions begins with humility, love, and a willingness to embrace people and circumstances just as they are.

Life Bridge

Loving people often means stepping into their world—eating their food, learning their language, seeing through their eyes. It's how hearts open to the gospel.

Prayer

Lord, help me love across cultures and serve with joy, even when it's uncomfortable. Thank You for preparing me through every season for what's ahead.

Reflection Questions

1. Who in your life feels different from you right now?
2. How can you show them Christlike compassion this week?
3. What has God taught you through uncomfortable moments?

Take a Step

Intentionally spend time this week with someone whose background or story is different from yours.

DAY 7 – HE PREPARES THE WAY

Scripture

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

Psalm 37:23

Observation

In 2009, the Lord told me that a friend and evangelist, Brian Essary, would call and ask me to work with his ministry. A few days later, it happened exactly as He said. About a year later, the Lord spoke again that Brian would ask me to move to Missouri to work full-time for his ministry—but that I would have to raise my own support. It happened just as the Lord had said. That season taught me to live by faith—to trust God for provision and see that obedience always positions us for His purpose.

Application

God doesn't just send us—He goes before us. Every season of obedience is training for the next. When we trust His voice, His provision is already waiting.

Life Bridge

Your next season is already being prepared by God. The people you'll meet, the doors that will open—they're part of His orchestration. You just need to walk in step with Him.

Prayer

Father, thank You for ordering my steps. Help me to trust Your leading even when I don't know what's ahead. I rest in Your perfect timing and provision.

Reflection Questions

1. When has God prepared something ahead of you that you only recognized later?
2. How can you walk with more trust today?
3. What area of your life do you need to surrender to His timing?

Take a Step

Write down one way God has proven faithful in leading you so you can remember it next time you face uncertainty.

DAY 8 – A DREAM OF THE AMAZON

Scripture

"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'"

Isaiah 30:21

Observation

One night before sleep, I had a dream—or it could have been an open vision—that the Lord gave me. I saw myself giving everything I owned away and moving to Brazil. I told the Lord, "I don't want to go to Brazil. It's filled with believers, churches, and pastors. I want to be in

places where there is no light, where there are no churches, where there are no believers—send me to the lost, Lord." The Lord said, "Good. I'm sending you to the Amazon." Six months later, at twenty-five years old, single, with one suitcase, a guitar, and a backpack, I packed up and went. It was one faith adventure after another. The two words the Lord spoke to me in that dream were Tabatinga and Tikuna. At the time, I had no idea what they meant, but those names would become the beginning of a lifelong call and a story of divine appointments that only God could orchestrate.

Application

When God speaks, His direction often surprises us. Obedience leads us into purpose far beyond what we could ever plan.

Life Bridge

God's call may not look like what you expect. But when He speaks, say yes and watch His direction unfold in ways you never imagined.

Prayer

Lord, lead me wherever You will. Even when I don't understand the full picture, I trust Your voice. Wherever You send me, I will go.

Reflection Questions

1. What has God spoken to you that didn't make sense at the time?
2. What would it look like to obey without needing all the answers?
3. How can you prepare your heart to follow His unexpected directions?

Take a Step

Write down one dream or calling God has placed in your heart, even if you don't understand it yet.

DAY 9 – DIVINE CONNECTIONS IN MANAUS

Scripture

"The Lord will perfect that which concerns me."

Psalm 138:8

Observation

After I had gotten settled in the northeast of Brazil with the hub of Rhema, I shared my heart for the Amazon. They said, "We don't have any official work there, but we can connect you with someone who is there for the weekend." So I said, "Okay," and bought myself a ticket to Manaus, the capital of the Brazilian Amazon. We messaged over email, but we didn't even know what each other looked like. I shared my flight information and flew into Manaus. I wasn't fearful, but I didn't have the layout or plan of what was ahead. I trusted God—He had opened the door, so He would provide the provision and the protection. Later, I based myself in Manaus and ended up moving in with Pastor João and his family when I wasn't in the villages working with the Tikuna. They weren't only my pastors—they became my family. Pastor Jorge, a friend, was the one who connected me with the people in Tabatinga, which opened the door for me to eventually meet and begin working with Edileine. Both of those connections were God-given, and they would have never happened had I not taken a step of faith into the unknown.

Application

God goes before us and aligns the right people, places, and moments for His purposes. Divine connections are never coincidences—they're His fingerprints.

Life Bridge

Some of the most meaningful relationships in your life will come through obedience. When you trust His leading, He'll bring the right people at the right time.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for the people You've connected me with along this journey. Help me to keep stepping out in faith, trusting that every divine connection has purpose.

Reflection Questions

1. Who has God placed in your life as part of His plan?
2. How can you intentionally strengthen those godly connections?
3. Where might He be preparing a new relationship for His purpose?

Take a Step

Reach out to someone who has been a divine connection in your life. Encourage them and thank God for them.

DAY 10 – THE SUPERNATURAL TRANSLATION

Scripture

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts.

Zechariah 4:6

Observation

One morning, while having breakfast with Pastor Lázaro and his wife in Manacapuru, we were preparing to travel to a nearby village for the day. He told me that our translator wasn't able to come and asked if I still wanted to go. I said, "Yes." He replied, "Then I'll translate for you." At that time, I spoke very little Portuguese, and he didn't speak

any English. He said, “By the help of the Holy Spirit, I’ll translate for you.” So that’s exactly what we did. We got on a boat, traveled to the villages, went door to door, prayed for the sick, saw miracles, and shared the love of Jesus. The Holy Spirit bridged the language barrier, and every person heard the message clearly in their own tongue. That’s what happens when we obey—the supernatural is able to flow.

Application

God doesn’t need our perfection to move through us—only our obedience. When we step out in faith, His power makes up the difference.

Life Bridge

The Holy Spirit will empower you to do what seems impossible. Your obedience creates space for His power to flow.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for filling me with Your Spirit afresh and anew. I pray that I will be a vessel through which Your love and power can flow freely.

Reflection Questions

1. When has God helped you do something you couldn’t do alone?
2. How does obedience invite His power into your daily life?
3. Where do you need to depend more on the Holy Spirit right now?

Take a Step

Ask God to use you today in a way that requires His power, not your ability.

DAY 11 – THE VISION IN MANACAPURU

Scripture

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17

Observation

One evening while riding on the back of a motorcycle in Manacapuru, I suddenly felt dirty. I asked the Lord why, and He said, "It's because the city is filled with spiritual pollution—human trafficking, prostitution, and sin. The people need to repent and come to Me." That moment birthed a vision in my heart for a women's conference. What began as a burden in prayer became a three-day conference and crusade where more than two thousand women came together. We saw women come to salvation, miracles happen, and deliverance take place. God was glorified, and His love and power swept through that city with lasting fruit for even more than a decade later.

Application

When God allows us to feel the weight of darkness, it's not to discourage us—it's to invite us to partner with Him in bringing His light. Our obedience creates the space for transformation.

Life Bridge

When your heart feels heavy for your city or your nation, that's an invitation from God to pray and act. You're not called to carry the burden alone but to partner with Him in bringing His light.

Prayer

Lord, open my eyes to see what You see. Give me compassion for the broken, and boldness to bring Your light into places that desperately need Your presence.

Reflection Questions

1. What areas of your city or community do you feel burdened for?
2. How might God want to use you to bring His light there?
3. What steps can you take to turn that burden into action?

Take a Step

Pray specifically over one area of darkness in your city and ask God to show you how to respond.

DAY 12 – PIONEERING AMONG THE TIKUNA

Scripture

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!'"

Romans 10:14–15

Observation

After our supernatural encounter and discovering our shared heart for the same people and the same vision for pioneering among the unreached, raising up disciples, and sending them out, Edileine and I began working together among the Tikuna villages on the Colombian side that had never received the gospel. We weren't deep in the jungle, but we were in it—surrounded by life and mystery on every side. The people were unreached by the gospel, though not completely cut off from the world, and yet the light had not come there—until now.
We traveled by canoe, by speedboat, and on foot—machetes in hand, carving our way through dense paths that seemed to breathe. We

pressed on through heat and humidity, through rain and wind, through sudden cold when the clouds sank low over the river. We crossed high waters and low waters, slippery bridges made from fallen trees, and faced each new day as both a challenge and a miracle. We met witch doctors and village chiefs, slept in hammocks strung between trees, in tents, or sometimes on the bare earth. We bathed in the river, cooked over open fires, and lived among the people—not as visitors, but as family—bringing them the message of a Savior who saw them, even there.

Through that pioneering work, house churches began to rise. From simple gatherings and those humble beginnings, disciples were raised who still remain faithful to this day. Now, some of those same indigenous Tikuna believers are attending Bible school—those who were once unreached now being equipped to reach their own people with the gospel.

Application

The gospel takes root when we live among those we're called to reach. True missions is love in motion—enduring, serving, and sowing until the light of Christ transforms lives.

Life Bridge

You may not be called to the Amazon, but you are called to carry His light into dark places around you—your school, workplace, or neighborhood. The same love that crosses oceans also crosses the street.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the honor of carrying Your gospel into new places. Keep me humble, teachable, and faithful to serve among the people You love.

Reflection Questions

1. Where has God placed you to carry His light right now?
2. What does "love in motion" look like in your daily life?

3. How can you sow faithfully even when results take time?

Take a Step

Reach out to someone near you who doesn't yet know Jesus. Show His love through a simple act of kindness.

DAY 13 – STANDING YOUR GROUND

Scripture

"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart."

Galatians 6:9

Observation

Every village we traveled to required that we first meet with the chief before we began any ministry. When we arrived at one village, he was away, so we waited three days for him to return. During that time, a kind family let us stay in their home. We cooked together, shared stories, and simply waited. When the chief finally came back, we told him that we wanted to share the love of God and pray for the sick. He said, "There are many sick here. Go, and pray for them."

We went house to house, praying for the sick, and we saw many miracles. Afterward, the chief gathered around two hundred people from the village for a meeting. They had to vote whether we could stay or go. While the meeting took place, our small team prayed and interceded, asking that God's light would remain and that His harvest would come forth. When the vote came, the people decided that we could stay. And today, there is still a church growing there—a testimony of God's faithfulness and the fruit that comes from perseverance.

Application
When you refuse to give up, heaven backs you up. God honors perseverance that stands firm in faith, even when the outcome seems uncertain.

Life Bridge
Obedience doesn't always bring instant fruit. Sometimes, the greatest victory is just standing your ground in faith until the breakthrough comes.

Prayer
Lord, thank You for strength to stand even when it's hard. Help me to keep believing, keep loving, and keep sowing until Your will is accomplished.

Reflection Questions
1. What situation in your life is requiring endurance right now?
2. How can you stand firm in faith while you wait for the harvest?
3. Who can you encourage today not to give up?

Take a Step
Encourage one person who is in a long season of waiting. Remind them that God is faithful.

DAY 14 – THE POWER OF GOD AMONG THE PEOPLE

Scripture
"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Matthew 6:10

Observation

We went to another village that was several hours by boat downstream and several hours by foot inland. This was the farthest village that we had pioneered work in. When we arrived, the head chief was not there, so we met with the second chief. Because he couldn't give us permission, we waited. During that time, we stayed in the home of a family who welcomed us. We cooked with them, ate with them, and shared stories.

When the chief returned, we met with him and told him that we wanted to share with the people about the love of God, pray for the sick, and see miracles. He said, "Okay, I'll let you do that. We'll see what happens." So we did. We went house to house praying for the sick and saw many miracles. During that time, we met a man who had once been the chief for many years. But because the people of the community didn't want him there, they went to the witch doctor. Through curses, nine of his ten children died. He was heartbroken and destroyed. We shared with him about the love of Jesus and the healing that only He can bring to the soul.

Later that evening, we went to the home of the second chief to prepare for an evening meeting. As we talked, he began asking questions about our God. Through telling him about the power of our God, the door opened to share the gospel with him. He asked if we could pray for his back because he had been in pain for a long time and it was difficult for him to play on the floor with his child. We prayed, and the power of God came on him so strongly that he began to weep. Through his tears, he said, "What is this power? How can I have it every day of my life?" That night, he chose to believe in Jesus and was filled with the presence of God.

Later, at the evening meeting, he stood beside me and, by the power of God, began to translate my Portuguese into Tikuna as we shared the gospel with his own people. Together we prayed for the sick and saw many more miracles. That is the Kingdom of Heaven coming to

earth—the supernatural power of God reaching people through love, mercy, and truth.

Application

When we go where God sends us, His Kingdom goes with us. Heaven touches earth through yielded hearts.

Life Bridge

You carry the Kingdom of God wherever you go. When you obey, love, and pray, His presence moves through you to touch others.

Prayer

Lord, let Your Kingdom come through me. Use my life to reveal Your power, love, and mercy to those who don't yet know You.

Reflection Questions

1. How have you seen God's power work through your obedience?
2. What does it mean for His Kingdom to come through your life?
3. Where is He asking you to bring His love and truth next?

Take a Step

Pray that God would use you this week to bring His presence and healing to someone in need.

EPILOGUE – THE FAITHFUL ONE

"Faithful is He who calls you, and He will do it."

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Observation

From that first yes in Peru to the jungles of the Amazon, every step has been marked by His hand. Every closed door, every waiting season, every place of surrender—all of it was preparation. What I thought were detours were really directions, leading me into His perfect will.

Looking back, I see that He never failed me once. Every promise He spoke, He fulfilled in His time.

Application

God's call is not a single moment—it's a journey of many yeses. The path may twist and stretch, but His faithfulness remains unbroken. Our story becomes the evidence that He finishes what He starts.

Life Bridge

Wherever you are in your journey, remember that the same God who called you will also sustain you. He is faithful to complete the work He began in you.

Prayer

Jesus, You are faithful. Thank You for leading me every step of the way. My suitcase belongs to You, and my life does too. I will keep saying yes—for as long as I have breath, I will go where You send me.

Reflection Questions

1. Where can you see the evidence of God's faithfulness in your story?

2. How can you strengthen your trust in His timing today?

3. What "yes" is He inviting you to give Him next?

Take a Step

Write a short prayer of gratitude to the Lord for His faithfulness in every season of your life.