

PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY

DAY 1 - LEANING ON GOD'S STRENGTH

*"FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU; BE NOT
DISMAYED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD. I WILL
STRENGTHEN YOU, I WILL HELP YOU, I WILL
UPHOLD YOU WITH MY RIGHTEOUS RIGHT
HAND." - ISAIAH 41:10*

WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THE WORDS, "YOU HAVE
CANCER," YOUR WORLD CAN FEEL LIKE IT'S
BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN. SHOCK, FEAR,
AND A FLOOD OF UNCERTAINTY ARE NORMAL
REACTIONS. IT'S A MOMENT WHEN LIFE FEELS
FRAGILE, AND QUESTIONS SUDDENLY CLOUD
THE FUTURE. IT'S OKAY TO FEEL SCARED. IT'S OK
TO FEEL OVERWHELMED. BUT EVEN DURING
THIS STORM, GOD WHISPERS: "FEAR NOT, FOR I
AM WITH YOU."

LEANING INTO GOD DURING TIMES OF FEAR
DOESN'T ALWAYS COME EASILY, BUT IT IS
ESSENTIAL. THINK BACK TO MOMENTS WHEN
YOU FELT COMPLETELY BROKEN OR
OUT OF CONTROL.



Cottonwood Creek
— CHURCH —

IN THOSE TIMES, DID YOU FEEL GOD'S PEACE WASH OVER YOU? MAYBE IT CAME IN THE QUIET MOMENTS OF PRAYER OR THROUGH THE GENTLE ENCOURAGEMENT OF A FRIEND. GOD'S PRESENCE DOESN'T ALWAYS ERASE THE PAIN OR FIX THE PROBLEM RIGHT AWAY, BUT IT GIVES YOU THE STRENGTH TO TAKE ANOTHER STEP FORWARD, BREATHE A LITTLE EASIER, AND FACE THE UNKNOWN WITH A SENSE OF PEACE.

THIS VERSE IS A LIFELINE IN MOMENTS OF DEEP FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY. GOD PROMISES TO BE NEAR AND UPHOLD YOU WITH HIS RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND. HE ISN'T A DISTANT OBSERVER OF YOUR PAIN—HE'S YOUR STEADY ROCK, YOUR FIRM FOUNDATION. HE'S FIGHTING ALONGSIDE YOU, GIVING YOU THE COURAGE TO FACE EACH DAY, NO MATTER HOW HARD THE ROAD AHEAD SEEMS. TRUSTING GOD FULLY IN THE MIDST OF YOUR DEEPEST FEARS MEANS RECOGNIZING THAT HE IS GREATER THAN YOUR ILLNESS, STRONGER THAN YOUR DOUBTS, AND FAITHFUL THROUGH EVERY HIGH AND LOW.

REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

HOW DO YOU USUALLY PROCESS OVERWHELMING EMOTIONS? DO YOU RUN TO GOD, OR DO YOU TRY TO HANDLE IT ON YOUR OWN?



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— CHURCH —

CAN YOU RECALL A TIME WHEN GOD'S PEACE FILLED YOU DURING A STORM IN YOUR LIFE? HOW DID THAT CHANGE THE WAY YOU FACED THE SITUATION?

WHAT CAN YOU DO DAILY TO REMIND YOURSELF TO LEAN INTO GOD'S STRENGTH INSTEAD OF YOUR OWN?

TODAY, ASK GOD TO FILL YOU WITH THE PEACE ONLY HE CAN PROVIDE. PRAY FOR THE COURAGE TO TRUST HIM COMPLETELY, EVEN WHEN FEAR THREATENS TO TAKE OVER. AS YOU WALK THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT JOURNEY, ASK HIM TO HELP YOU SEE HIS HAND AT WORK, KNOWING HE IS ALWAYS FAITHFUL.

STATEMENT TO REMEMBER:

GOD'S PRESENCE STRENGTHENS US TO FACE ANY BATTLE, AND HIS FAITHFULNESS NEVER FAILS.

PRAYER:

LORD, I COME TO YOU IN THE MIDST OF FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY, ASKING FOR YOUR STRENGTH TO CARRY ME THROUGH. HELP ME TO TRUST YOU FULLY, EVEN WHEN I CAN'T SEE WHAT'S AHEAD. FILL MY HEART WITH YOUR PEACE, AND REMIND ME OF YOUR CONSTANT FAITHFULNESS. AMEN.



Cottonwood Creek
— CHURCH —

PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY

DAY 2 - FINDING PEACE BEYOND UNDERSTANDING

"DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERY SITUATION, BY PRAYER AND PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, PRESENT YOUR REQUESTS TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS." - PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

A CANCER DIAGNOSIS CAN SHAKE THE GROUND BENEATH YOU LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE, LEAVING YOU FEELING EXPOSED TO THE UNKNOWN. ANXIETY, FEAR, AND AN OVERWHELMING SENSE OF LOSS OF CONTROL ARE ALL NORMAL REACTIONS. YET IN THIS TURBULENT MOMENT, GOD SPEAKS A POWERFUL TRUTH THROUGH PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7: DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING. INSTEAD, BRING YOUR NEEDS TO GOD IN PRAYER. WITH HEARTS OF GRATITUDE, WE ARE INVITED TO PLACE OUR BURDENS AT HIS FEET AND, IN RETURN, RECEIVE HIS PEACE— A PEACE THAT TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING.



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— CHURCH —

WHEN YOU'RE FACING SOMETHING AS DAUNTING AS A SEVERE ILLNESS, RELEASING YOUR FEARS AND ANXIETIES TO GOD CAN FEEL ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. THE TEMPTATION IS TO HOLD TIGHTLY TO YOUR WORRIES, THINKING THAT SOMEHOW, BY KEEPING THEM CLOSE, YOU HAVE MORE CONTROL. BUT GOD IS INVITING YOU TO DO THE OPPOSITE. HE'S ASKING YOU TO TRUST HIM, TO COME BEFORE HIM WITH ALL THE WORRY, THE FEAR, AND EVEN THE ANGER, AND THEN TO THANK HIM—NOT JUST FOR WHAT HE'S DONE IN THE PAST, BUT FOR HOW HE'S HOLDING YOU RIGHT NOW AND WILL CARRY YOU THROUGH EACH TOMORROW. THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF PEACE: NOT AN ABSENCE OF PROBLEMS, BUT THE CALMING PRESENCE OF GOD WHO WALKS WITH YOU IN THE STORM. GOD PROMISES THAT HIS PEACE WILL "GUARD YOUR HEART AND MIND." PICTURE HIS PEACE LIKE A PROTECTIVE SHIELD, STANDING BETWEEN YOU AND THE ENDLESS "WHAT-IFS" THAT CAN FLOOD YOUR MIND. THIS PEACE DOESN'T MEAN EVERYTHING WILL INSTANTLY FEEL BETTER, BUT YOU'RE NO LONGER ALONE IN CARRYING THE WEIGHT. IN EACH PRAYER, YOU ENTRUST YOUR BURDENS TO THE ONE WHO LOVES YOU MOST AND IS STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD YOU UP.

REFLECTION ON THESE QUESTIONS:

HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY RESPOND WHEN FACED WITH HARD NEWS? DO YOU HOLD ONTO THE FEAR OR BRING IT TO GOD?



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— CHURCH —

CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN PRAYER CHANGED HOW YOU VIEWED A DIFFICULT SITUATION? HOW DID GOD'S PEACE GUARD YOUR HEART IN THAT MOMENT?

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO INCLUDE GRATITUDE IN YOUR PRAYERS, EVEN WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES SEEM BLEAK?

AS YOU JOURNEY THROUGH THIS, BRING YOUR HEART BEFORE GOD EVERY DAY. ASK HIM FOR THE COURAGE TO RELEASE YOUR ANXIETIES AND TO TRUST HIM DEEPLY. LET HIS PEACE GUARD YOUR HEART AND MIND, FILLING YOU WITH CONFIDENCE BEYOND UNDERSTANDING.

STATEMENT TO REMEMBER:

GOD'S PEACE DOESN'T REMOVE OUR PROBLEMS, BUT IT SUSTAINS US THROUGH THEM, PROTECTING OUR HEARTS AND MINDS DURING LIFE'S STORMS.

PRAYER:

FATHER, IN MOMENTS OF FEAR AND ANXIETY, HELP ME TO BRING MY HEART TO YOU IN PRAYER. TEACH ME TO LAY MY BURDENS DOWN WITH A HEART OF GRATITUDE, TRUSTING THAT YOU HOLD EVERY PART OF MY LIFE IN YOUR HANDS. GUARD MY HEART AND MIND WITH YOUR PEACE, AND HELP ME TO WALK WITH FAITH AND THANKSGIVING. AMEN.



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DAY 3 - FINDING REFUGE IN THE STORM

***"GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH, AN EVER-
PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE. THEREFORE WE
WILL NOT FEAR, THOUGH THE EARTH GIVE WAY
AND THE MOUNTAINS FALL INTO THE HEART OF
THE SEA." - PSALM 46:1-2***

**FACING CANCER IS NOT ONLY A PHYSICAL
BATTLE BUT A DEEPLY EMOTIONAL AND
SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, OFTEN FILLED WITH
MOMENTS WHEN THE WORLD FEELS UNSTABLE
AND UNPREDICTABLE. IN PSALM 46, GOD
REMINDS US THAT HE IS OUR REFUGE—A PLACE
OF SAFETY AND PEACE, EVEN WHEN
EVERYTHING AROUND US SEEMS TO BE
CRUMBLING. THIS PSALM CALLS US TO REST IN
THE TRUTH THAT NO EARTHLY TROUBLE, NO
MATTER HOW OVERWHELMING, CAN
OVERPOWER GOD'S UNSHAKABLE PRESENCE
AND STRENGTH.**



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WHEN LIFE FEELS LIKE IT'S FALLING APART, FINDING GOD AS OUR REFUGE MEANS LEARNING TO TRUST THAT HE'S IN CONTROL, EVEN WHEN WE AREN'T. THINK OF WHAT REFUGE MEANS: A SAFE, HIDDEN PLACE TO LAY DOWN OUR BURDENS, FEARS, AND ANXIETIES. IT'S NOT DENYING THE STRUGGLE BUT A PLACE WHERE WE FIND THE STRENGTH TO FACE IT. GOD ISN'T DISTANT FROM OUR PAIN; HE'S PRESENT IN IT, PROVIDING SHELTER AND SUPPORT TO KEEP US GOING. HIS PRESENCE DOESN'T REMOVE THE STORM, BUT IT CHANGES HOW WE EXPERIENCE IT, HELPING US FACE IT WITH COURAGE BEYOND OUR OWN STRENGTH.

PSALM 46 ALSO REMINDS US THAT GOD IS "EVER-PRESENT," CLOSE AT ALL TIMES. THIS CLOSENESS CAN TRANSFORM HOW WE NAVIGATE SUFFERING. WHEN WE LOOK TO GOD AS OUR REFUGE, WE ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS A SOURCE OF HELP AND SHELTER IN THE MOST CHALLENGING MOMENTS. WITH HIM, THERE'S NO FEAR THAT'S TOO GREAT, NO CHALLENGE THAT'S TOO OVERWHELMING BECAUSE HE IS GREATER THAN THEM ALL. IT'S A CALL TO LET GO OF TRYING TO CONTROL WHAT WE CANNOT AND TO LEAN INTO HIS SUSTAINING POWER.

REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY EXPERIENCE GOD AS A REFUGE? IS IT A PLACE YOU FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO BRING ALL YOUR FEARS AND PAIN?



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CAN YOU REMEMBER WHEN GOD'S PRESENCE FELT AS REAL AND SUPPORTIVE AS IF HE WERE PHYSICALLY THERE? HOW DID THAT CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

WHAT PRACTICES—SUCH AS PRAYER, READING SCRIPTURE, OR SILENCE—HELP YOU STAY GROUNDED IN GOD'S PRESENCE WHEN LIFE BECOMES CHAOTIC?

AS YOU GO THROUGH THIS SEASON, BRING EACH BURDEN TO GOD, KNOWING HE IS YOUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH. LET HIS PRESENCE BE YOUR CONSTANT ANCHOR, CARRYING YOU THROUGH EVERY WAVE OF FEAR, UNCERTAINTY, AND PAIN.

STATEMENT TO REMEMBER:

GOD IS OUR REFUGE IN EVERY TRIAL, AND HIS STRENGTH IS MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN ANY CHALLENGE WE FACE.

PRAYER:

LORD, THANK YOU FOR BEING MY REFUGE AND MY STRENGTH. HELP ME TO FIND PEACE AND COURAGE IN YOUR PRESENCE, EVEN WHEN LIFE FEELS OVERWHELMING. REMIND ME EACH DAY THAT YOU ARE MY SHELTER, MY EVER-PRESENT HELP, AND THAT NOTHING CAN SEPARATE ME FROM YOUR LOVE AND PROTECTION. AMEN.



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DAY 4 - THE GIFT OF GOD'S COMFORT

"PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF COMPASSION AND THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT, WHO COMFORTS US IN ALL OUR TROUBLES, SO THAT WE CAN COMFORT THOSE IN ANY TROUBLE WITH THE COMFORT WE OURSELVES RECEIVE FROM GOD." - 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4

CANCER DOESN'T JUST AFFECT THE ONE DIAGNOSED; IT RIPPLES OUT, IMPACTING FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND EVERYONE WHO STEPS INTO THE ROLE OF CAREGIVER. IN THIS SEASON OF HARDSHIP, GOD PROMISES TO BE OUR COMFORT—SO MUCH SO THAT WE, IN TURN, CAN BECOME CONDUITS OF THAT SAME COMFORT FOR OTHERS. THIS VERSE FROM 2 CORINTHIANS IS A POWERFUL REMINDER OF HOW GOD'S LOVE WORKS IN OUR LIVES: HE DOESN'T JUST COMFORT US FOR OUR OWN SAKE BUT SO THAT WE MIGHT ALSO BE A SOURCE OF COMFORT TO OTHERS WALKING SIMILAR PATHS.



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REFLECT ON THE TIMES GOD HAS COMFORTED YOU, BRINGING YOU PEACE IN MOMENTS OF PAIN OR FEAR. MAYBE THROUGH A KIND WORD, A FRIEND'S STEADY PRESENCE, OR A MOMENT IN PRAYER, YOU FELT HIS CALMING LOVE. EACH EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S COMFORT IS MEANT TO PREPARE YOU TO WALK ALONGSIDE OTHERS, GIVING YOU A WELL OF COMPASSION TO DRAW FROM. AND AS YOU STEP INTO THIS ROLE FOR SOMEONE ELSE, SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL HAPPENS: YOU BECOME A BLESSING, OFFERING THE SAME STRENGTH AND LOVE THAT ONCE HELD YOU UP.

THIS SCRIPTURE ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE PROFOUND ROLE OF CAREGIVERS. A CAREGIVER ISN'T JUST A HELPER BUT OFTEN BECOMES A SOURCE OF HEALING FOR THE SPIRIT AND HEART, EMBODYING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING, AND SUPPORT. WHEN WE REACH OUT TO THOSE AROUND US IN THEIR TIME OF NEED, WE BECOME A LIVING REMINDER OF GOD'S COMPASSION. EXTENDING COMFORT TO OTHERS IS A WAY TO EXPRESS GOD'S LOVE TANGIBLY, STRENGTHENING OUR FAITH AND GIVING US A DEEPER GLIMPSE OF HIS HEART.

REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

WHO HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF COMFORT IN YOUR LIFE DURING CHALLENGING TIMES? HOW HAS THEIR PRESENCE IMPACTED YOU?



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HOW HAS EXPERIENCING GOD'S COMFORT EQUIPPED YOU TO SUPPORT OTHERS? HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO BRING PEACE AND STRENGTH TO SOMEONE ELSE?

WHO AROUND YOU TODAY COULD USE A GENTLE REMINDER OF GOD'S LOVE, AND HOW MIGHT YOU OFFER THEM COMFORT?

TODAY, ASK GOD TO SHOW YOU THOSE WHO NEED HIS COMFORT AND TO GUIDE YOU IN EXTENDING HIS LOVE. PRAY FOR THE COURAGE TO BE A STEADY, LOVING PRESENCE FOR SOMEONE ELSE, KNOWING THAT AS YOU GIVE, YOU ARE FILLED.

STATEMENT TO REMEMBER:

GOD'S COMFORT FLOWS THROUGH US TO REACH OTHERS, SHARING HIS LOVE THROUGH EVERY TRIAL.

PRAYER:

FATHER OF COMPASSION, THANK YOU FOR COMFORTING ME IN MY TRIALS. GIVE ME THE STRENGTH AND WISDOM TO BE A SOURCE OF COMFORT TO THOSE AROUND ME. HELP ME TO SEE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS AND TO REMIND THEM OF YOUR LOVE AND CARE. USE ME AS AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE AND HOPE. AMEN.



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DAY 5 - GOD'S PURPOSE IN ALL THINGS

"AND WE KNOW THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD WORKS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM, WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE." - ROMANS 8:28

ROMANS 8:28 SERVES AS A POWERFUL REMINDER THAT EVEN AMID ILLNESS AND SUFFERING, GOD'S PURPOSE AND PLAN REMAIN STEADFAST. THIS VERSE REASSURES US THAT GOD IS ACTIVELY WORKING IN OUR LIVES, ORCHESTRATING CIRCUMSTANCES FOR OUR GOOD, EVEN WHEN WE CANNOT SEE IT. IT ENCOURAGES US TO TRUST HIM WHOLEHEARTEDLY, ESPECIALLY DURING TRIALS WHEN UNDERSTANDING MAY FEEL OUT OF REACH.

IN TIMES OF HARDSHIP, SUCH AS FACING ILLNESS OR CARING FOR LOVED ONES, WE CAN OFTEN STRUGGLE TO SEE THE SILVER LINING.



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YET, GOD HAS A REMARKABLE WAY OF TRANSFORMING OUR MOST CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES INTO TESTIMONIES OF HIS FAITHFULNESS AND LOVE. STORIES OF CANCER RECOVERY HIGHLIGHT THIS TRUTH, REVEALING HOW SUFFERING CAN LEAD TO PROFOUND GROWTH AND RESILIENCE IN FAITH.

IT IS VITAL TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND GIVE THANKS FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS, EVEN AMIDST FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY. REFLECTING ON THE GOODNESS OF GOD DURING TRIALS NOT ONLY STRENGTHENS OUR TRUST IN HIM BUT ALSO CULTIVATES HOPE AND PEACE IN OUR HEARTS. KNOWING THAT HE IS WORKING EVERYTHING FOR OUR GOOD ASSURES US THAT OUR LIVES ARE IN HIS CAPABLE HANDS, GUIDING US THROUGH EVERY STORM.

REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

REFLECT ON A SITUATION WHERE YOU'VE SEEN GOD BRING GOOD OUT OF DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.

HOW CAN YOU KEEP YOUR FOCUS ON GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE DURING CHALLENGING TIMES?

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BLESSINGS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED EVEN IN TRIALS? HOW HAVE THESE SHAPED YOUR FAITH?



STATEMENT TO REMEMBER:

**GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES,
TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES
FOR GROWTH AND TESTIMONY.**

PRAYER:

**HEAVENLY FATHER, I THANK YOU FOR THE
ASSURANCE THAT YOU ARE WORKING ALL
THINGS FOR GOOD IN MY LIFE. HELP ME TO SEE
YOUR HAND AT WORK EVEN IN THE MIDST OF
TRIALS. REVEAL TO ME THE PURPOSE BEHIND
MY CURRENT CHALLENGES AND INSTILL IN ME A
DEEPER TRUST IN YOUR PLAN. I ALSO WANT TO
TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK YOU FOR THE GOOD
YOU HAVE BROUGHT OUT OF PAST
DIFFICULTIES, KNOWING THAT YOU ARE
FAITHFUL IN EVERY SEASON. AMEN.**



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