

# INTRODUCTION

I wrote this book after living through the darkest time in my life. It was something no one could have prepared me for, and something I never thought I would make it through. The journey of grief is indescribable to those who have not walked it. It is unique to each of us, but we do share one thing in common: a desperate need to know that God is with us through it all.

Within these pages, you'll find words of hope and encouragement; you won't find quick fixes or easy answers. I want to walk with you daily; to invite you into faith beyond

feeling; to assure you of a love so great that it is covering every moment you experience and is working to heal your heart in ways you can't even imagine. You are precious to the One who made you, and you won't face one day without Him.

Each day of this devotional, I'll offer reminders of His presence, promises from His Word, and ways to take small steps of healing as you move through this season. Please hear these hopeful words from someone who has been there: there is no day too hopeless, no struggle too great, no darkness too deep that He can't carry you through. I hope you'll find that to be true as you walk this path of hope and healing with Him.

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# EVERY MOMENT MATTERS

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 NIV

If you've ever gazed at a flickering candle long enough, you've likely noticed a change happening right beneath the flame. The once-hard wax begins to soften and turn to liquid, and if that candle is scented, its sweet aroma will start to fill the room. If candles had feelings, they would likely resist the match that lights them, preferring to stay unmelted, avoiding the burn, keeping their original, undis-

turbed shape.

When we experience the hardest times in our lives, it can burn in ways we never imagined. We most definitely would not have chosen to endure these seasons, and we may wonder how much more we can take before our loving God extinguishes the flame. First, we must remember that He never intended for us to feel the sadness of loss or the pain of brokenness. However, He does not allow a moment of our difficulties to be wasted. Whether we can see it now or will see it one day as we look back, He is orchestrating goodness within us, one day at a time. He is allowing us to become more like Jesus through it all. Like the wax of that burning candle, God softens our hearts in our grief. We learn what it is to bear the pain of a broken world, and we begin to recognize the deeper struggles in those around us. The more we open ourselves to His compassion, the more of that compassion pours through us to others. And not only are we softened, but we can offer the sweet aroma that only comes from those who have clung to Jesus through their darkest days. We, who have beheld His tender gaze, can offer His soul-soothing love to those who need it most. There's no

rush, though—no matter where you are on the journey, just know every one of those difficult moments matters, and your loving Father assures you that not one will be wasted. May you feel His tenderness today.

Lord, this life burns so much sometimes. I need to know You are bringing goodness out of the pain. May I sense the softening of my heart and find purpose in sharing Your love with others on the journey.

# HIS VOICE

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

PSLAM 46:10 NIV

When we lose someone we love, we are often bombarded with overwhelming thoughts and feelings. We may be surrounded by others seeking to offer comfort and care for us through words and actions. And we may be confused by all that’s happening around and within us; things may feel chaotic when we just want a sense of peace. Life can suddenly feel surreal, and it can sometimes be hard to sense God’s presence, even though we know we need Him more than ever and we long for that sense of assurance He brings. When we’re in the depths of our struggles, we just want to know, How can I connect with You, God? We know He is with us, but we need something more to hold on to.

In moments like these, it’s good to remember that, as much as we are reaching out to Him, He is reaching out to us even more. It may take some time to identify, but as we listen with our hurting hearts, we can hear His still, small voice beneath everything we’re experiencing. He is whispering words of hope and peace and comfort, assuring us that He is right here and will never leave our side. If we are able to pause amid everything we’re going through, we can pray this simple prayer: Lord, help me to hear You today. Our thoughts and feelings can be loud and pressing, but the more we can pause and turn our hearts toward Him, even for a moment, the more attuned we will be to His voice.

We can also hear Him speaking Life to us through Scripture, any time of day: “‘Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor My covenant of peace be removed,’ says the LORD, who has compassion on you” (Isaiah 54:10 NIV). Whether it’s in the quiet of our hearts or in our reflections on His promises, He will speak. Be encouraged as you walk through what can feel like an overwhelming time. He is

here, wanting you to know the comfort of His love and the assurance of His peace.

Lord, help me to hear Your loving words in my heart.

# THE ROAD AHEAD

Jesus answered,  
“I am the way and the truth and the life.”

JOHN 14:6 NIV

**W**hy don't our hardest paths come with maps? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could know exactly what was coming down the road so we could be prepared? Many people throughout history have surely cried out to God in this way: Lord, I just need to see what's ahead. Please show me the way! Grief, especially, can leave us feeling lost, even in the midst of our ordinary lives. Feelings may be unfamiliar; relationships may be strained; we may feel afraid to move forward in faith, wondering what might be lurking around the corner, waiting to steal our joy. We can feel frozen,

struggling to trust God's leading and wishing life were more laid out for us. Most of us have been there at one time or another—called beyond the boundaries of our trust, wondering where the courage will come from for our next steps, maybe even crying out for God to make His presence known in a time that feels lonely and scary. In these times, it's good to remember that He has never left our side.

While our prayer for an easy-to-follow map may not be answered, the assurance that He is with us on the journey is there, even in the most confusing times. If you ever have trouble imagining Jesus's constant presence, try to envision Him in the light of the Gospels. Hear Him saying, “Let the little children come to Me” (Matthew 19:14 NIV) and see yourself as that child, cherished by Him, held safely in His arms. See Him washing His close companions' feet the night before He died for us, and count yourself among those companions. “...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” (John 13:4–5 NIV). Remember that even those who walked with Him were uncertain about the road

ahead, but they held on to that one promise—I will be with you—spoken and demonstrated in so many ways. That is our blessed assurance too. When you feel a little lost, you can count on your Navigator to bring you through. He is the Way, and you belong to Him.

Lord, remind me of Your constant presence,  
and help me to rest in the moment with You.