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CHAPTER 1

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

I sat numbly at my husband's graveside and wished for the pain to go away. I wanted so badly to share the heartache with my best friend.

But that friend now lay lifeless, unable to listen or respond to the pain his death had caused me. He had left this life without a final good-bye, and I just wasn't ready to part ways. I had much more to tell him, and we had much more life to share. In the days to come, it meant so much to have other people around. And while they couldn't take away the pain, it was nice to have people nearby even if they were only able to listen, hug, and cry along with me.

■ Stacey, age 42, Minnesota ■



BELIEVING IN A GOD WHO CARES

- You don't need to cry anymore. The LORD is kind, and as soon as he hears your cries for help, he will come.

ISAIAH 30:19 CEV

- For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

ISAIAH 57:15 NIV

- You notice everything I do and everywhere I go.

PSALM 139:3 CEV



- God keeps an eye on his friends,
his ears pick up every moan and groan.

PSALM 34:15 MSG

- He reached down from on high and took
hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.

PSALM 18:16 NIV

- I'm still in your presence,
but you've taken my hand.
You wisely and tenderly lead me,
and then you bless me.

PSALM 73:23–24 MSG

- Come near to God and he will come near
to you.

JAMES 4:8 NIV



- The beloved of the LORD rests in safety—the High God surrounds him all day long—the beloved rests between his shoulders.

DEUTERONOMY 33:12 NRSV

- “The young women will dance for joy, and the men—old and young—will join in the celebration. I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them and exchange their sorrow for rejoicing.”

JEREMIAH 31:13 NLT

- Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

PSALM 73:25 NIV



FOLLOWING A GOD WHO KNOWS YOUR PAIN

- “Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.”

JOB 13:15 NIV

- 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 have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3–5 NIV



- Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

We also know that the Son did not come to help angels; he came to help the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.

HEBREWS 2:14–18 NLT



- Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

HEBREWS 7:25 NIV

- He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows, and familiar with
suffering.

Like one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed
him not.

ISAIAH 53:3 NIV



CRYING OUT TO GOD

- “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”

JOHN 16:24 NIV

- “Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”

MATTHEW 7:9–11 NIV

- “And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?”

LUKE 12:28 NLT



- And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for.

1 JOHN 5:14–15 NLT

- God...richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

1 TIMOTHY 6:17 NLT

- You want something you don't have, and you will do anything to get it. You will even kill! But you still cannot get what you want, and you won't get it by fighting and arguing. You should pray for it. Yet even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons.

JAMES 4:2–3 CEV



- Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

JAMES 1:17 NIV

- I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.

JEREMIAH 29:11 MSG

- Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.

PSALM 68:19 NIV