



I



## PRESCRIPTION FOR REST

*You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is  
steadfast, because he trusts in you.*

ISAIAH 26:3

Whenever I see an advertisement for a sleeping pill, I am reminded of the verse of Scripture that I have come to use as my own prescription for a good night's sleep: Isaiah 26:3. I find that many of my longest and most meaningful conversations with God are at night before falling asleep. As I give Him my concerns, He reminds me of His promises. As I meditate upon His promises, His peace cradles me into a restful sleep: "Father, I am sorry to bother you with my concerns tonight."

*Child, give me all your worries and cares for I am always  
thinking of you and everything that concerns you  
(see 1 Pet. 5:7).*

"Father, I need you. I do not know which way to turn. I am at a total loss. Please guide me during this crisis and give me wisdom."

*Beloved, if anyone asks Me for wisdom, I will give it. If  
you will trust Me, I will direct your path. I am at work*





*to bring good to you in everything you experience. Do you believe Me? (see James 1:5; Prov. 16:9; Rom. 8:28).*

“Yes, Lord. But I don’t understand why this had to happen. Couldn’t you have stopped it?”

*Dear one, My ways are not your ways; My ways are higher than your ways. I know the plans I have for you, plans to give you a future and a hope. Trust in Me and lean not on your own understanding (see Isa. 55:8–9; Jer. 29:11; Prov. 3:5–6).*

“Yes, Lord. I will trust you. Thank You for hearing my prayer.” Even if your pillow is damp from weeping, know that God sees and remembers each of your tears (see Ps. 56:8). He knows your hurt and your heart—not just at night but all day long. He wants you to hear from Him by meditating on His promises. Instead of tossing and turning in your bed at night, turn the pages of Scripture through your mind. Give Him your concerns, listen for His assurance, and let your mind be at peace and your body be at rest.

*Heavenly Father,*

*When I talk to You in the still of the night, may Your Spirit bring to my mind the truths that will bring peace and rest to my soul.  
Amen.*

————— *For the rest of your life . . .* —————

*exchange your personal unrest for the peace of God.*







## WHY WE WORRY

*Do not be anxious about anything,  
but in everything, by prayer and petition,  
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

 **W**e all know worrying does no good, yet we do it anyway. We explain our worry by saying, “But that’s just part of human nature.” Part of *fallen* human nature, yes. Our sinful, fallen human nature always demonstrates what being separated from God looks like. It looks like “fear”—fear that we are in this alone, fear of what the future holds, fear that life is spinning out of our control. 

As God’s beloved children, we are called to faith, not fear. Faith says, “God is in charge of my life”; “I will trust God even when my circumstances would suggest otherwise”; and “I believe God loves me and knows what’s best for me.” Faith always crowds out fear.

Jesus gives us a clear alternative to worry. He tells us to turn our worries into prayers (see Phil. 4:6). Prayer is simply a way of demonstrating our faith in God (see Heb. 11:6). We pray because we have faith that God hears our prayers (see Matt. 7:8). We pray





because we know God has not left us alone (see Heb. 13:5). And we pray because God calls us to pray (see Matt. 7:7).

When you pray with a trusting heart, you will experience what the apostle Paul promised the Philippians: “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7). Paul was in jail when he wrote those words and probably wondered if his life was about to end, yet he wrote, “Do not be anxious about anything.” He even said, “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances” (4:11). Why? Because he replaced fear with faith and worry with prayer.

The next time you face a concern or fear, and worry begins to plague your heart, do what Paul did: through prayer, put your faith in a God who has everything under control, and watch your panic be overcome by His peace.



*Heavenly Father,*

*Forgive me for the many times I have worried about things in my life. Help me to put my faith in You and Your love and not my circumstances. Amen.*



————— *For the rest of your life . . .* —————

*turn your worries into prayers and your fears into faith.*






3



## A CALM IN THE STORM

*He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters;  
the storm subsided, and all was calm.*

LUKE 8:24

 In the summer when our children were younger, I often sat on the beach and watched my husband take them out on a small sailboat. He loves to sail and excelled at tipping the boat almost over on its side, making the children scream in mock fear and true delight. As scared as they were, they knew their father was in control. They'd done this so many times before that they knew they were safe with him. So they held on to the boat and one another, screamed as loud as they could, and laughed all the way back to shore. They were calm in the midst of the waves.

Sometimes our lives are like a storm at sea. When we cry out to Jesus, He may calm the storm, but more often He calms us in the midst of the storm.

Mothers live in storms every day. With four teenagers I often find myself rowing and rowing and feeling like I am going nowhere. No sooner have I rowed upstream with one child and feel like I am making progress, than I find myself drifting downstream with another. I need a rudder to keep me headed in the right direction when strong winds blow.

10





Jesus becomes our rudder as we spend time getting to know Him and listening to Him speak to us. As we know Him better, we understand that He is totally to be trusted with not only our lives but also the lives of our children. If we don't get to know Him, we will listen to the world. Advice from the world is like hidden shoals or sharp boulders beneath the surface, which rip into our lives and cause a flood to come pouring in.

When we are caught in the storms of life, it is easy to think that God has lost control and that we're at the mercy of the winds of fate. In reality, God is sovereign. He controls the boat. As we spend time getting to know Him and experience His love, we learn to trust Him no matter how large the waves and no matter how scary the storm.

*Heavenly Father,*

*I know the waves are coming, and I want to be ready. I'm not asking You to keep me from the storms, but I am asking You to take me through them. Amen.*



————— *For the rest of your life . . .* —————

*you will be safer in the midst of a storm with Jesus  
than in peaceful waters without Him.*







## BEING BEFORE DOING

*“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”*

LUKE 10:41–42

 **W**hat brings you satisfaction in life? One thing that satisfies me is getting things done—seeing my to-do list get shorter as the day moves forward. The problem with getting things done is having to be in control. But for a Christian, control is something we’re asked to yield to the Spirit, to trust God for what does and doesn’t get done in a day. Sometimes our actions indicate louder than our words just who we think should be in control. 

In the story of Mary and Martha (see Luke 10:38–42), Jesus gives us His perspective on priorities: the difference between doing and being—and which is more important. When visiting two sisters one day, Jesus found Martha bustling around the house, busy with preparations. Mary, on the other hand, sat down at the feet of Jesus to listen to Him, which didn’t sit well at all with Martha. Martha’s attitude drew a gentle rebuke from Jesus, saying Mary had chosen the best thing: being over doing.





Mary found it is more important to listen to Jesus than to do for Jesus. He was not saying that what Martha was doing was unimportant. Rather, He was saying that if we have not spent time sitting at His feet before focusing on our to-do lists, all our activity amounts to just so much pot banging and dish breaking. Our day can lose its focus, and our activities can lose their purpose without His guiding hand.

When Jesus said only one thing is needed, He wasn't exaggerating. What is needed to move forward in our Christian walk? Sitting at the feet of Jesus, looking into His face, and hearing His words each day. Why is this so hard for us? Like Martha, we would rather be busy, focusing on our abilities and our achievements. But life is not about us. Life is about Jesus and what *He* can do through us. On whom will you focus and put your trust in today?



*Heavenly Father,*

*Please help me to learn that spending time with You is the single most important thing I can get done in my day. Help me to learn the priorities of Your kingdom. Amen.*



————— *For the rest of your life . . .* —————

*don't confuse religious busyness with spiritual  
oneness with Jesus.*





5



## DIGGING YOUR ROOTS DEEPER

*Every branch that does bear fruit he prunes  
so that it will be even more fruitful.*

JOHN 15:2

Several years ago my Lady Bankshire roses that grow up one side of my house looked completely lifeless after a winter storm. I was brokenhearted. But I pruned them and nurtured them through the winter, and, sure enough, they came back the next year more beautiful than ever. It's amazing how storms seem to make plants stronger. Plant breeders, when seedlings are young, will actually brush their hands across the tops of the tiny plants several times a day to simulate the buffeting of a storm; it stimulates root development as the plants anchor themselves against the "wind."

Pruning and storms make us stronger in the Christian life as well. The *New Living Translation's* version of James 1:2–3 suggests such: "Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow."





Every gardener has more than one set of pruners and cutters; and the sharper they are, the more fruitful the resulting cut. I have noticed that my world is filled with pruners that God uses to make me grow deeper and stronger. Inside the walls of my home live four teenage pruners whom God uses daily to trim me when and where needed. Pruners are at home, at work, at church, in the neighborhood—everywhere we go. And they don't even know how they're being used! In fact, it's not what other people do but my reaction to them that matters. My unspiritual reactions, not their actions, cause the pain of pruning.

So when trouble comes my way, I know it's only going to become major trouble if I let it. And if I do, then I know God will use it to prune and perfect my faith—to cause my roots to grow deeper and deeper into Christ so I'll be ready for the next storm that hits.



*Heavenly Father,*

*Storms and pruning are not my idea of enjoyment. But I know they are necessary for me to grow stronger and more fruitful. I am ready, Lord. I will trust in You. Amen.*



————— *For the rest of your life . . .* —————

*be willing to be pruned in order to bear much fruit.*

