



Why Does God Allow Us To Suffer?

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CORNER
7-DAY DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

Welcome

IT'S TIME TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER INTO WHY DOES GOD ALLOW US TO SUFFER?

This 7-day devotional journal was created to complement our blog post [Why Does God Allow Us To Suffer?](#) Journaling is a great way to help you digest what you're learning through the written word. We hope you find this useful while working through when it feels like God has betrayed you. Enjoy your journaling time!

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Call Me Mara

“Don't call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.” – Ruth 1:20

Naomi had spent years away from home, living in a foreign land. But these were not pleasant years abroad. She buried one husband and two sons and lost nearly everything she owned.

When she returns, she looks and seems so different that those in her community question, “Wasn't this Naomi?”

Naomi's declaration shows her despair at God's seeming betrayal. She says, “I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.” (Ruth 1:21)

Encountering hard times can change us. It can make us feel as if God brought misfortune upon us. It's not uncommon to feel like you're not the same person anymore—as if your very identity has shifted.

Although you may not feel like the same person, your identity as God's child is still secure. You are still deeply and passionately loved. You may not feel that right now, but the truth still remains.

God, I think this trauma has changed my very identity. I don't feel like the same person, and I'm not sure how to move forward. Please help me to rest in the truth that I am Your child. Let me focus on that in the middle of my pain. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. Have you ever returned from a long-term trip and had others not recognize you?

2. How do you feel about Naomi blaming her misfortune on God? Do you think it was a fair and accurate statement?

3. What would your “new name” be if you had to describe yourself after a tragedy or trauma?

The Lord Is Peace

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.” – Judges 6:12

Gideon was quietly going about his business, threshing wheat. He was working in a winepress, trying to keep his work from being seen by Israel's enemies.

But while he's concentrating on the wheat, an angel appears and explains that God is with him. Naturally, Gideon has a question. “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us?” (Judges 6:13, NIV)

In the middle of pain and heartbreak, it's natural to question where God is and why bad things are happening to us if He's still present.

God never gives Gideon an explanation (although the preceding text clarifies that the nation had stumbled into sin). But He gives Gideon a mission—to go forward and fight for his family, friends, and country.

When the encounter is over, Gideon christens the spot where he met the angel “The Lord Is Peace.” He builds an altar and worships God there.

This story is a beautiful picture of what God does with your darkest valleys—He transforms your place of struggle into one of peace!

God, I need peace. I'm standing in a dark valley, and I keep questioning why this has happened. I'm looking for reassurance and begging for help. Strengthen me just like You did, Gideon. Remind me that You are with me! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. If you were to name the place you're in right now, what would you call it?

2. Have you ever had an encounter where you felt as though you met God face-to-face? How did it affect your life?

3. How can you go forward and fight for your family, friends, and country like Gideon did? What might that look like in your life?

Are You the One?

“Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” – Matthew 11:3

It's a simple question but tinged with heartache, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus the question. But John was no ordinary Christian. He was the cousin of Jesus. He had most likely grown up playing games with Him and seeing Him during annual family get-togethers.

But more than that, John had been a faithful proclaimer of Christ. He was the one who stood boldly in the wilderness proclaiming, “Prepare the way for the Lord!” (Isaiah 40:3, Mark 1:1-3).

It was John himself who had baptized Christ. He'd been there when the Spirit had descended, and a voice from Heaven had boomed out, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him, I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17)

Yet circumstances have changed, and John has found himself imprisoned. Frightened and hurting, John begins to doubt.

Maybe you've never been in a physical prison, but you've been in an emotional, spiritual, or mental prison. It's the hurt from the spouse who won't stop cheating. It's the pain of depression that isn't improving. It's the sting of betrayal from the friend who gossiped about you.

And like John, your doubts suddenly seem a whole lot bigger than your faith. What does Jesus do in these moments? Does He chastise you? Does He turn a blind eye to your pain? Does He reprimand you?

No, he tells John's disciples to send a message that, “The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.” (Matthew 11:5)

In essence, Jesus was saying the same thing He says to every weary, doubting heart, “I am still at work. I know you can't see that in the middle of the pain. I know things look dark right now. But I am on the scene.”

God, be with me when I doubt. Sometimes, the pain overwhelms me, and my faith deserts me. Help me remember You are with me, and You are at work. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. Have you ever gone through a period of intense doubt? How did that affect your faith?

2. When are you personally tempted to doubt God the most?

3. What do you do with your doubts? Do you hide them away or bring them to Jesus?

When Your Dreams Are Shattered

“Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.” – Genesis 39:20

Joseph had dreams of greatness. These weren’t some youthful dreams of ambition but true visions God gave him. In these dreams, Joseph was held in a place of high honor and respect.

Unfortunately, Joseph’s brothers were jealous of his bright future, and in one of the first Biblical accounts of human trafficking, Joseph was sold as a slave. But despite his slave status, God still blesses Joseph.

Then comes more heartache. Joseph is falsely accused of rape and sent to prison. Surely, at this point, Joseph must have wondered where God was. Why did He give him all of those visions if this is how things would turn out?

Sometimes, God gives us a dream long before it will be fulfilled. It would be over thirteen years before Joseph was raised up to a place of honor, and the path to getting there wasn’t pretty. It was full of brutal, degrading, unfair moments.

But Joseph believed that his suffering was part of God’s plan. He later told his brothers, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” (Genesis 50:20)

God, I know Your plans are good, but Your methods aren’t what I would choose. Help me hold onto my faith when the path of my life is filled with hard, unfair moments. Let me remember Joseph and how he sought Your glory above all. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. Has God given you a vision or dream for your life?

2. Have you found other people are jealous of the blessings God has proclaimed over your life? How have you handled these experiences?

3. In what ways have you encountered adversity in your life? Can you see how God has used it for good?

Walking Alone

"I will make you a wall to this people, a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you to rescue and save you," declares the LORD. – Jeremiah 15:20

Jeremiah was a prophet of the Lord. He spoke the messages that God gave him, delivering them to the nation of Israel. Unfortunately, those around Jeremiah weren't receptive to the Spirit of the Lord, and they often turned on him.

Jeremiah was beaten, cast into a pit, opposed, thrown into prison, and frequently threatened with violence in his lifetime. It's little wonder that this man earned the nickname "The Weeping Prophet."

Yet God sustained this brave man. He didn't allow Jeremiah's enemies to triumph over him. He rescued and protected him over and over again.

Sometimes, those around you aren't receptive to the truth. Perhaps you're speaking life to a spouse who's walking in a false way. Maybe you're trying to reach your adult daughter who wrestles with an addiction. Perhaps you're calling out to someone who needs to choose a different path.

As a result, this person may lash out at you, and this can cause you to feel alone, isolated, and abandoned by God. But just as God promised to protect Jeremiah, He can protect you too.

God, walking alone is breaking my heart. I feel so abandoned, and I don't know how to deal with that. Please comfort me with Your Holy Spirit. Remind me that I am not alone and hold me close. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. How has God protected and rescued you at various times in your life?

2. Have you ever spoken truth into someone's life even though it was difficult to do? What happened?

3. What would you say to encourage Jeremiah if you could have a conversation with him?

If Only God Had...

When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.” – John 11:4

Martha relaxed her tense shoulders when she heard the words her friends delivered. “You’re sure He said that?” She asked again as she glanced at her sick brother lying on the couch. “The Messiah said my brother wouldn’t die?”

When her friends confirmed it again, Martha sighed in relief. Even though the Messiah hadn’t yet visited her home to heal her brother, all was well. He would recover one way or the other.

Yet a few days later, the unthinkable happens. Martha buries her brother, and when she hears Jesus is on the way, she runs to Him. Overflowing with hurt, she says, “If only You’d been here...”

Martha’s cries echo our own in heartache. We lament with tears in our eyes and heavy hearts, “If only God had...”

But what Martha’s aching heart couldn’t possibly know was that she was still in the middle of the story. The miracle? It was coming. Despite evidence to the contrary, Jesus still held everything under control.

And in time, Martha’s faith was rewarded. Her brother was returned to her—happy, healthy, and whole.

If you’re aching right now, take heart. It might be that what you see as an ending is still the middle of the story. The miracle may still be coming...

God, I struggle with the moments You haven’t moved. I don’t understand. But give me faith like Martha. Let me cling to You no matter what my heart tells me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. Have you thought you heard from the Lord only to have circumstances play out differently? How did you deal with this?

2. Has God ever used something terrible in your life for His glory? What did that look like?

3. What would you ask Martha if you could have a conversation with her today?

Help My Unbelief

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" – Mark 9:24

He's traveled for days. Achy and tired, he brings his young son before the disciples. He's heard the stories—the blind seeing the beauty of a sunset, the deaf rejoicing in the sound of birds chirping, the lame dancing in the street.

If there's a miracle possible for his boy, he wants one. Love has driven him for miles, keeping him focused on the singular goal: wholeness and healing for the one he loves.

But in the moment of truth, the aching father is overcome with despair and doubt. How many doctors has he taken him to? How many healing ceremonies? How many prayers has he uttered?

And still—still, his precious child suffers. Is it any wonder he phrases his request with such an air of defeat? "If you can do anything," He whispers softly to the Messiah, "please help."

Jesus' words seem to condemn the father to a lifetime of watching his sick son suffer. "Everything is possible for one who believes." (Mark 9:23)

Tears fill the man's eyes, and desperation drives him to his knees. Dropping his head into the sand, he cries out. His words come from a soul that sounds like it's being ripped in two, "I do believe. Help my unbelief!"

The aching father isn't alone. It's easy to doubt when we encounter painful circumstances. Suddenly, our once rock-solid faith is shaky. We're aware of our frailty—our humanness—in a new and scary way.

But Jesus never turns away the honest heart. Upon hearing the man's confession, Jesus heals the boy and returns him whole to his father.

Just as Jesus had compassion for a weary father, He has compassion for you. Your doubts don't have to keep you from your faith. Instead, let them be the fuel that pushes you into the arms of the Savior who loves you passionately.

God, there are so many moments when I struggle to believe. I want to be a strong Christian who is stoic in the face of everything, but I'm not. I have weak knees and a trembling heart. I want to believe—oh, help my unbelief! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Your Thoughts

1. What doubts do you wrestle with?

2. Have you taken your doubts to Jesus?

3. How has Jesus shown you compassion even in the middle of your doubts?

Congratulations!

You completed the 7-day devotional journal!

Our hope is that you will grow to understand why God allows suffering and find some peace amidst your struggles.



Join Our Facebook Groups For Friendly Accountability And Community



The Christian Women's Corner private Facebook groups were created with you in mind. CWC's goal is to provide and facilitate encouragement, accountability, and community for Christian women.

The CWC private Facebook groups include Christian Women's Corner, Good Morning Girls, and Love God Greatly Bible studies

Free online Bible study groups have become very popular because they offer flexibility and accountability for your daily quiet time. You'll feel connected with a group of women who share the same love of Jesus that you do and will be able to share as much or as little as you want with them.

We're excited and hope you will join our private Facebook groups to start reading the word of God daily and have the accountability to keep up this habit.

To find out more about the Christian Women's Corner Facebook groups, please click the green button below.

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About The Author



Alicia Bowyer created Christian Women's Corner after talking to a good friend one day. They discussed how hard it was to keep up with daily prayer, Bible reading, and telling others about Jesus who didn't share their faith. She knew that some might not struggle with these three things, but many do.

She wanted to take the knowledge that she gained from over 40 years on her Christian walk and help others.

Alicia lives in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, with her family, whom she loves dearly.

To find out more, visit: www.ChristianWomensCorner.com