

10 Scriptures to Stand on Through Senseless Painful Trials

The surgery waiting room was packed with family and close-as-family special friends. We had been told the day before that my tall, dark, and handsome 23-year-old son's mass was cancer. This second surgery would reveal if the cancer had spread to Will's lymph nodes. (It had.)

As we sat together, my best friend and her husband motioned for us to talk privately in a corner of the room. I knew they understood our pain far too well, and it hurt my heart for them to be there—for they had lost their 3-year-old daughter to cancer many years before. I didn't want them reliving those painful memories, but I also knew Suzanne and her family would insist on being by our side.

Joined by Loss

Years before, our hearts had been joined together by our unique understanding of deep pain. My first husband had committed suicide while my second child fought for his life due to prematurity and chronic illness—near the time Suzanne lost her Elizabeth to cancer. We had both run to God in our gut-wrenching loss with hard questions and found Him to still be good and faithful.

As I sat that evening in the waiting room, the enemy had been relentlessly assaulting my mind: "Haven't you already had enough pain in your life? Surely a powerful God would spare you of this."

As we walked to the corner in that cold, waiting room to talk with our friends, I was fighting off tears and trying to remember truth. When they said, "We need to pray," I readily

agreed.

Yet I was not prepared for what they shared. They explained that just that day their older spunky, full-of-life son, Isaac, whom I had watched grow up and who now sat playing cards with my other son in that waiting room, had been diagnosed with a tumor in his knee and doctors were (correctly) concerned that it was cancer as well.

Unbelievably, my closest of friends and her family were facing their second battle with cancer at the same time we were facing our first. None of it seemed fair considering our past painful roads with God.

But just like before (and we suspect forevermore), our answers were not found within our own understanding.

Nothing about our situations seemed fair to the human eye. Hadn't we learned to cling to God in faith already? Shouldn't He protect us from more pain? And this kind of pain had to be the most miserable of all. Both Suzanne and I would have gladly taken the horrible cancer upon ourselves rather than watch our sons struggle with it. Yet God didn't offer us this choice.

Once again, He asked us to trust Him beyond our human understanding.

Holding on to Truth

We suspect you too have wondered, *Why me?* or *Why my child?* Life by nature is hard and often feels incredibly unfair. Deep down, even the strongest of believers yearns occasionally for the easy roads. We sure have.

We haven't ignored the reality of the situation—we've cried and we've mourned the interrupted plans for our full-of-life and full-of-potential young men. We also haven't been oblivious to how their illnesses have affected our other

children, our finances and our own energy. We don't deny that we would have rather not gone down this road.

As I write these words, we don't have the happy ending to tell you about. Our boys face more chemo and radiation and more testing in the coming months. We can't tell you all God will do. But we would like to tell you what He has done for our mothers' hearts in the waiting and the questioning, in the right now, before the end of the story.

God has helped us hold on, as He always does, by pointing us back to truth. Sometimes that truth is close and easy to remember. Other days, we fight harder to hold on and grasp again the Word that keeps us going and hoping and knowing. We often find ourselves reminding each other of what we already know, what we learned before in our painful pasts—we find ourselves once again and always in need of holding onto His Word.

Here are some of those truths we hold onto:

- **God has been faithful and is the One who will carry us through whatever we are facing, just as He has in the past.**

"He only is my rock and my salvation; my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God" (Ps. 62:6–7).

- **We won't always feel hopeful, but the more we meditate on God's promises and repeat them out loud, the more our emotions catch up with what we know to be true. No matter how far we have come with the Lord, our strength still comes from deliberately focusing on Him.**

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there

is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:8–9, ESV).

- **Often it is when God withdraws our conscious blessings that we truly learn to walk by faith and trust Him more.** The result is a tested faith that is far better than the visible blessings ever were. We want this for ourselves, and we especially want this for our kids.

“I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distress of my soul” (Ps. 31:7, ESV).

“My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me” (Ps. 63:8, ESV).

- **God will give us the strength we need in the moment.** We have to stop worrying about the what-ifs and take one day at a time.

“May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!” (Ps. 29:11, ESV).

“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matt. 6:34, ESV).

- **We find peace when we deliberately insulate ourselves with praise and truth and grab hold of our thoughts.** We play the praise music loud, and we surround ourselves with others who will speak truth to us and help us refute the lies of the enemy.

“For as he thinks within himself, so he is” (Prov. 23:7, NASB).

"Take every thought captive to make obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5, ESV).

- **We repeatedly hand it all over to God.** We compare our problem to God's ability to handle it—not our own, not our sons, not the doctors, for "nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37, ESV). Big fat nothing!
- **In our moments of faith, and even our moments of self-pity, God continues to graciously make His abiding presence known.**

"If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful" (2 Tim. 2:11–13, ESV).

"How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings" (Ps. 36:7, ESV).

Long ago, Suzanne and I surrendered our lives to Jesus. Once again, God is asking us to surrender everything to Him, even our expectations for how life should go. Long ago, God asked us to trust Him for eternity. Now He is asking us to trust Him with our boys whom we love so much.

Can we trust God, even when we don't understand? Can we trust God, even when it doesn't seem fair? The answer has to be yes. All other choices lead only to more misery and pain. The God who loves us loves our boys more than we ever will. His plans for them are exceedingly, abundantly more than even their moms could plan for them. And this same God, who drew both Suzanne and me closer to Himself through our hardest of roads, can use this hard road to do the same for our sons.

Is it the way we would have picked? Of course not. But this we know: We can trust God more than we trust ourselves for

whatever comes our way—or that of our kids. {eo}

© 2001-2016 *Revive Our Hearts*. God has opened doors for **Kim Jagers** to minister to women as a speaker, writer and ministry leader. Kim loves Jesus with all her heart and has a passion for others to develop a real, run-to-Him relationship and to crave God's Word as she does ... "more than chocolate."

Kim authors an internationally received e-devotional entitled "Single Moment." She has served as a guest blogger for *Lifeway's Women Reaching Women*. Kim's compelling story has also been featured on *Revive our Hearts*. She lives and laughs often with her family near Knoxville, Tennessee.