

How God's Reckless Love Helped My Wife Overcome Postpartum Depression

After both pregnancies with our first two children, my wife, Anna, dealt with severe postpartum depression. With Gabriel, our firstborn, it lasted about nine months. With Lily, our second, almost a year passed before she started to feel like herself again. There were many mornings when it felt as if we'd never find our way to the other side. Anna often woke up with what I can only describe as a cloud of blackness over her mind.

Usually, instead of settling into the hopelessness, she chose to sing, pray or call a friend. I always knew my wife was a fighter, but these moments of unwavering devotion to God and her family convinced me I'd married a warrior. She would often ask me to tell her things that didn't make sense to me at the moment, such as "You're not alone" and "You won't always feel like this." While I always thought it was silly that she wanted to hear things she already knew, I told her anyway. Any glimmer of hope in the dark hole she felt lost in was welcome, no matter how it came. If there were ever a time in our lives we dealt with the lie of abandonment, it was then.

Our daughter Lily went through some major life-threatening health issues. Unfortunately, these two circumstances coincided. We were in what felt like the perfect storm from hell, with Anna battling debilitating postpartum depression and our daughter fighting for her life.

Right around this time, Sarah and John Mark McMillan released their song, "King of My Heart." The truths in the lyrics were anchors for our hearts. The declarations, "You are good!" and "You're never going to let me down!" gave us the language of

faith we needed to declare a greater reality than the one we were living.

Anna sang and prophesied this song until she believed with resilient conviction that God had not left her on her own. Even when we weren't entirely convinced that the words were true, we sang, and the more we sang, the louder we heard His love roaring above the lies.

In Deuteronomy 31:6 the Father made the everlasting promise that He will never leave us or forsake us. What the Father promises in this Scripture is His undivided, uncompromising devotion to us. His heart will ever be leaning in toward us. He will never give up on us, never turn His back on us and never leave us. Even in the midst of great trials, when we felt as if God were a million miles away, He was still good, and His plans for us were full of hope, life and deep joy.

The lie that the Father will abandon us goes back to the garden. When sin entered the world, Adam and Eve were forced to exit the garden. There, the lie of separation, that God is a distant Father who abandons His creation, trickled into the hearts and minds of mankind.

We must sing, pray and meditate on the truth of God's love to renew our hearts and minds. God never wanted separation from us. His desire has always been to dwell together with us in perfect unity, relationship and love.

As we look forward from the garden in Genesis, we see that Jesus was the answer to the lie of separation and abandonment. He bankrupted heaven to become the one forsaken by the Father on the cross. He sacrificed all and suffered separation from God so there would no longer be any separation between God and us.

Jesus made a way for us to be adopted as sons and daughters (Ps. 27:10). We can stand, confidently knowing He cannot forget us. He has inscribed us on the palm of His hand (Isa.

49:16). His eyes are always on us (Ps. 34:15).

You may be under a cloud of depression today, just as Anna was. You may find yourself in a time of hopelessness or intense hardship. Or maybe you have just always viewed God as a distant taskmaster or a disapproving teacher who is waiting for you to mess up.

Contemplate these words from Deuteronomy. Let His presence come and wash over you. “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you” (Deut. 31:6, NIV).

Know that sometimes faith requires speaking and singing the truth over and over before you believe it. I leave this as a challenge for you. Don’t let your current situation dictate your beliefs concerning the Father’s heart. Take hold of the truths in Scripture and make them your anthems of hope. In this place of declaration, your mind will be renewed, and you will see who He is and who you are. Write a declaration that you will speak or sing about your situation. Write your anthem! {eo}

*This is an adapted excerpt from Reckless Love: A 40-Day Journey Into the Overwhelming, Never-Ending Love of God by **Cory Asbury**. Copyright ©2020 Published by Charisma House. Used by permission.*