

Through the Fire

My mother was diagnosed with Huntington's Disease (HD), an incurable, genetic brain disease, in 1995. My siblings and I were told that each of us had a 50 percent chance of also carrying the HD gene and in turn passing it on to our children.

I was terrified. Seeing the changes in my mother was heartbreaking. But I knew God had a plan.

We were told that a test was available that could accurately determine whether we carried this fatal gene. But without a cure, it seemed ludicrous to consider.

I began to cling to the Lord for everything. My faith was strengthened, and my intimacy with Him deepened.

At a women's retreat I attended, I heard author Neva Coyle challenge us to find the thing that most caused us pain and give it to God. The Lord was preparing me to undergo testing for HD. Though the thought scared me, I knew it was time.

An article by E. Charlotte Baker called "The Eye of the Needle" that appeared in *SpiritLed Woman* (Oct./Nov. '98) touched me profoundly. The emphasis of the story was surrendering to God everything we have—even our God-given abilities.

God was asking me to lay all my hopes and dreams at the foot of the cross.

The article, along with the retreat, was the crucial turning point in my journey. I walked through the eye of that needle and pledged my life to the Lord.

I went through a series of grueling mandatory counseling sessions that would lead to my finding out if my DNA carried the gene for HD. Three months later, my husband, Steve, and I,

and two of our closest friends were ushered into a small room to get the definitive results of the tests.

I was prepared for whatever the Lord chose, but I was very nervous. Always in the back of my mind was that voice saying, Do you surrender it all? Do you trust Me?

I knew in my heart that I would trust God no matter what. And I was surrendered to the Lord's will. But it did not mean that my faith was always strong or that tears never came.

The results of the tests were negative. I do not now, nor will I ever, carry the HD gene, and neither will my young boys.

How thankful I am to the Lord for allowing this to pass over me! I walked through the fire, but I found Jesus was there in the very midst of it, holding my hand. Julie Sando