

PROTECTING OUR HEARTS

WITH GOD'S WORD

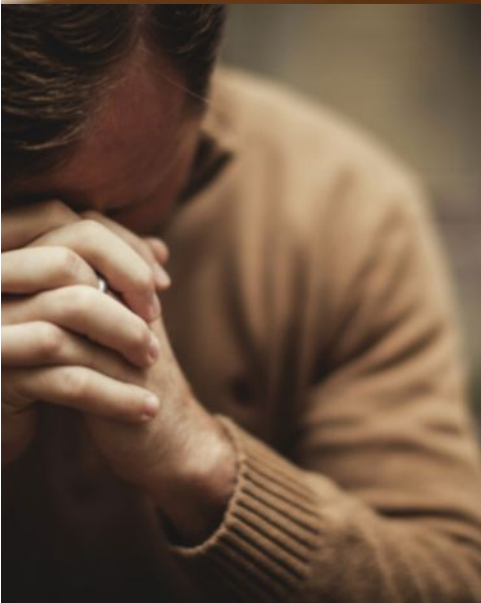
Benefiting from the gift of God's peace doesn't come naturally! We have to open ourselves to that gift. In the quiet reading of Scripture, we give God permission to speak to us through His Word; this, so that He can protect our hearts from distress. With this, the following biblical truths are helpful to know:

- "Be not afraid" is a directive given by God well over a hundred times in the bible. As such, God's protection from fear is real and attainable.
- God can just as easily improve our situation in times of crisis as He can in times of peace.
- Our imagination about the future is often more oppressive to us than the actual circumstances we are called to endure.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Jesus answered the devil's temptation with God's Word. Negative thoughts need a response too.

- One response is to recall a passage from Scripture (see below) and then hold firm to it.
- Recalling God's fidelity in our own lives is yet another response to negative thoughts.
- Finally, Scripture says, "Hope for good things!" Expectant faith and hope empowers us to see through our trials, even when all seems lost.



GOD'S CONSOLING WORDS

MEETS US WHERE WE'RE AT

MANY PEOPLE HAVE LET ME DOWN. HOW DO I KNOW JESUS WON'T LET ME DOWN?

- Psalm 27:10 *Even if my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me in.*
- Isaiah 49: 15 *Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.*
- Malachi 3:6 *Surely I, the LORD, do not change, nor do you cease to be sons*

I'M DEPRESSED. I WONDER WHERE GOD IS.

- Isaiah 58:9 *Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am!*
- Psalm 42:6 *Why are you downcast, my soul; why do you groan within me? Wait for God, for I shall again praise him, my savior and my God. Why are you downcast, my soul; why do you groan within me? Wait for God, for I shall again praise him, my savior and my God.*
- Isaiah 40:31 *They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength.*
- Psalm 62:6 *My soul, be at rest in God alone, from whom comes my hope.*

I FEEL SO HELPLESS IN THIS CRISIS, I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP.

- I Peter 4:12 *Beloved, do not be surprised that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as if something strange were happening to you.*
- Matthew 11:28 *Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.*
- II Corinthians 7-9, 17-18 *We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.*

GOD'S CONSOLING WORDS

MEETS US WHERE WE'RE AT

I REALLY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH FEAR. I'M AFRAID!

- John 14:1 *Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me.*
- Mark 5:36 *Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith."*
- Psalm 112:7 *He shall not fear an ill report; his heart is steadfast, trusting the LORD.*
- Hebrews 13:5-6 *For the Lord has said, "I will never forsake you or abandon you." Thus we may say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"*

I WORRY ABOUT EVERYTHING. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- 1 Peter 5:7 *Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you.*
- Joshua 1:9 *Be firm and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD, your God, is with you wherever you go.*
- Colossians 3:2 *Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 *16 Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.*



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