



Walking in the Peace of God

by Linda Heins

It was my mother who started me thinking about walking in God's peace. That means having *peace* in the middle of a traumatic situation in your life because of your complete trust and faith in the Lord and His Word. My mother, at age 80, was hospitalized suddenly and had quadruple heart by-pass surgery and then a second

surgery. This started all sorts of serious problems and complications that kept her in and out of the hospital and rehabilitation center for ten months! What brought me to thinking of walking in God's peace was her surprising lack of it! She would call me two or three times a day, those ten months, for prayer. She would also ask questions like, "I don't understand this, why is all this happening to me?" "Where is the Lord in all of this?" "Why can't I trust the Lord?" "Why am I so anxious when I have no reason to be anxious?" "Why doesn't the Lord take me? I can't take this any more and I'm ready to go." Most of the time she was completely hysterical. She was living one long, never ending anxiety attack! Perfectly normal things would set her off. We said we would be back by 5 PM and got there at 4:45 to find her totally hysterical believing something terrible had happened to us. We were not even late! Completely unreasonable fears overwhelmed her. I was astonished at this because she is a Christian woman who is able to quote long passages of the Bible and give wise advice to everyone else! What had happened, and how could she change and get rid of this outrageous behavior? There was only one hope and that was the Lord! There was no help from the Doctor or the rest of the family, so I had to seek the Lord for help! This started me seriously praying and seeking the Lord to show me how to help my mother find peace in the Lord in the midst of all her present circumstances. I prayed for months about how to help her and then, all of a sudden, the Lord gave me an understanding of the foundation blocks necessary to walk and live in the *Peace of the Lord*.

As I read the Scriptures I believe that it is God's plan that we should all walk and live in His Peace! I do not believe God intended for His people to be afraid, nervous, anxious, panicked, fretful, depressed or in any state

that is not His peace (“*God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of peace, love and a sound mind.*” 2 Timothy 1:7). I see in His plan that we are to love Him and trust Him completely and then He will supply all our needs and He will take our heavy burdens and give us a light one instead. I praise God that He came down to earth in human form and He understands human emotions and made allowances for those emotions in us. Even though He made allowances, it was and still is His plan that we live and walk in His peace. I see His peace as a package that the Holy Spirit gives us when we receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord. That package is wrapped and given to us and we have it all the time. We must decide to unwrap it and put it to use.

The following scriptures support my belief that it is God’s plan that we live and walk in His peace.

***John 14:27** Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid.*

***1 Peter 5:7** Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.*

***Matthew 11:28-30** Come unto me all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your soul. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*

***Isaiah 26:3** You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast on You; because he trusts in You.*

***Matthew 6:25-34** Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.....your Heavenly Father knows what you have need of. But seek you first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

***Philippians 4:6-7** Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the Peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

***Isaiah 54:10** Though the mountains be shaken apart and the hills be removed; yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken, nor My covenant of My peace be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you.*

Isaiah 43:2 Fear not for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior

2 Timothy 1:7 God has not given you a spirit of fear (timidity) but a spirit of peace (power), love and a sound mind (self-control).

There are two basic foundation blocks that need to be in place before we can build on them and walk in His peace.

- Absolute belief that God's Word is true and we can stand secure on it.
- A proper, holy, reverent fear of the Lord.

When these basic foundation blocks are in place we can then build on them using faith and trust in the Lord and His Word in order to walk in His peace.

God's Word is True and Accurate!

The most basic foundation block is accepting the validity and accuracy of the Word of God. There is plenty of historical information that has confirmed the accuracy of the Word throughout time. The Dead Sea Scrolls proved that a lot of the book of Isaiah is as accurate today as it was when the scrolls were written thousands of years ago. Josephus, a historian at that time, writes about the time and activities of Jesus, which helps confirm the accuracy of the Bible. There are large amounts of archeological information that proves Jesus lived and died as the Bible says. With our current research and technology we are constantly discovering more and more proof that the Bible is accurate.

Consider Isaiah 53. It was written about 500 years before the birth of Jesus, yet it describes His life and death accurately. A friend read Isaiah 53 to a Jewish man and asked him where it was found in the Bible. The man replied that it was from the New Testament because it described Jesus. He was amazed to learn it was found in Isaiah, the Old Testament. When Isaiah 53 was written it was completely accurate about something that would happen 500 years in the future! That's remarkably accurate!

What does the *Word of God* have to say about the truth or accuracy of the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:16 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, correction and instruction in righteousness.*

Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31 *Heaven and Earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away.*

Isaiah 40:8 *The grass withers and the flowers fall but the Word of God shall stand forever.*

Matthew 5:18 *I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law, until everything is accomplished.*

Hebrews 4:12 *For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword piercing even to dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and is a discerner of thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Proverbs 30:5 *For every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him.*

Isaiah 55:11 *So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

2 Corinthians 1:20 *For all the promises of God in Him are yes and in Him are Amen, unto the glory of God.*

We must come to a place where we know in our heart and we accept completely that the Bible is accurate and can be used for encouragement, teaching, correction and reproof. When I was in college I took courses in the Old and the New Testament. During these two courses, which were taught for their historical value, I had questions that were unanswerable because the professors would point out what they saw as inconsistencies. I came to the place where I was struggling with my beliefs because of these questions. I had grown up in a Christian home and had given my heart to the Lord, but now I was struggling. I kept going over these questions but finally I made a decision that, whether I could answer these questions or not, it did not really matter. I was going to *trust the Lord and accept His Word as true no matter what. I did not care if I could not answer questions!* As soon as I made this decision I felt such a weight taken off of me and I also felt a peace about it. I knew the questions really did not matter in the long run. I made a decision to put my trust in the Lord and the Word and as a result He gave me His peace.

We must also remember that Jesus often quoted Scripture. In combating Satan while in the desert for 40 days, each time He was tempted He used Scripture as His weapon against the enemy and the enemy had to flee!

The preceding list of scriptures is definitely not complete but should give you the idea! He loves us and He can provide far better than we can think or imagine. If God's Word is true, we can trust it completely! Should it conflict with what we can see, touch, feel and understand from looking around us, we must *not lean on our own understanding of things, but put our trust completely in the Lord and His Word!* Human emotions lie to us and therefore get us into trouble. We need to convince ourselves to keep verses of scripture uppermost in our minds in order to combat these emotions, so we can trust in God's promises. That also means we should be committing scripture to memory so the Holy Spirit can bring an appropriate scripture to mind at just the right moment. Then we can walk in faith and trust in Him because we believe God's Word is true.

A Proper, Healthy, Reverent Fear of the Lord

The second essential foundation block is a proper, healthy, reverent fear of the Lord. These two foundation blocks of believing the truth of the Scripture and having a proper, healthy, reverent fear of the Lord allow us to have a base on which to build. We know the words, *the fear of the Lord*, but it is all-important to grasp the full meaning of the words. If you lack this basic foundation block, I believe God's Word says that you will receive it if you pray for it and seek it as though it is buried treasure.

When I was approximately 14 years old, a radio station at home had a contest. They hid a key to a car (a nice, desirable car!) somewhere in the city of Philadelphia. Every couple of days this radio station would give another clue as to where the key was hidden. We listened very carefully and wrote down all the clues. We had long discussions about what the clues might mean. Then one day we realized in which park they had hidden the key. We were so excited and went there and took at least two hours to search everywhere, very thoroughly! While we did not find the key, I have never forgotten the excitement and diligence in checking clues and looking so completely. Many years later this episode came to mind when reading my Bible. The Bible says to seek wisdom as though it were buried treasure. But . . . how do you get wisdom? The Word says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10). If the *fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, and we are to search for wisdom as though it were buried treasure, then we must wholeheartedly seek to have a proper, holy and reverent fear of the Lord. Go after it; constantly beseech the Lord for it until it is yours.

Why should we fear the Lord? What is there about the Lord that we should fear Him? I thought of some of the things that happened in the Bible

that show how awesome God is. He spoke the world into being. He put the stars and planets in their place and He holds the universe in the palm of His hand. He created all things and all things are in submission to Him. He parted the Red Sea and the Israelites crossed on dry land. He brought the plagues to Egypt. The face of Moses shown so brightly with God's glory that no one could look on his face and Moses had to wear a veil to protect the people. If we don't praise Him, the very rocks will cry out (Luke 19:39-40)! He knows the number of hairs on your head, even though they constantly fall out! He knows your innermost secret thoughts and desires, even the ones that are hidden to you! The dictionary describes "fear" as "*awe, profound reverence, especially for the Supreme Being.*" A description of fear found in Cruden's Complete Concordance states, "*The Fear of God means that reverence for God which leads to obedience because of one's realization of His power, as well as of His love to man.*"

I was asked once to describe what I thought the fear of the Lord was to me. Two things came to mind. I replied that the fear of the Lord reminded me of a thunder and lightning storm. I love a good thunderstorm. I like to watch the streaks of lightning (they can be pretty awesome), and count the seconds to figure the distance away. It is exciting! BUT . . . I feel quite differently when lightning comes very close and we have the flash/crash all at once! Then I have a *healthy fear* of it. I know it can start a fire, blast a tree apart, electrocute a person, come in through electrical wires and destroy things. I would not go out into a field with a metal rod and hold it above me to see if lightning would strike it, or dare the lightning to strike. You don't challenge a thunderstorm! I fear and respect the awesome power of lightning even though I do enjoy the splendor. I believe this is a healthy and proper fear!

The other thing that came to mind is the ocean. I love the ocean, to watch the waves come and go, or to be on a boat and feel the sea rolling under me. It is so soothing! We used to sing a song "*Jesus took my burdens and rolled them in the sea, never to remember anymore!*" That song always comes to mind while I watch the ocean waves and He takes my burdens! But . . . I have also seen it raging in a hurricane, chewing away at sand dunes mercilessly and pulling houses and foundations into the ocean or bay, and there is **nothing** we can do to stop it until it's over!

While I so enjoy watching the ocean, I have a proper and healthy fear of the possible fury and devastation it can bring. Also, while the ocean looks so peaceful on the surface, there can be an undertow that is not seen, but it can be there just the same and be deadly. While on vacation one evening we were surprised by the sound of a rescue helicopter going back and forth up and down the coastline where we were staying. We left the house

and walked the block to the beach and watched the rescuers search and search for many hours. It was well after midnight when they stopped. We were a couple of blocks away from a motel where there had been a wedding and the father of the bride and her brother went swimming. The father went under and the brother went out to help the father. The father made it back but the brother drowned. What a way to remember your wedding day! Now, every time I hear the high pitched whine of the rescue helicopter, I am reminded of the power and hidden danger in the ocean. The very thing that I love to watch and get such peace from is also able to take a man's life and destroy land and property. We must be respectful and even have a healthy fear of the awesome power of the ocean.

What is it about thunder and lightning or the ocean? I believe it is the fact that we know their awesome power and the fact that those elements cannot distinguish between person, place, thing or time. These forces help me explain my idea of the good, healthy, proper fear of the Lord. I love Him, appreciate Him, respect Him and enjoy Him. I am in awe of Him. He is an awesome God, to be respected and feared. Just like the thunderstorm was to be respected and not to be challenged, we are not to challenge or defy God. A healthy "fear of the Lord" is to love and enjoy God but also to so respect Him and be so in awe of Him and who He is and what He is that we could not challenge or defy Him. Therefore, we have to obey and do whatever He wants us to do - no matter how ridiculous or strange it may seem to us. Fear of "the wrath of God" each time we sin or do something wrong is not what I am talking about! That is *being afraid of the Lord and we should not be afraid of Him*. Instead we should be so in awe of Him, so reverence Him, who He is, what He has done and can do and be so loyal to Him that we desire in our hearts to do anything He wants, because He is so worthy of our obedience.

Just to give you a practical example of the fear of the Lord: When my second son was born, I injured my back and spent years in and out of the hospital, seeing doctors, having physical therapy and wearing a back brace. Praise God that He is so good and understanding of human emotions! I had gone to a healing service and even though the Lord healed my back, it was slowly, bit by bit. I realized I no longer needed the back brace that I had worn for years, but I was afraid to not wear it. At first the Lord allowed me lose weight and I was too small for it, *so I sewed tucks in it!* Then I became too large for it! I still did not stop using it! I was about to leave the house one day and I had not put the brace on, so I went to put it on. I don't know if my ears heard, but I know every cell in my body "heard" a voice say ***"Do you trust me or don't you?"*** My heart skipped a beat and then raced. I replied, ***"I do, I really do trust You!!"*** and dropped the brace on the

floor. I was so shaken and so in awe of God that I was afraid to even pick it up and put it in the trash! It stayed there on the floor until my husband asked what in the world it was doing there! I asked him to throw it away because I was too afraid of even touching it! I did trust the Lord, but I guess fear had been keeping me bound to the brace. When the Lord intervened, it was so awesome, and I also feared Him and revered Him, that I could not touch the brace, not even to throw it away! I was not afraid of what the Lord would do to me if I touched the brace; rather I was so in awe of God that I didn't want to touch it, even to throw it away!

Now let's look at some scriptures to show why a proper, healthy fear of the Lord is desirable, and also a foundation block, and definitely to our advantage!

***Psalm 111:10** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom!*

***Job 28:8** The fear of the Lord is wisdom*

***Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10** The fear of the Lord is the beginnings of knowledge.*

***Psalm 34:9** There is no "want" to those who fear Him.*

***Psalm 19:9** The fear of the Lord is clean*

***Proverbs 8:13** The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*

***Proverbs 10:27** The fear of the Lord prolongeth days*

***Proverbs 14:26-27** The fear of the Lord is strength and a fountain of youth*

***Proverbs 15:6** Better a little with the fear of the Lord*

***Proverbs 22:4** By the fear of the Lord are riches*

***Psalm 119:74** They that fear thee will be glad*

***Psalm 34:7** Angels encamp around them that fear the Lord*

***Psalm 103:11** Mercy to them that fear Him*

***Psalm 103:13** The Lord pitieth them that fear Him*

***Psalm 103:17 & Luke 1:50** The mercy of the Lord is upon them that fear Him*

***Psalm 111:5** He provides food for them that fear Him*

***Psalm 15:4** He honoreth them that fear the Lord*

***Psalm 112:1, Psalm 115:13, Psalm 128:1** Blessed is the man that fears the Lord*

2 Kings 17:39 But the Lord your God you shall fear

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Psalms 34:11 I will teach you the Fear of the Lord

Deuteronomy 5:29 Oh, that they would fear Me

This is an impressive list! Please note all the things promised if we will have a proper fear of the Lord. We will have wisdom, knowledge, length of days, riches, gladness, no want, angels encamped around us, mercy, pity, meat (food), honor, be blessed, and be praised!!! Wow! What awesome benefits we receive if we “fear” the Lord. We should be heartbroken to disappoint or displease Him! Notice that He longs for us to fear Him and He will teach us the proper fear of the Lord. We need to beseech Him for it until we receive it.

Faith and Trust in the Lord

Now we come to the building stones that go on top of the two foundation blocks. The Lord showed me that faith and trust in the Lord and His Word are the key ingredients to walking in His peace. He also showed me that it would be almost impossible to have such faith and trust without having a conviction that God’s Word is true and without having a proper healthy fear of the Lord. This is separate from God divinely placing His peace upon us in a given circumstance. “The peace that passes all understanding” is awesome and divine. God is a sovereign God and can give His “peace that passes understanding” regardless of anything else. What is being talked about here is living in His peace day-by-day, circumstance-by-circumstance, because you actually do cast your cares on Him. You trust Him enough to give Him your heavy burdens and He gives you a light one instead (this light burden is His peace).

When I think of faith and trust, they seem to go together like peanut butter and jelly. They are different but compliment each other. Each one is great by itself but together they are even better. Faith is not something we have to conjure up. Rather it is something we already have. The Word says that God has given to every one a measure of faith, but we need to use it. All we need is the faith of a grain of mustard seed and we can move mountains! When we come to a situation that requires our faith and trust in the Lord and the Word, we come to what I call a “*crisis of belief*.” It is easy to say I trust the Lord. When you are in a situation, you are at a fork in the road and which side of the fork you take will determine whether you actually do trust the Lord; not just saying the words, but walking out that faith.

You take the next step down the path of trust rather than the path of not walking out that faith and trust. Your words do not determine your trust in the Lord but your actions will show if you trust Him. Most of us are completely unaware that we are facing a decision or even of the decision we are making. It is actually a decision of “Do I trust Him or don’t I?” There is no middle of the road. Either we do trust Him or we do not. Our actions demonstrate clearly if we trust Him and have faith in Him and His Word.

SCRIPTURES ABOUT FAITH

Romans 10:17 *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*

Hebrews 11:1 *Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Romans 12:3 . . . *God has dealt to every man a measure of faith.*

2 Corinthians 5:7 *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . .*

Matthew 17:20 . . . *for verily I say unto you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible for you.*

Romans 4:21 *And being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform.*

Isaiah 46:11b *I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*

SCRIPTURES ABOUT TRUST

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and **lean not on your own understanding.** In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.*

Philippians 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that He which began a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

2 Timothy 1:12 *I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him until that day.*

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.

Philippians. 4:19 But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

Philippians 4:7-8 And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Psalms 91:1-2 He that dwells in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust.

Isaiah 43:2 I have called you by name and you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; the flame will not set you ablaze.

Psalms 56:11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

Psalms 91:4-7 He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings shall you trust: His trust shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flies by day; nor for the pestilence that [walks in darkness; nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; **but it shall not come near you.**

Psalms 91:10-11 There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways.

Psalm 34:10 . . . but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

Luke 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

1 Corinthians 10:13 There is no temptation that can befall you except what is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able to endure but for every temptation He also will make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

Crisis of Belief - Decision to Believe, To Put Our Faith and Trust into Action

Here's a personal example to explain what is meant by "crisis of belief" and walking in faith and trust and having God's peace. Keep in mind Hebrews 11, verse 1: "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*"

Before my husband came to a personal relationship with the Lord he drank heavily and I was afraid of him when he drank. I could not leave the boys alone with him so I could not go out to meetings at night. He acted like a Master Sergeant with the boys, barking out orders, a perfectionist, and nothing we did could please. I believed he was a diamond in the rough and the Lord could make something beautiful of him.

I had two boys who were hyperactive and had special diet needs, which required me to make all their food from scratch. I even traveled 70 miles to get them a gallon of Goat's milk and made yogurt and cottage

cheese for them. I was at my wits end; I felt desperate; I could not take anything any more! I had heard on a program I listened to, to pray specifically for something and that it was even all right to set a time limit! So, I decided the time limit was to be Christmas for my husband's salvation! I asked my cousin to agree with me in prayer and even to join me in fasting each Wednesday. My desire was for it to happen *immediately*, but I prayed that the Lord would do it right, in His perfect timing and to give me patience to wait for His timing. I did not want it to be like the seed that fell on shallow ground that looked good only until hard times came along. The Lord gave me a list of scriptures to claim.

Well, Christmas Day was a disaster! My husband was in bed and asleep by 9 PM! There was no way I could conceive of the Lord accomplishing anything good that night. I kept thinking it would take a bolt of lightning coming in through the window to zap him where he was sleeping! For reassurance I decided to review the scriptures the Lord had given me. I looked and looked in the Bible but I could not find them, I had not written them down, not even one!!! What I did find said that no one can be assured of another's salvation! What a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach! This was DECISION time! I was stunned! The decision was to trust Him and what He had shown me or to lean on my own understanding and to accept the scripture that said no one can be assured of another's salvation. Did I trust Him or didn't I? This was a "crisis of belief." My next step would demonstrate whether or not I trusted Him. Of course, at the time, I did not know I was making a decision.

Looking back, I praise God that I did make a decision and it was to trust Him no matter what! I closed the Bible with a slam and jumped out of my seat and started pacing the floor. Then I said out loud that I knew the scriptures the Lord had given me and I knew they were there in the Bible, whether I could find them or not, and that I was claiming them just the same. I did not have to find them right then to know they were there and to believe them and to stand firm on them!! Our living room clock chimes and, while still imagining the lightning zap, the clock struck midnight. On the 12th stroke of 12 every cell in my body heard a voice saying, "***IT IS DONE!!***" At first I was stunned but quickly I began to laugh, praise the Lord and jump around. After that, wherever I went, I told everyone I met to just wait and see, that my husband would come to know the Lord! I *could not* keep my mouth shut!! I would promise myself before leaving the house that I would not say anything and the next thing I knew I was telling it again and again!

It had been a decision time for me; I experienced a crisis of belief. I came to a point where the next thing I did or said would demonstrate

whether I trusted the Lord or I did not. Saying I trusted the Lord did nothing, I had to demonstrate with words *and deeds* that I trusted Him. That was Christmas time and that Easter my husband was baptized. It was done in the Lord's perfect timing and the seed was planted in fertile soil. Praise the Lord! We can totally trust Him, His Word and His timing! "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1).

There is another scripture the Lord uses with me often. "*I am the potter and you are the clay. Can the clay tell the potter what to make?*" (my paraphrase: Isaiah 64:8, Isaiah 45:9, Romans 9:17-21) What a humbling experience when I was grumbling about something the Lord was or was not doing and He would bring this scripture to mind. I would cringe at my attitude and repent of it. I earnestly prayed that He would take me and make me and mold me into just what He wanted me to be. Why are we so amazed when He then begins to shape and mold us into what He desires? I have had a long history of trouble with my knee. When I was 24 years old I had major reconstructive surgery on my left knee and it was a whole year before I could drive my standard transmission car. I had almost 15 years of no problems with it when suddenly, one day something happened and I could not bend the knee. I had only one spot that I could put weight on when I walked. I expected the doctor to find a bone chip, they would remove it, and I would live happily ever after.

After an arthroscope the doctor said I had worn the cartilage covering of the bone away and I was walking bare bone on bare bone. This was osteoarthritis without the arthritis, a prime location for arthritis to settle in. He wanted me to have no weight on it but to have full motion. I was on crutches for a year! The doctor said that a white fibrous substance should cover the area but he did not know what that white fibrous substance could withstand. He also said excitedly that he had not found this condition except in elderly people and they died before the doctor could figure out what to do. That did not cheer me up at all! I was only 39 at that time! I went to the Lord with this and the only thing I kept getting was "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and **lean not on your own understanding***" (Proverbs 3:5-6). I had a peace that somehow it would be all right and I did not have to worry about it. There was a song we would sing at that time "*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. Teach me Lord; teach me Lord, to wait!*" That song (from Isaiah 40:31) became my theme song! Periodically through the year I asked the Lord for a reassurance. He always, somehow, gave it to me.

The doctor was concerned that I did not understand the seriousness of the situation. I explained to him that the Lord had given me a peace and I did not have to worry about it and I truly did not worry. The Lord showed me that He could heal it with new cartilage or it could be healed with the white fibrous substance the doctor hoped for. But I believed the Lord would heal it. Right before I went for the final surgery I asked again for a reassurance from the Lord, but this time there was none. I knew I did not really *need* one, but I *wanted* it. I told the Lord that it was all right because I knew I did not need it, just wanted it and so it was OK. As we were leaving for the hospital the phone rang. It was my mother and she said she had a scripture for me. She quoted, *“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles”* (my scripture for this time!!). She was stunned at the scripture she had quoted and said, *“Wait a minute, where did that come from? That is **not** the scripture I wanted to give you!”* But God is so good! That was what I wanted and needed to hear! I was filled with such a peace and an assurance that it would be all right.

After the surgery I asked the doctor what he had found. Was it the white fibrous substance or was it the “real thing?” He was vague and said it sure looked like the “real thing” to him! But a week later when I saw him, he was bouncing off the walls. He was so excited saying what he saw could not be, but he saw it. He said, “You kept telling me! Only God could have done what I saw!” The Lord had given me a brand new knee and the doctor said, medically speaking, there was no reason to see me again since the knee was perfect! God took that whole year to teach me and mold and shape me into the person He wanted. He is a patient and gentle teacher and I learned many valuable lessons during that year; to not lean on my own understanding, to ignore “logical” thoughts, to trust when nothing made sense, to disregard emotions, to remind myself of the truth of scripture, to learn and practice patience, etc. Only the Lord can make someone content while on crutches for a whole year!

There were so many times during that year that I could have doubted. So many times I could have grumbled, not believed, listened to my own doubts and other people’s doubts, but the scripture, *“trust in the Lord with all your heart and **lean not on your own understanding**, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.”* (Proverbs 3:5-6), was always there. The emphasis was to *not lean on my own understanding*. Because I chose to accept the Word as substance for something I hoped for and I believed God’s Word was true, the Lord could follow through. That was a decision time for me, whether I realized it or not. I actually had courage enough to decide to put my trust in the Lord and His

Word instead of doubting or dwelling on what the doctor had said about only elderly people having this problem. There was my *crisis of belief*, to trust in spite of what I felt and heard from the doctor or to rely on emotions and human understanding. He is the potter and He knows exactly what He wants to make of us. There is a peace for us in allowing Him to make us and mold us into what He wants.

Our older son had a learning disability. Because he is a very bright boy he felt something was wrong and often said he was no good and he wanted to kill himself. If he was feeling that at age 8, we did not have good feelings about the teen years with him. One day he accidentally shut a door on his hand and he had a massive thick bruise under his fingernail. It hurt him so much that we took him to the emergency room. They put a small hole in his fingernail to relieve the pressure. It bled all night! He also had huge bruises and he could not remember how they had happened. When the doctor saw him the next day, he put him right in the hospital for “protective custody” because he was a bleeder at that point and he had been bleeding internally. They were going to do a bone marrow test to check for leukemia! I earnestly prayed and said, with all my heart, that I had been praying for peace in my son’s life for a long time. I knew the Lord had given him to me for what ever length of time the Lord knew was right and if He wanted to give our son peace by taking him to Himself, it was all right. I gave my son to the Lord when he was born and he was the Lord’s to take if, and when He wanted. I had a peace about it!

About an hour later I received a call saying that they did not do the bone marrow test because they had given him massive doses of prednisone and almost immediately his platelet count was coming up. With leukemia that could not have happened. His spleen was mistaking platelets as being defective and was getting rid of them by the hundreds of thousands and he was, at that point, a bleeder. The prednisone made his body make platelets faster than his spleen could get rid of them.

Amazingly, when our son returned to school his learning disability was gone and he went from second grade reading to fourth grade reading in only three months! His teachers said he could do anything they gave him and do it perfectly! How amazed I was to realize that, what looked like a tragedy to our human understanding was used mightily by the Lord for our son’s good. What appeared to be a tragedy was actually a blessing! Every good and perfect gift comes from God! This apparent tragedy was actually a good and perfect gift from God! Never again did I hear our son say he was no good and he wanted to kill himself. We can trust the Lord completely, even when everything looks negative and disastrous. Again, here was a crisis of belief. Do we trust Him, or don’t we? There is no middle ground. If

we say we trust Him and then say, “*But . . .*,” do we really trust Him? All of this looked like a disaster that the Lord’s hand was not in, but what a blessing and a good and perfect gift He brought out of a seeming disaster. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen! Disasters can be God’s blessing in the making! Allow yourself to think that you can’t wait to see how God can bring His blessing out of this apparent disaster! We can trust and count on Him!

I mentioned the ten months of calls from a hysterical mother, sometimes three times a day and they were collect calls! God always gave me the grace and wisdom to pray effective prayers that helped her. He always gave me answers to her questions. Mostly the answers were that whether we can see the Lord in a situation or not we have to *trust* that He loves us and has a plan for us. Nothing comes as a surprise to the Lord. He knows the future and has made provision for anything that can come our way. If we want to give good gifts to our children, how much more does God want to give good gifts to His children, except *He is able to give them*. He loves us more than we can comprehend. Little did I know that the Lord was spoon-feeding me daily in preparation for something that was coming.

My mother finally came home after 10 months and I went to stay with her for 10 days to help her learn how to use a pump for nightly feedings. She is the least mechanical person on earth! She needed all the help she could get. When I returned home I made appointments for all my yearly women’s tests. My mammogram was taken three times and then I had a sonogram. It took three hours to get my test that usually takes twenty minutes. Then I was sent to a breast surgeon who said that what I had was usually malignant although it was *possible* that it wasn’t. I had personally had the Lord divinely heal me and I knew that God was able to heal me if it were malignant. I earnestly prayed that the Lord would heal me again and I could avoid this!

When I came out of the doctor’s office, after receiving the results of the biopsy - that it was malignant, I pulled out of the parking lot saying, “What’s going on Lord, I do not understand?” As soon as I said these words I was flooded with all the things and prayers I had said for my mother a couple of times a day for 10 months! Suddenly I realized God had been preparing me during the last 10 months for this very moment! Over and over I had said to my mother that we must trust Him especially when we can’t see or feel Him. How awesome and compassionate God is! I drove home, after hearing that I had breast cancer, laughing and praising God at the top of my lungs! Tears of wonder and joy ran down my face. I was filled with joy *in Him!* I still had breast cancer that had spread to the lymph nodes, was facing chemotherapy and radiation therapy, but I was filled with wonder and

joy in the Lord right in the middle of this situation! What a peace He put upon me and that peace lasted the whole treatment time and beyond.

Again, I faced a crisis of belief. When I received the diagnosis, I had to make a choice: trusting and believing in the Lord and walking it out, or not believing and giving in to negative thoughts and emotions. I chose to believe. Praise God that He completely prepared me to be steadfast in my faith and to trust in Him. His ways are not our ways but we can always trust in His way. My doctor was worried about me, believing I was in denial, because I was so peaceful about all that was happening. I did not lose any sleep over it! If I woke up in the middle of the night, it never came to mind. I cannot tell you how many people I was able to share with about the Lord and His provision because I was right there with them, going through the same things they were. Because I was in it with them they could “hear” me and hear what I was saying about the Lord. What could have been a disaster in my life became a blessing to me, as well as to others! It was a decision to trust no matter what I saw, heard, or felt. He is always trustworthy!

I want to leave you with a challenge. The next time you have a situation, give it to the Lord and leave it with Him, or pray earnestly that He will give you all you need to be able to give it to Him. Understand that you are making a decision to trust the Lord and His Word, or not to trust. Realize that this is an opportunity for the Lord to show you His provision, if you will allow Him to show you. Ask yourself as many times as needed “***Do you trust Him, or don’t you?***” Remember that the next thing you say or do will demonstrate if you truly have faith in Him and trust Him. We can say we trust Him but not walk it out. We can say we have faith and trust Him and our actions show we do not actually put our faith and trust in Him. We need to get to the point where we do trust Him completely, ***no matter what***. Don’t allow your own reason or emotions to rule. Don’t rationalize things with human understanding! An appropriate scripture verse can give us the reassurance we need to put our faith and trust in the Lord and His Word, because God’s Word is true.

What the Lord showed me as I prayed for my mother is that we can walk in the Lord’s peace and live in His peace if we will completely have faith in Him and trust Him. When we give everything over to Him, He will take our heavy burden and we can walk in His peace. If you don’t have the two foundation blocks of an absolute belief in the validity of God’s Word and a proper, healthy, reverent fear of the Lord; and you haven’t been able to completely have faith and “trust in the Lord with all your heart,” then seek the Lord in prayer. Pray diligently! His Word says He will give you every thing you need to walk in His peace, and His Word is true.

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