



A FREE 2-DAY TASTE

When They Will Not Get Better

*14 days of grace for the one
who cares and keeps praying*

THE STILL PRAYING COLLECTION • NO. 6



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You Do Not Know What to Pray

READ: Romans 8:22-27

“We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.”

— Romans 8:26 (NIV)

The prayer stalls in your mouth. You sit down to pray for the person you are caring for, and you do not know what to ask.

Healing feels like the right answer, and some days you ask for it with your whole chest. Other days it sounds like denial, like praying for a season the doctors have already ruled out. So you try asking for peace instead, or comfort, or a little more time. And underneath all of it, unsaid, is the prayer you will not let yourself finish: that this would be over. That they would be at rest, and so would you. The moment it surfaces you push it back down, because what kind of person prays that.

Here is what Paul says about that exact moment. We do not know what we ought to pray for. Not as a confession of failure, but as a plain description of the human condition, dropped into the middle of the most hopeful chapter in the New Testament. And then the sentence turns: the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

Read that slowly. When your prayer will not form, the praying does not stop. It changes hands. The Spirit takes the groan you could not turn into language and carries it to the Father already translated, already right, already free of the parts you were ashamed of.

You have not run out of prayers. You have arrived at the place where Someone else does the asking, and has been doing it quietly on the days you managed nothing at all.

REFLECT

1. What is the prayer you keep starting and cannot finish?
2. What changes if the groan you cannot put into words is already understood and already carried?

✦ TRY TODAY

Pray for your person today without asking for an outcome. Say their name to God, sit quietly for one minute, and let that be the whole prayer.



Spirit of God, I do not know what to ask. Take the groan I cannot turn into words and carry it to the Father for me.

He Wept Anyway

READ: John 11:32-44

“When Jesus saw her weeping... he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled... Jesus wept.”

— John 11:33, 35 (NIV)

By the time Jesus reached Bethany, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days. Jesus had known this was coming. He had deliberately waited two days before setting out, and He had told His disciples plainly what He intended to do. He arrived at that grave with the outcome already decided.

Then Mary fell at His feet, and He looked at her crying, and at the people crying with her, and something in Him gave way. The Greek is stronger than English usually renders it: He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled, a phrase used elsewhere of anger, of being shaken. And then the shortest verse in the Bible. Jesus wept.

Sit with how strange that is. He was minutes away from calling a dead man out of a tomb. If anyone ever had grounds for saying do not cry, it will be fine, He did. He said nothing of the sort. He stood at a grave He was about to open, and He cried.

Which means the tears you cry over a decline God could stop are not faithlessness. They are not a failure to trust the ending. Jesus modelled them at the one graveside in history where the ending was guaranteed.

People will tell you to stay positive. Some of them will quote verses at you. But the God who actually walked into this world did not manage His grief at a funeral. He joined it. Whatever else is true about your person's decline, this is true first: God is not watching it from a polite distance with His composure intact.

He is close enough to cry.

REFLECT

1. Who has told you, directly or by implication, that grieving now is a failure of faith?
2. What does it do to you to picture Jesus weeping at a grave He was about to open?

TRY TODAY

Let yourself cry about it once today without stopping yourself. If the tears will not come, say out loud to God the one sentence you have been refusing to say.



Jesus, You wept at a grave You were about to open. Thank You that my tears are not a failure. Sit with me in them.



This is only the beginning

There are twelve more days waiting for you: the thorn that stayed, the broom tree, the one who is not helping, and the long valley you walk through rather than around. Find the complete 14-day guide in the Everyday Mercies shop on Etsy, and come say hello at everydaymercies.com.

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