

HEALING DAY *by* DAY



Scripture, reflections, practices, and prayers

MARCI ALBORGHETTI

TWENTY-THIRD PUBLICATIONS

1 Montauk Avenue, Suite 200, New London, CT 06320

(860) 437-3012 » (800) 321-0411 » www.23rdpublications.com

© Copyright 2014 Marci Alborghetti. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission of the publisher. Write to the Permissions Editor.

Cover photo: ©iStockphoto.com/

ISBN: 978-1-62785-000-1

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2014935254

Printed in the U.S.A.

Dedication

FOR GOD



To Mom

Twenty-Third
Publications
Sample

Introduction

I spent the first thirty-five years of my life relatively complacent about healing. Granted, I'd had the occasional flu or stomach bug, a few aches and pains, and even breaks and strains. But when a doctor told me when I was thirty-six that if he hadn't found and removed an in situ melanoma from the center of my back, it could have developed into a fatal cancer, I found my interest in healing telescoping rather swiftly. When he added that I'd likely be living with this shadow all my life, it was all I could do not to panic.

We are all in need of healing. It is in our human nature to be broken, hurt, fragile, ill. It is this need for healing that reminds us always of our need for God. Our fragility is a constant echo of Saint Paul's claim that it is our weakness that allows God's strength to shine through. There are so many human conditions that require God's healing. From allergies to lung disease, from cancer to bitterness, from anger to addictions, from infections to broken bones, from mental illness to hurt feelings, we all, in some way or another, need to be healed.

But are we ready to be healed?

In my personal search for healing—and I've learned in the later years of my life that I need it in many more ways than one—I've been intrigued by what Scripture tells us about healing. We are all frequently assured that God heals, and this is true. But we seldom discuss or acknowledge what is required from us to be healed. No, it is not sinlessness, or piety,

or constant striving for a perfect character. It is not a specific diet plan or a particular exercise regimen.

It is acceptance. Acceptance that God's will for us may not be our will for ourselves. Acceptance that what healing looks like to us may not be what it looks like to God—or anyone else, for that matter. Acceptance that we are in God's hands and that we belong exactly there. Acceptance that peace or forgiveness may be the healing that results from physical illness, even if that illness itself remains. Acceptance that “feeling better” may simply mean feeling closer to God and others in our lives. Acceptance that being “made whole” may have nothing to do with our bodies.

What I've also learned from Scripture and biblical healings is that we must be willing to turn to God and acknowledge our need to be healed. We must be willing to seek—and accept—God's healing, his will, for us. We must feel ourselves to be essentially valuable to God, and able to open ourselves to him, no matter how broken or ill we may be.

It is difficult to find a healing in the Bible where something is not required of the one who needs to be healed. It may be action as complicated as the friends of the paralytic in the gospel who literally took the roof off a house to lower the man in his stretcher before Jesus. It may be as simple as putting ourselves before Jesus, like the leper, and acknowledging that we know he can heal us.

In other words, healing calls for faith.

In the pages that follow, I offer the Bible passages with prayers that have helped me and others in our ongoing healing journeys. For each of the fifty-two weeks of the year, you will find a Scripture passage, a meditation and lesson, and then, a short prayer or action you can make or take for every day of every week in the year. I pray that God will bless us both with the healing we want and need on this path that ultimately can lead only to him.

HEALING DAY BY DAY

Twenty-Third
Publications
Sample

IS ANYTHING TOO WONDERFUL FOR THE LORD?

Then one said (to Abraham), "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." Sarah laughed to herself. The LORD said, "Why did Sarah laugh and say to herself, 'Shall I bear a son now that I am old?' Is anything too wonderful for the LORD?" **GENESIS 18:10, 12-14**

By the time the angels of the Lord, disguised as human travelers, walked into Abraham's camp, Sarah was an old woman who thought she knew it all. She'd traveled much of the known world with Abraham, who had used her beauty when she was young to assure success and safe passage for himself. She'd left family, country, and religion to marry a man who was following the one God. She'd sacrificed everything, and though Abraham had won material success from God, Sarah had not been given what she most wanted: a son.

Sarah probably felt bitter and a little cynical when three strangers strolled into town and assured Abraham that she would bear a son. She was too old. So was he. It was ridiculous, and her laughter probably held less amusement than irony. But she was caught in her cynicism, called out by God, and—to her joy—proved wrong. She did bear a son. God healed her barrenness—the worst malady a woman of that world could face.

Do we ignore God calling us out? Do we grow so comfortable in cynicism and bitterness about our suffering that we fail to remember God's power? Have we become so accustomed to misery that it becomes habit? Are we so entrenched in complacency with our unhealed selves that we fail to properly answer the question: is anything too wonderful for the Lord? Or even to ask it?

Are we prepared to be healed?

SUNDAY ■ *Pray:* God of all wonderful things, let me turn to you with a face shining in faith and hope rather than contorted in resentment and cynicism.

MONDAY ■ *Act:* Today, refuse to live cynically. Think about how you regularly “act out” an attitude of surrendering hope for healing. Identify those habits that demonstrate complacency or bitterness about your situation, and banish them for twenty-four hours. Remember: nothing is impossible with God.

TUESDAY ■ *Pray:* Lord, as you forgave Sarah for her doubtful laughter, forgive me when I refuse to acknowledge your presence and your promise.

WEDNESDAY ■ *Act:* Throw yourself into one act of hope today. Eat healthy foods. Read an inspiring story about someone who has overcome illness or suffering. Tell someone that you believe God is healing you. Trust God!

THURSDAY ■ *Pray:* Father, when I am afraid to hope, lest I be crushed with disappointment, remind me that one deep breath of faith in you outweighs a dozen shallow gasps of fear.

FRIDAY ■ *Act:* Reach out to someone who is suffering and offer a reminder of God’s powerful presence. Share an inspirational card, book, verse, or Scripture; or visit and simply talk about how to look for God’s tree of life through a forest of worldly weeds.

SATURDAY ■ *Pray:* Lord, remind me always about the wonderful things you have in store for me!

TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY

Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain but your pain will turn into joy.” JOHN 16:19–20

When we are sick, downhearted, frightened, and in need of healing, nothing is more depressing than seeing others healthy and happy, having a great time. It’s hard not to believe that they are deliberately showing off their joy and heartiness while knowing that we weep and mourn. It can feel like the world is rubbing salt in our wounds.

Jesus warned his disciples about this just before he was crucified: not only were they about to be devastated, filled with doubt and grief; they would also be forced to witness others rejoice in his death.

In times like these there is one thing we can do: remember that tomorrow is another day, and another day—or in the case of the disciples, the third day—will bring something so amazing, joyous, and unexpected that our current suffering will be removed even from memory. Indeed, Jesus goes on to assure the disciples that it will be like a woman who, once rejoicing in the birth of her child, forgets the pain of that childbirth.

My guess is that over the agonizing days after Jesus promised this joy, the disciples completely forgot his words. They were likely in shock from witnessing the swift, brutally violent end of Jesus’ mission. After seeing him betrayed, denied, beaten, humiliated, condemned, crucified, and buried in a grave not his own, could they even conceive of feeling joy again?

But the day after tomorrow, they did. And so can we.

SUNDAY ■ *Pray:* Risen Jesus, teach me to live in hope, not just for my own healing but for the joy that comes in knowing that you conquered sin, pain, and death, once and for all.

MONDAY ■ *Act:* Think about the last time you felt joy. Consider the feeling and the reason for it. Now think back again. Was there a time before that joyful period that you felt pain? Of course there was. Remember that if your pain turned to joy in the past, it will do so again.

TUESDAY ■ *Pray:* Jesus, when I weep let my tears wash away the pain and grief so that I may raise my dim eyes to the east in hope.

WEDNESDAY ■ *Act:* Make a list of ways in which the pain you now feel might be turned to joy. Lift this list to God in openhearted, trusting prayer.

THURSDAY ■ *Pray:* Enduring Jesus, help me wait patiently and faithfully until you turn my tears of pain into rejoicing.

FRIDAY ■ *Act:* Spend time—in person, over the phone, by e-mail, or through a letter or card—with someone experiencing pain or grief. Without belittling their suffering, gently let them know that “this, too, will pass.”

SATURDAY ■ *Pray:* Lord, thank you for every new dawn with its promise of relief, healing, and rejoicing.