

Surrender

Have you ever taken a problem, worry, your anger, sorrow to the cross and left them there? I have but then I must remind myself that my concern, guilt, or worry is gone because I try to pick it up again. God took it from my heart and shoulders, and it no longer exists. When I had cancer, I prayed that the lump would be benign, and it wasn't. Then I prayed that it wouldn't be in the lymph nodes, and it was. Then I prayed that I wouldn't have to have chemo and radiation and I had to have chemo for 9 months. It became obvious to me that things were not going my way and I surrendered. I had to give up control. I still prayed for my needs and what I wanted but my prayers took a different turn. I added, "Not my will but yours God, I am willing to take whatever comes with you at my side." I had surrendered my controlling nature. It was only through surrender that I felt God truly with me and in control. When my husband had Alzheimer's, I turned to God for comfort and took to him how unfair this was for him and as the disease progressed it became a burden for me. There was much we still wanted to do, and we couldn't. But God provided special angels to help me. They would call and take him out to lunch or the Woodward dream cruise or on his birthday a group would take him to a restaurant and have a cake. One very special angel even arranged for me to go on the Walk to Emmaus and had another very special angel stay with my husband for three days so I could attend. Another special angel would take him out in the evening and to Fuddrucker's (a place Gene had always loved), and free me up for Christmas shopping. I was surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. Kind people who saw a need and responded. When I prayed, "Lord, I can't do this," a special angel would appear even just to chat with me or take him out for a meal and I would thank God and feel revived even if just for an hour. This has continued through good days and bad days and has changed my outlook. I know I can give my concerns and problems to God, and it will be his will and kindness that prevails.

Matthew 6:25-27 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

Psalms 121 I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you— the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Lord, we thank you for this day. May we use it to your glory. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and be with him. Give him your protection. Be with our families, guide and protect them. Be with our church Lord may we remember it is your church and we are your caretakers. Be with our Staff and Leaders, bless and lead them. Be with those who suffer in Haiti and the Ukraine. Grant them your protection and strength. Be with those usually in our midst who are traveling, grant them safe travels and may they know you are beside them. Be with them as they seek to do your will. May we remember to feed the hungry and clothe the poor, to give shelter to the homeless and to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this place. Amen

Grace Epperson