

## Chapter 8

### *Questions to Ponder*

1. Take some time to write out your faith story. When you think of church and God, do you feel comforted? Or are your memories hurtful or oppressive? Maybe, like me, you began your faith journey as a child, but it took a different turn as an adult. Describe your faith story and its impact on you today.
2. How has experiencing the pain of an abusive relationship affected your relationship with God?
3. Have you ever found yourself blaming God? Are you angry? Disappointed? Confused about Him? I encourage you to express your honest thoughts and feelings toward God. Do not be afraid to speak truth. His love for you is so incredible that nothing you can say will diminish His love for you.
4. What concepts in this chapter were particularly meaningful to you? Write down one or two ideas and reflect on them this next week.

### *Prayer of Reflection*

*God, I have asked You questions, and I still struggle to find answers that bring me lasting comfort. My faith has faltered at times not knowing where You were in the midst of my pain. Often I called out to You but felt and heard nothing. Were You there? And if so, why couldn't I feel You or hear You speak to me? I want to trust You and believe You will restore my life. I also know I cannot fool You. So I choose to be honest with You today, to tell You my doubts, my fears, and even my struggle to believe.*

*Like the man in the Bible who asked You to heal his son in response to Your question, "Do you believe?" answered, "I believe, help me with my unbelief." This is me, Jesus. I believe,*

*and at the same time, I am filled with unbelief. This is where I'm at: I sit in the middle of doubt, at the crossroads of belief and unbelief. You alone can help me walk the road of believing again. Down deep, I know this is true. When I struggle to believe You care, You hear me. Please wash away my doubts and fill me with faith to trust You without wavering. Thank You for allowing me to be honest with You. I bring all my questions, my fears, and my doubts to You. I lay them at the foot of Your cross. Lead me in the way I should go. Make my path clear. Help me to choose freedom for myself. Open my ears and my heart to really hear Your voice. Please quiet the clamoring within me and still my troubled soul. Lead me beside still waters, and give me peace. Amen.*

### ***God's Enduring Promises***

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Answer me when I call to you,  
my righteous God.  
Give me relief from my distress;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer. (Psalm 4:1)

I am worn out from my groaning.  
All night long I flood my bed with weeping  
and drench my couch with tears.  
My eyes grow weak with sorrow;  
they fail because of all my foes.  
Away from me, all you who do evil,  
for the LORD has heard my weeping.  
The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;  
the LORD accepts my prayer. (Psalm 6:6-9)

You, LORD, hear the desire of the afflicted;  
you encourage them, and you listen to their cry.  
(Psalm 10:17)

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
(Romans 8:38–39)