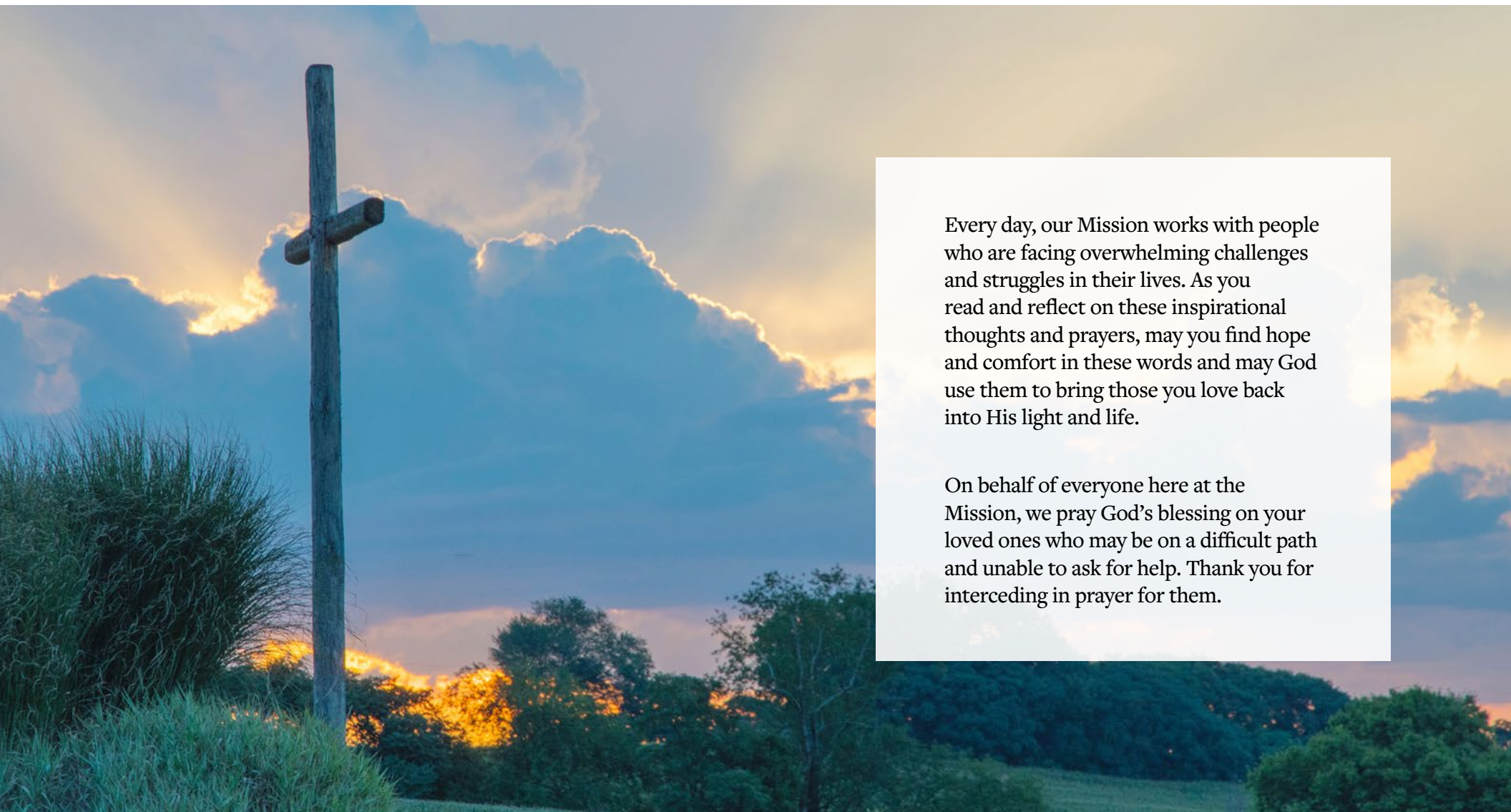


A person is silhouetted against a bright sunrise, with their arms raised in a gesture of prayer or praise. The background features rolling hills and a prominent mountain peak under a hazy, golden sky. The overall mood is one of hope and spiritual uplift.

*Five Days of
Prayer & Inspiration*

TO HELP A STRUGGLING SPIRIT



Every day, our Mission works with people who are facing overwhelming challenges and struggles in their lives. As you read and reflect on these inspirational thoughts and prayers, may you find hope and comfort in these words and may God use them to bring those you love back into His light and life.

On behalf of everyone here at the Mission, we pray God's blessing on your loved ones who may be on a difficult path and unable to ask for help. Thank you for interceding in prayer for them.

DAY 1

SCRIPTURE

Romans 15:5-7

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to **live in such harmony with one another**, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for glory of God.

Harmony

WISDOM & REFLECTION

Take a moment to think about what “harmony” looks like to you in terms of your relationship with your loved one who is struggling.

Finding harmony with someone going through difficult times can be challenging. **The temptation is to give advice with words like “should,” instead of listening.** Rather than offering practical or moral solutions, try to find harmony simply by showing them love with a hug or an encouraging word.

It may be helpful to mentally and emotionally try to step into their world – in other words, empathize with them. Put yourself in their shoes. Try to imagine the choices they’re faced with during this challenging time and how hard it might be for you to find your

way out. Visualizing that may not be easy! **However, trying to meet your loved one where they’re at will usually create an open space to connect and find harmony with one another.**

Consider what your loved one’s reaction would be if you set aside any “should” and just approached them as a friend who cares and is ready to listen. **You may even want to spend some time thinking about how to show them kindness during this hard time in their life** – maybe it’s as simple as taking them out for ice cream or a round of mini-golf. With the Lord’s guidance, are you open to meet your loved one where they’re at in order to find harmony?

DAY 1

PRAYER

Lord,

Give me the ability to have an open heart when spending time with my loved one during this challenging time in their life. Please grant me patience, so that I can empathize with their struggles and listen to them better. As Romans 15 says, please help me welcome my loved one, just as they are, so that our time together is harmonious in Your eyes. **Ultimately, You are my source of endurance and encouragement, and I pray I let You be theirs too.** Even though I can't always see the big picture, I know You work all things for good for those who love You; I put the challenges they're experiencing in Your hands, and take them out of my own.

Amen



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT

One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.

-Bryant H. McGill

Harmony

DAY 2

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:25-34

Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear... But seek 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.

Trust

WISDOM & REFLECTION

When a loved one is struggling, it's often hard to trust that God is still at work in their lives. Instead, we focus on what's causing us stress, fear, anger or anxiety about their situation.

It's so easy to get hyperfocused on those feelings. Many of us have had a thought like, "They'd struggle so much less if they'd just change _____!" This mindset may contribute to frustrations you then carry into conversations with your loved one who's struggling. **For our own mental health and for the health of our relationships, we must try to steer away from these anxieties** looming in our mind and dominating our interactions with others.

When you are with your loved one, and feel overcome with worry, anger or fear for them and their situation, try to recognize those feelings. **Then remember that God is faithful. You can trust that He will never leave you or forsake you or your loved one.** He will not let you or your loved one be tested beyond what you both can handle. Instead of focusing on your worries, how would it change you to remember God's faithfulness to those in Scripture, to those you know – including your loved one struggling – and in your own life?

DAY 2

PRAYER

Lord,

I ask that you give me the ability to let go of the worry I have for my loved one. Fill me with trust in Your infinite wisdom and timing for those who are struggling in my life. It is often easy to be overcome with concern and stress. **When I'm surrounded with worry, doubt, frustration and sorrow, help me take a breath and turn to You.** I ask that You fill me with peace, love and kindness in the midst of these feelings. Lord, I continue to trust in Your glory and empathic love because You are with us. I find freedom at laying my burdens and concerns at Your feet. Thank You for guiding my steps. Each day is a gift from You!

Amen



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT

Don't give up on the people you love. Your patience and faithfulness may be exactly what they need to make a complete turnaround.

-Joyce Meyer

Trust

SCRIPTURE

Galatians 6:1-10

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. **Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

WISDOM & REFLECTION

Take a moment to think about your community – the people you love, and who consistently show you love and encouragement. **God has blessed you with these people in your life for mutual support, comfort and guidance.**

Is there at least one person or group in your community that would welcome you to share your feelings and join you in prayer? People in your community may have experienced a similar situation, or are currently experiencing it, and you can lean on them during this difficult time. **Keep in mind that your loved one who's struggling may not have a community to lean on – and that you may be their only support.**

There are moments during challenging times where you may feel frustrated, hopeless and alone when trying to support your loved one. **The Lord tells us to take heart because He surrounds us with people who not only love us, but have experienced similar feelings.** But it's also OK if your situation is not the same as or even similar to those in your community's. They can still provide a godly perspective and heartfelt prayers for you. Sharing your feelings with others can provide healing, hope and most importantly, fill you up with love that you can then share with your loved one who's struggling.

Community

DAY 3

PRAYER

Lord,

Thank you for giving me people to reach out to in moments of hardship. In times of struggle, I know that we can mourn together in our communities through you. Lord, you bring meaning to our suffering. When I feel alone, I ask for the ability to be open with others about my pain. **Grant me the courage to reach out to those in my community with vulnerability and honesty.** I pray that you provide a space for others who are hurting to share their pain with me as well. As first Peter says, we need to show love and hospitality to one another. I ask that you give me at least one person with whom I can share my pain. I hope to comfort others while finding healing within my soul. Lord, you are here in my loneliness. You remind me of your love through the community which surrounds me. Thank you.

Amen



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT

Community is God's answer to loneliness. When we walk alongside other people, we find a community where we learn how to love.

- Rick Warren



Community

DAY 4

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 55:1-9

Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on them. **“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD.** “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.

WISDOM & REFLECTION

It’s natural to put a lot of pressure on ourselves when it comes to the well-being of our loved ones. **Our love for others often comes with feelings of responsibility for them, especially if they’re younger than us.**

Sometimes, however, there may be too much emotional baggage between you and your loved one to work through a particularly difficult situation or issue. In these times, don’t lose hope! **The Lord will reach out to them through other people and situations in often extraordinary ways.** In the same vein, He may be using you to reach out to people other than those you know and love best.

The Lord has a plan for your loved one that you can’t yet see. How does this honestly make you feel? Take a moment to tell the Lord about your feelings. **He holds your loved one who’s struggling in His mighty hand and you no longer need to feel the pressure of responsibility for them.** You can rest in His love for them.

Then reflect on this: Is God possibly using your unique gifts, talents and abilities to connect and comfort other people who are struggling? **You can feel encouraged knowing that even when you’re not aware of it, God is using you to minister to the people around you.**

Faith

DAY 4

PRAYER

Lord,

I realize that there are differences between me and my loved one who's struggling. I long for them to be restored gently to You. And yet, I pray for faith and understanding that my loved one may find You through outlets outside of me. Remind me that You can encounter us on any path we take. I pray that you grant me peace in times where my loved one's faith, or lack thereof, is out of my control.

As Isaiah writes, Your ways are not my ways. I pray to have complete faith that You are working our lives in ways that I cannot see. Give me the strength to abandon my need to control, to feel responsible and help me place my loved one's journey into Your hands. I know that You are the great redeemer and make all things right. Thank you for guiding me and my loved one, Lord.

Amen



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT

You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. Don't be foolish or naive. But don't despair either. With God's help, you'll get through this.

-Max Lucado

Faith

DAY 5

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 4:4-8

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.

WISDOM & REFLECTION

Reflect on times when you've experienced the Lord's peace in your life most powerfully.

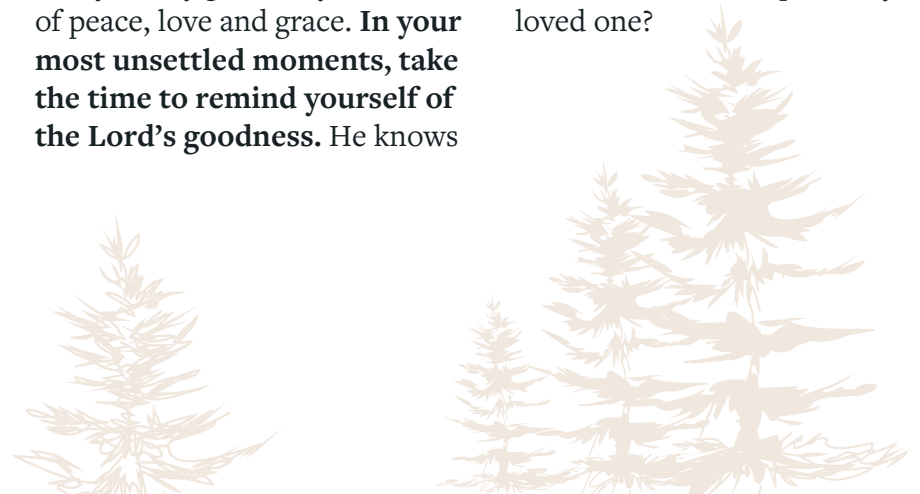
If it's helpful, maybe write these experiences on a notecard or in your journal as a reminder for when you feel anxiety about your loved one who's struggling.

There may be seasons of hardship where you find yourself questioning and maybe even doubting God. If so, lift up your feelings honestly to Him and hold fast to the times when you felt His presence. Have faith that you and your loved one are both on a journey guided by the God of peace, love and grace. **In your most unsettled moments, take the time to remind yourself of the Lord's goodness.** He knows

your pain and is walking with you in it.

Consider a few different things you can do to find peace in the midst of uncertainty. Does it help to write? Talk to someone? Listen to music? Take a walk outside? Hold on to the moments of joy you've experienced with them whenever you feel discouraged or worried. **Reflect on what it may look like for you to live joyfully in the midst of uncertainty.** What does it look like for you to live a joyful life in the midst of hardships with your loved one?

Peace



DAY 5

PRAYER

Lord,

I pray that you grant me abundant peace in times of uncertainty and doubt. I ask You to surround me with your peace and remind me of Your goodness to me. **Remind me of the joy that comes from knowing You and being in Your presence.** Lord, sometimes it's hard to believe that my loved one is ever going to overcome their struggles. But I pray that in the midst of this time, I keep my eyes focused only on You. I know You are the giver of peace. Fill me with Your peace and let me experience a heart overflowing with joy and thanksgiving.

Amen



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT

If you believe in a God who controls the big things, you have to believe in a God who controls the little things. It is we, of course, to whom things look “little” or “big.”

-Elizabeth Elliot

Peace