

# The Path of Hope

One of the key truths we need to learn is:

“My helplessness is not a signal for despair; it is an invitation to depend upon Christ.”

We might call it, “The path of hope.”

## What To Do When I Feel Overwhelmed, Triggered, or Despairing

When I am overwhelmed by memories of the affair, fears about my marriage, concerns about my children, or feelings of helplessness, I will remember:

### **Despair says:**

“I have to figure this out.”

### **Faith says:**

“God never asked me to carry what only He can carry.”

“Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

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## STEP 1

### Identify What Is Happening

Ask:

#### **What is overwhelming me right now?**

- ☐ A memory of the affair
- ☐ A trigger from a movie, conversation, or event
- ☐ Fear about my future
- ☐ Fear that my husband will fail again

- ☐ Conflict in the marriage
- ☐ Problems with the children
- ☐ Loneliness
- ☐ Exhaustion
- ☐ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

Then ask:

**What am I trying to solve right now?**

Write it down: \_\_\_\_\_

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## STEP 2

### Identify the Lie of Despair

Despair often begins when I believe:

- ☐ I must fix this.
- ☐ I must understand everything.
- ☐ I must have certainty.
- ☐ I cannot survive this pain.
- ☐ God is not helping me.
- ☐ Nothing is changing.
- ☐ My future is ruined.
- ☐ I am alone.

Which one am I believing?

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## STEP 3

### Replace the Lie with Truth

#### **If I think:**

“I have to fix everything.”

Remember:

“The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” (Exodus 14:14)

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#### **If I think:**

“I cannot handle this.”

Remember:

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

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#### **If I think:**

“Nothing is changing.”

Remember:

“He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.” (Philippians 1:6)

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#### **If I think:**

“My marriage is hopeless.”

Remember:

“Behold, I am making all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)

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**If I think:**

“I am alone.”

Remember:

“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)

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**If I think:**

“This pain will never end.”

Remember:

“Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” (Psalm 30:5)

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## **STEP 4**

### **Move Helplessness Toward Dependence**

Ask:

**What is beyond my control?**

Write it down.

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Now pray:

“Father, this is beyond me. You never asked me to carry it. I surrender it to You. Help me trust You with what I cannot fix.”

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## STEP 5

### Choose One God-Honoring Action

Instead of trying to solve everything, choose ONE faithful step.

#### **I can:**

- ☐ Pray.
- ☐ Read a Psalm (Psalm 3, 13, 23, 42, 43, 121)
- ☐ Read (and even memorize) Romans 8.
- ☐ Listen to worship music.
- ☐ Call a trusted friend.
- ☐ Text my counselor.
- ☐ Ask my husband for prayer.
- ☐ Take a walk and meditate on Scripture.
- ☐ Journal my thoughts.
- ☐ Write out God's promises.
- ☐ Serve someone else.
- ☐ Review evidence of God's faithfulness.
- ☐ Rest.
- ☐ Go to bed early.
- ☐ Spend 10 minutes thanking God.

Question:

**What is one thing God is asking me to do today?**

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## STEP 6

### Remember God's Track Record

When despair is loud, I will ask:

#### What has God already done?

Has He:

- ☐ Sustained me
- ☐ Saved me
- ☐ Given me His Spirit
- ☐ Provided faithful counselors
- ☐ Led my husband to repentance
- ☐ Preserved my marriage
- ☐ Given me His Word
- ☐ Given me His church
- ☐ Answered prayers
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Write three evidences of God's faithfulness today.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 7

### Train, Don't Drift

Despair says:

“I can't do this.”

Faith says:

“God is teaching me how to suffer.”

“Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” (Romans 5:3-4)

Today God may not be removing the trial.

He may be training me through the trial.

Like an athlete develops strength through resistance, God develops hope through suffering.

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## EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR TRIGGERS

When a memory, movie scene, conversation, or intimate moment suddenly triggers me:

### STOP

1. Name the trigger.
2. Take three slow breaths.
3. Remind yourself:

“This is a memory, not a present danger.”

4. Read Psalm 46:1.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

5. Ask:

**What am I feeling?**

**What am I believing?**

**What truth do I need?**

6. Choose one faithful action. Today, instead of believing the lies of despair, I choose to:

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7. Thank God for one evidence of His grace. \_\_\_\_\_’;;

## **The Hope Principle**

I do not need:

- complete understanding,
- complete certainty,
- complete healing today,

to have hope.

My hope is not found in understanding my suffering.

My hope is found in the God who rules my suffering.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God...”  
(Psalm 42:5)

The one key truth I am learning when despair tempts me to give up is:

“My helplessness is not a signal for despair; it is an invitation to depend upon Christ.”

**What Scripture can I depend on to replace the lie of despair?**

**How can I live out this Scripture to depend on Christ and take the next faithful step?**