

## Study Companion for A Firm Place to Stand

Thank you for choosing to go deeper into the story of Maribel, Conner, and so many others from the book, A Firm Place to Stand, and hopefully deeper into the heart of God.

The verses used in this book were rarely pre-meditated, but instead were placed in my thoughts at just the right time by the real Author of all things true.

May they inspire in you a desire to pursue godly wisdom and understanding through reading and meditating upon them.

The verses appear in the order found in the book. I've included questions to consider as you listen for what God has to say.

There are references throughout to the Pool of Siloam, so we'll start our study with the passage of Scripture that tells about Jesus' miracle of healing the blind man at the Pool of Siloam.



### Lesson One

*As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

*"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*

*After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing (John 9:1-7).*

In Jerusalem, there was a man who had been born blind. He made his living as a beggar, spending his days sitting beside the road and hoping for charity from those who passed by. The righteous people in his day blamed sin for all their physical infirmities. Because of his blindness, they judged him to be a lowly sinner. And he knew these were their thoughts.

In this passage of Scripture, Jesus is about to undo that notion.

Through Jesus' words and actions, we can understand that, although we may suffer painful and permanent consequences for our sin, these things are not a punishment from God.

Sometimes we allow sin and the consequences we face because of our sins to blind us, at least temporarily, to the truth of God's love and the knowledge of who we really are. And yes, God will often discipline those He loves (see Proverbs 3:12), but He doesn't do it with cancer or Parkinson's disease or heart disease or macular degeneration or any other sickness or infirmity.

Here he sat, a grown man on the side of the road, begging for charity from people he couldn't see—and who didn't want to see him.

He certainly didn't see Jesus coming.

But Jesus saw him.

Just like with the blind man, Jesus sees you. He sees you in your despair, your frustration, your doubt and disbelief. He sees you in your darkest moments and in the shame and guilt you wrap yourself in after. He sees you even when you don't see Him.

Jesus had compassion on the blind man and offered to heal him. He placed mud on the man's eyes then told him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. Jesus could have completed the act of healing right there with nothing more required of the blind man. Was Jesus testing the man to see if he had faith? Or was He revealing a bigger truth through His request?

This blind man may have never heard of Jesus before this day. But something made him allow this stranger to come and put mud in his eyes. I think it is safe to say he was desperate for a healing. But did he also sense a divine healing was possible when he entered into Jesus' presence?

Scripture doesn't tell us if the man had closed his eyes before Jesus applied the mud, or if the mud had been placed directly on his eyes. Either way it would be painful or at least uncomfortable. Scripture also doesn't tell us the distance the man had to go to reach the Pool of Siloam, but it was more than a few steps away. And a slow journey for blind man with mud in his eyes.

The words in John 9 tell us Siloam means "sent."

In Luke 4:18 Jesus states, *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free...”*

In effect, Jesus told this man to go and wash in the One who was sent to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, recovering of sight for the blind, and to set the oppressed free.

By sending the man to the Pool of Siloam, He was making a point that only through Him will we receive true and lastly healing and restoration.

Perhaps you have difficulty accepting the truth that God created you for His glory because you, like this blind man, had heard the whispered, and sometimes shouted accusations, of others. The disciples even went so far as to ask Jesus who sinned, this man or his parents—within hearing distance of the man.

But while the disciples were busy trying to decide who to blame, Jesus focused on the healing and how that act of restoration would bring glory to God.

*“...but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”*

Jesus refused to engage in assigning blame, but instead stated that God could be glorified through this. The past didn't matter to Him. He focused on what the future could be.

- ❖ Can you relate to how this man might have felt? From the day he was born he had been told that his blindness was a result of sin. Would he have wondered what sin he had committed to warrant his blindness? Would he have wondered why others weren't suffering equally for the sins they committed? Do you believe he would have asked Jesus for healing if he thought his blindness was a punishment from God?
- ❖ Might he have felt distant from God? Or questioned God's love for him? Might he even have felt angry with God? Have you?
- ❖ Are you sitting beside a dusty road, unworthy, ashamed, and alone, and wondering why me? Do you believe Jesus sees you? Do you believe He loves you? How would your life be different if you did?

- ❖ How did Maribel feel about herself at the beginning of the book? Was she looking for Jesus? If not, what was she looking for? What did she think would solve her problems? What did she really need? What feelings did she have that you can relate to?
- ❖ What did she believe was true about her current circumstances? What did she believe was true about the future?
- ❖ Would the man have been tempted to find the nearest source of relief from the irritation, to wash in the first water he found? Are we sometimes tempted to reach for the nearest relief we can find, to take a shortcut instead of doing the work Jesus asks of us? What are some of the sources of temporary relief from the pain we go to? What is the problem with these shortcuts?
- ❖ What did Maribel believe was true about herself and her life? Have you ever experienced times when you felt the same?
- ❖ Do you believe God can use your past to glorify Himself? If not, what keeps you from believing? If so, how are you allowing Him to use it?

Read more:

Matthew 7:1-2

Job 38:4

Romans 8:1

Acts 10:43

Psalm 103:1-5



## Lesson Two

*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. (Ecclesiastes 1:2 NKJV)*

On the surface, this verse might seem fairly depressing or discouraging. And taken all by itself, it is. But read as a part of the entire message of the Ecclesiastes, it leads us into one of the most hopeful truths we can ever hold onto.

Some bible translations use the word “meaningless” instead of “vanity.” And the original Hebrew word used here means “breath.” Our time here on earth is but a breath, and all that we do or acquire here will ultimately prove to be meaningless. We tend to think of this in terms of wealth, fame, and whatever it takes so we’ll be remembered. Somehow, as a people, we have come to seek and define our purpose in life by the things of the world. Is it any wonder we always come up disappointed?

As Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes, searches for the meaning of life, he allows himself to partake of every pleasure. He achieves the highest of recognition and the greatest of wealth. And then he declares it all worthless. If Solomon, one of the wisest and richest men who has ever lived, found the things of this world to be meaningless, how are we—who are much less wise and rich—to find any value in our existence?

We recognize our value the same way Solomon did. We find that while the things here ‘under the sun’ may be meaningless, a vanity to strive for, the things of God and His Kingdom are of immeasurable and eternal value. Our life on earth is a tiny part of a much bigger picture—a much grander, happier, glorious picture.

We won’t find the meaning of life in the things of the world. The meaning of life is in the glory of the Lord. The things that exist here in this world become our craft room for creating a life that glorifies God. And when we find our satisfaction in the things that bring God glory, there we find our purpose.

Solomon discovered any meaning found here on earth is but a breath.

The meaning of life is found in the Creator, not the creation.

- ❖ What things do you believe are necessary for your life to have meaning and purpose? Have you experienced a time when you achieved one of your markers for meaning and purpose? How did you feel afterwards? If it left you feeling empty or lacking still, why do you think that was so?
- ❖ In the book, Maribel remembers this verse when she is thinking about how people often valued their family histories. Why didn't she think this was important?
- ❖ In what ways have you struggled with wanting to feel you had a purpose or that your life matters?
- ❖ If it is true that outside the glory of God, the things we achieve in the world are ultimately meaningless, what does it mean concerning our mistakes and failures? How can you allow this to change your view of your purpose in life?
- ❖ In what way might Maribel's discovery of the events from Peg, Mack, and Conner's past change her opinion about the ability of God to use all things for His glory?

Read More:

Matthew 6:33

1 John 2:16-17

Luke 12:15

Ephesians 2:10



## Lesson Three

*See, I am doing a new thing! (Isaiah 43:19 NIV)*

*Behold, I will do a new thing,*

*Now it shall spring forth;*

*Shall you not know it?*

*I will even make a road in the wilderness*

*And rivers in the desert.*

*(Isaiah 43:19 NKJV)*

When God spoke these words to the children of Israel through the prophet Isaiah, He was speaking to a people who knew despair, suffering, sorrow, and hopelessness. These Israelites had seen their homes and families destroyed. Those that survived were taken to Babylonia where they existed as captives for seventy years. Perhaps most disheartening of all to them was seeing the temple, God's Holy Place where He chose to dwell among them, demolished.

God told the Israelites "Behold, I will do a new thing." He isn't going to rescue them in the same way He rescued them from the Egyptians. God's options for rescuing, healing, restoring, and resurrecting are unlimited, and He often delights in surprising us with the unexpected.

As humans, we often see only one solution to the problems we face. We convince ourselves only one thing will fix this or make our life better. We are sold on the idea there is only one way—and most often that way is *our way*. We make our determination based on our past experiences, our perceived limitations, and the misconception that we alone know what is best for us. We even set our expectations by the things we've seen God do in the lives of others. And when God doesn't act along the narrow path we've planned for Him, we give up or give in to the kinds of manmade remedies that only take us deeper into our despair and hopelessness.

But the One who created everything can still do anything. Don't limit yourself by anticipating the same old rescue you experienced before or saw someone else receive.

Don't anticipate, just be ready to participate.

Through scripture God promises to make everything new (see Revelation 21:5) and that the former things will not be remembered (see Isaiah 65:17). Unlike with restored buildings like the one where Momma Mae's Café is located, people often don't want their former selves to be remembered. Yet when we remember them, they can serve as a powerful reminder of what God has rescued us from—and how.

- ❖ What sort of things might the Israelites have believed about God during this time?
- ❖ There are lots of things that can take us captive in this world, leading us to experience despair, suffering, sorrow, and hopelessness. What are the things in your life right now that trigger these emotions? In what ways are you captive to those thoughts or feelings?
- ❖ In the book, Maribel relates this verse to an old building that has been restored and given new life. What areas of your life might be feeling the effects of decay physically, emotionally, or spiritually? What is needed to bring new life into those areas?
- ❖ Take an honest look at the way or ways you anticipate God's intervention or rescue in the places you struggle. How did you come to have those expectations? Do you believe God can intervene in your difficulties in a supernatural way?
- ❖ How did God intervene in Conner's life to free him from his captivity to drugs, alcohol, and selfishness? How did He intervene in Maribel's to free her from the captivity of guilt and self-doubt? Why do you think God chooses to use new means of rescue for each of His children?
- ❖ Are there things from your past you wished no one would remember? How did God rescue you then?

Read More:

2 Corinthians 5:17

Revelation 21:1-5

Isaiah 65:17

Philippians 1:6

1 Peter 1:3-5



## Lesson Four

*The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;*

*(Psalm 18:2)*

In the story, Maribel asks Peg about the source of her faith and how it has kept her so strong through the trials. Peg answers her by saying “The Lord is my Rock, the solid rock on which I stand.” Here she is not quoting scripture but declaring the one thing she knows to be true and reliable. Of course, her ability to know this comes from knowing God’s character through studying His word.

There are numerous times in scripture where God is referred to as a rock or solid rock. His nature is reliable. He does not change. He can also be compared to a rock in that He is our protector, a place of refuge, a fortress against the storms of life.

In Matthew (see Matthew 7:24-27) Jesus tells His listeners that a wise man will build his house on the rock and then it will be able to withstand the storms that come. But a foolish man will build his house on sand, and that house will be unable to withstand the storms that come. The wise man is the man that listens to and hears God’s words, then puts them into practice. The foolish man hears what God is saying but doesn’t obey.

The foolish man clings to his own understanding, relying on his own strength, and placing all his hope in his ability to control his future. And then the storm comes, and he stands in disbelief, watching it ripped away in a tidal wave he thought couldn’t happen to him. Not to his house, his job, his community, his family, or his health.

Often it is not that we believe we have the strength or wisdom or courage to get through “something.” It is that we don’t really believe that “something” will happen to us.

We believe things like: No one in my family has ever had cancer so I won’t get it. I’ve been at this job longer than most, so they won’t let me go. We go to church every Sunday so my kids will never be prodigals. The list goes on, but we often learn the hard way that is goes on wrong.

But God.

But God still loves us. God still hears us. God still knows the very number of hairs on our head. He is still the source of truth and faithful to keep His promises.

Our health can fail, our jobs can be lost, and our relationships can end. Only one thing can never and will never change—God’s great and merciful love for us. When we seek Him as our fortress, our stronghold, our solid rock, then we can experience peace in every storm. We are confident our faith in Jesus keeps us secure. The storm doesn’t get to have the last word in our lives.

- ❖ What have you put your trust in? How will it respond when a storm comes?
- ❖ What do you think it means to build your house on the rock?
- ❖ Have you known someone in your life who always seemed at peace? What do you believe enabled them to do this?
- ❖ At the start of the book, what was Maribel placing her trust in? In what ways had that failed her?
- ❖ What areas in your life feel unsteady or untrustworthy? What would happen if you lost them? How can hearing God’s word and then doing what He asks help you feel secure?

Read More:

Psalm 62:5-6

Deuteronomy 28:52

Psalm 56:4

Romans 15:13

Proverbs 1:33



## Lesson Five

*You are fearfully and wonderfully made.*

*Psalm 139:14*

It is our human nature, thanks in no small measure to the fall of Adam and Eve, to feel much less than fearfully and wonderfully made. We have thoughts like *if I were really wonderfully made, I'd be taller, thinner, stronger, smarter, funnier*—you fill in the blank with the whatever limitation you've convinced yourself of. And what does being fearfully made even mean?

The Passion Translation says it this way:

*I thank you, God, for making me so mysteriously complex!*

*Everything you do is marvelously breathtaking.*

*It simply amazes me to think about it!*

*How thoroughly you know me, Lord!*

Mysteriously complex? That sounds much more like the me I know.

Ironically, we are willing to be enraptured by a beautiful sunrise or sunset, to stand in awe of the waves crashing against the shore, and marvel at the intricate pattern of a snowflake. But we are eager to the point of desperation to find the flaws within our own creation. Are we not significantly more beautiful, awesome, and marvelous than anything else in all of creation?

Psalm 8 says “*what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor*” (Psalm 8:4-5).

Crowned with glory and honor? A little lower than the angels? Not just a random assortment of features smushed together like the detritus found beneath the backseat of a minivan? Let's be honest, smushed together detritus is more likely how we see ourselves than as something crowned with glory.

The very fact that we exist as beings with a freedom of will, the ability to think and reason and feel, is a wonder in itself. But the enemy is desperate to keep you from this truth. If you have this truth in your heart, he won't be able to introduce self-doubt through his weapons of comparison and judgment.

In the book, Maribel's childhood insecurities are triggered by the smells she notices when she enters the cafeteria. The smells remind her of a time when she felt alone and helpless. It was a time of her life when she felt too different, unworthy, or flawed to belong.

Have you ever watched someone knitting with yarn? Each strand of the yarn runs through their hands, weaving in and out and between each finger as it passes through the hand to be woven into the creator's vision.

Prior to declaring himself fearfully and wonderfully made, the psalmist David, says "...you knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13).

What a beautiful thing to know that every fiber of my being—every fiber of your being—passed through God's hands as He wove us into His vision. Each stitch intricately, lovingly, intimately, placed. We are each a handcrafted masterpiece.

Yet we treat ourselves as though we were a mass produced product from some second-rate assembly line. Meant to look and be and act like all the rest, but not quite right because of a flaw in the manufacturing process.

Perhaps, if when we looked in the mirror, we searched for our mysterious complexities instead of flaws, we would see that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

- ❖ What are the things (smells, sounds, sights, or even touches) that trigger thoughts of self-doubt or even self-hatred? Do you believe these thoughts are justified? If so, how might the enemy be using old feelings to convince you the thoughts are true?
- ❖ What are things (smells, sounds, sights, or touches) that bring you joy or make you feel confident? What do you feel is true about yourself in these moments?
- ❖ Do you believe you are a handcrafted masterpiece or a mass-produced product? Which do you think Maribel believed was true about herself?
- ❖ Is your belief based on what the world has told you?

- ❖ What does God say is true about you?
- ❖ What are the things around you that inspire your awe? Sunsets, roses, ladybugs, the smell of coffee, the sound of a child's laughter, or ocean waves? How is it possible to stand captivated by their beauty, in awe of their existence, and yet think less of yourself?

Read More:

Psalm 139:13

Isaiah 55:8-9

Psalm 92:5

Genesis 1:27

Proverbs 31:10



## Lesson Six

*Perfect love casts out fear.*

*(1 John 4:18)*

Perfect love does not mean pretending fear doesn't exist. It also isn't the result of trying harder to love more.

In all things, there is only one source of perfection and that is God Himself.

One of the first blessings of knowing Jesus as our Lord and Savior is an awareness of the perfect love of God pouring into our hearts. It fills us to overflowing and it is in this overflow that fear is washed away.

Through our faith in Christ and the confession of our sins, we have been brought into God's perfect love. We no longer need to fear the coming judgment or the punishment we ought to receive. To know we have been so loved and valued that God forgives our sins when we repent and ask, pours out His mercy upon us, redeems us, restores us and makes us an irrevocable member of His family elicits a depth of love that eliminates our fear.

Love of God and fear of punishment cannot coexist.

But if perfect love casts out fear of God's punishment, then why are there so many passages in scripture that tell us to fear the Lord? It helps to know these two types of fear are actually different things. For the true believer, to fear the Lord means to stand in awe and reverence of our Creator. For the non-believer, to fear the Lord indicates the torment of a soul terrified by the coming punishment.

Sometimes we love someone or something enough to perform an act of bravery on their behalf, but the fear is still real. Out of love we may find the courage to act anyway, but it doesn't mean we aren't afraid.

The message of perfect love is that it casts out, drives away, eliminates, removes, and erases our fears. It doesn't say that it controls, minimizes, subdues, or restrains.

Nothing we can do enables us to experience this confidence, but only by the knowledge of what God has done for us. The He is free to fill us with His perfect love and without our intention or effort, we find our fears fade strangely into a distant memory.

God has given us the promise of eternal life, a share in the riches of his glorious inheritance (see John 3:15, Ephesians 1:18).

- ❖ How have you interpreted this verse in the past?
- ❖ In the book, after Conner rescues Maribel and Daylee from the flood, Maribel thinks maybe the imperfect love of imperfect people can cast out fear as well. What do you think she meant by this?
- ❖ How did Maribel respond to her fears? How did her response change as she began to accept the love of God has for her?
- ❖ How is being brave different from being fearless? Which do you think Maribel was being when she rescued Daylee from the flood? Which was she being when she forgave Ava for what she was about to do?
- ❖ Why do you think Maribel thought of her love as imperfect? Do you agree?
- ❖ How do you believe your love for God influences your love for others? Are you able to love others without fear?
- ❖ Do you experience fear of the Lord as a form of awe for Who He is and what He has done for you? If not, why?

Read More:

2 Timothy 1:7

2 Chronicles 20:17

Psalms 33:8

Psalms 33:18

Acts 9:31



## Lesson Seven

*For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do.*

*(Romans 7:15)*

Are we doomed to forever live a life drawn to sin, caught in a constant battle between the flesh and the Spirit?

As born-again Christians or new believers, we often start with the expectation that the temptations of our old sin nature will suddenly lose their power. So what is the apostle Paul saying here?

To be dead to sin means to be free from its bondage. Picture a slave who has been given the key to his shackles. The shackles are still there. They don't just disappear as if they never existed, but they no longer hold the slave captive. If for some reason the slave should find himself caught in them again, he still possesses the key to setting himself free.

This example isn't quite accurate because no one would want to lock themselves back up after obtaining their freedom. Becoming a shackle wearing slave is not a temptation. But there are other things that are.

When we are made new in Christ, it doesn't take away the fact that we are still walking around in our fleshly bodies that carry a sin nature.

If you were starving (not just missed lunch kind of starving, but haven't eaten in days), would you be willing to steal something to eat? Our flesh has a strong desire to live, to sustain itself, and to make itself feel good or at least avoid pain.

How about when someone has hurt us physically or emotionally? Our nature is to protect ourselves by withholding forgiveness. Forgiving them makes us feel vulnerable and our fleshly bodies don't like that. We know unforgiveness—jealousy, bitterness, resentment—is wrong, but it comes so easily to the flesh. It enters in even before we even know we've opened the door to it.

The law tells us not to steal. And Jesus says we should obey His instruction which tells us we are to forgive seventy times seven.

In both the examples above, our flesh responds in way that is opposite of what we know we should do, and it does so without our thinking. So temptation has popped in, what are we going to do about it?

The good news is that much of the battle can be won just by knowing it exists. We can be prepared for the attacks and have our weapons ready. Maybe it is a certain Scripture, a friend on speed dial, or a song to sing along to. We can let the Holy Spirit within us guide our decision, giving us the strength and wisdom we need to act in obedience to Christ, or we can give in to the flesh, clamping on the shackles of sin again.

It is a struggle I am convinced we will face until the day we meet Jesus face to face and our bodies are finally made perfect. But it is a struggle that will grow easier each time we make the right decision—each time we fight the battle and win.

- ❖ What are the things in your life you do but wish you didn't? Or wish you did but don't?
- ❖ Conner struggles with his attraction to Maribel the night she flirted with him. What do you think kept him from acting on his feelings?
- ❖ What drove Maribel's desire for "comfort food" and unhealthy snacks? How does this compare to the desires Conner struggled with? What need were each of these desires trying to meet?
- ❖ What are your greatest and most effective weapons against the temptations you face?

Read More:

Genesis 4:7

Psalms 119:133

Romans 8:1-4

2 Peter 1:3-4

Galatians 5:17



## Lesson Eight

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)*

One of the most powerful things a person can do for someone else is to pray for them. This verse is taken from the letter Paul wrote to the growing body of believers in Rome. Written as part of his letter to the Roman readers, Paul is calling on God to bless them.

In the story of Maribel and Conner, she finds her name written beside this verse in his Bible.

We often tell someone we'll pray for them, saying "it's the least I can do." But what could be more beneficial and powerful than asking for God's help?

With these words, Paul isn't asking for good health, safety, earthly prosperity—any of the things we quick to request when we pray for others. Paul asks the God of hope to fill them with peace and joy so that they would overflow with hope. Hope may be defined as the confident expectation of the glorious inheritance yet to come, and above all else, Paul wants them to experience this.

Paul is asking God to give them something even better and more lasting than earthly gain. When we have hope, we have the ability to experience peace in the midst of trials. Jesus has already assured the disciples that this would be true (see John 16:32). But He has also promised them that He has overcome the world.

When we trust in God, He can fill us to overflowing with peace and joy. And this the power by which we can face the trials of the world.

- ❖ Have you ever been surprised to learn that someone has been praying for you? How did that knowledge make you feel?
- ❖ How does it feel to pray for others even when they aren't aware of it?
- ❖ How does intercessory prayer for others effect our lives? Why does God want us to pray for others?

- ❖ What do you think would have made Conner choose this verse to pray over Maribel? What do you think he wanted to see happen in her life?
- ❖ How do you think Maribel felt when she saw the note? Do you believe this made a difference in her feelings? How?

Read More:

1 Samuel 12:23

Psalm 122:6 – 9

James 5:16

1 Timothy 5:5

Colossians 4:12



## Lesson Nine

*I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.*

*(1 Corinthians 3:6-9)*

In this letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminds them they each played different roles in bringing about the growth of the church. And while they each contributed, it was God alone who made the harvest possible.

This passage calls believers to obedience in performing the task they have been given, reminding them to have faith in knowing that the results are God's business.

In the story, [A Firm Place to Stand](#), Mack references this passage when Conner confesses feelings of guilt for failing in sharing the gospel with his friend, Tracy, who is now dead. He had tried, but Tracy hadn't been ready to hear. Now Mack reminds him that there are many people involved in preparing the conditions for a harvest, but God alone makes the plants grow. The same as with farmers in a field, as humans we can work to make the conditions right for growth, but we don't have the power to bring forth life.

God is responsible for the success of Christian ministry, but that doesn't excuse us from faithfully performing the task He gives us. Someone must tell them about the gospel. Someone must pray for them to receive it. Someone must walk beside them as they grow in faith.

While Conner blames his actions for failing to bring about eternal life for Tracy, Maribel deals with her own regrets, blaming her actions for causing Alexander's death.

- ❖ How are the two conclusions similar? How are they different?
- ❖ Were either one of them justified in their feelings? Why or why not?

- ❖ Have you experienced a time when you shared the gospel, but the person wasn't ready or willing to receive it? What did you do next? What do you wish you had done?
- ❖ Have you experienced a time when you wished you had shared the gospel but didn't? What kept you from sharing? How might you have overcome this obstacle?
- ❖ What role do you believe you have been given in reaching the lost? How could you better fulfill this role?

Read More:

1 Corinthians 1:27-31

Jonah 2:9

Psalms 51:12 - 13

Matthew 19:26

John 21:17

Matthew 9:37-38



## Lesson Ten

*Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.*

*(John 4:10)*

A thirsty woman went to the well one day to draw water. But she wasn't just a thirsty woman, she was a sinner. A woman with a dry and hopeless soul. She wasn't physically thirsty; she was spiritually thirsty. Perhaps her biggest problem was that she didn't know it.

We are often like the woman at the well. We don't know what we need and don't fully understand when it is offered to us. We misinterpret the longings we feel as a need for something—money, success, food, love, attention—that once acquired leaves us even thirstier. We have a spiritual thirst that we try to satisfy with earthly things—and it never works.

It is like drinking sewage water and thinking it will satisfy us. We thirst for something to restore our hearts and refresh our souls, but we reach for the contaminated, impure things of the world instead of the sparkling pure water of God's grace and mercy. The things we chase after don't give life but lead to sickness and death instead.

Jesus offers this woman a drink of living water. Living water is water that flows. It is like the refreshing water of a mountain spring. It is the water that gives life. And it is the gift of grace Jesus offers to each of us.

Before Jesus offers her the living water, He asks her a question. “Will you give me a drink?” (see John 4:7). I don't know but I think He did this to get her attention. After all, He turned water into wine. I'm sure He could have gotten His own drink. I think this was His way of giving her the opportunity to acknowledge Him, or to look the other way and ignore Him. He wanted to see if she was willing to have a conversation with Jesus?

Jesus wasn't going to force her to talk to Him or serve Him, but if she was willing to engage in a conversation, He certainly had a plan to bless her beyond anything she could have expected.

- ❖ Are we often so focused on what we think we need that we have no time to notice or respond to what Jesus is asking of us? What is the well you go to in hopes of satisfying our longings?
- ❖ Do you believe Jesus wants to meet you there? If so, what does he long to tell you? What do you long to hear from him? Are you willing to engage in a conversation with Him?
- ❖ In the book, this verse comes to Maribel's mind at a moment when she is experiencing guilt, shame, and hopelessness. What do you think prompted Maribel to remember this verse when she did?

Read more:

Jeremiah 17:13

Jeremiah 2:13

Revelation 7:17

John 7:38

Ezekiel 47:12



## Lesson Eleven

*“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying,  
“This is the way; walk in it.” ( Isaiah 30:21)*

This verse brings to mind the picture a small child walking along in the park with his father, his attention being captured by some many things, bright and shiny things perhaps. And in his curiosity, he runs from the path to pursue this newfound delight. In love his father never lets him out of his sight, but instead says “this is the way.” It doesn’t say he yells or shouts. He simply says, “this is the way, child.”

This is the image of a patient Father, calling his wayward child back onto the right path.

But why from behind? Because that is where we have left Him when we turned aside to venture off the path. Was it a career we thought we needed? Was it the allure of the pleasures of sinful living? Maybe it was a ministry that someone convinced us was supposed to be ours? Or perhaps it was a momentary doubting of God’s goodness on our part.

How did this distraction even reach our eyes to capture our attention? Without fail it is because we took our eyes off God. The briefest of glances is all the enemy really needs. We neglect prayer, quiet time with the Lord, or our Bible reading, and there Satan is with some shiny attention-grabbing item, just a fraction off the path. And then the next one is just a fraction further and on it goes until we can’t even see the path anymore. We are lost, but we are not abandoned to stay lost. When stop to listen, we will hear that voice—His voice—calling us back to the path.

When we follow Him, He is always before us. He is our trustworthy guide.

- ❖ What are the distractions and temptations that have the power to lead you astray?  
How do you guard against them?
- ❖ Why do we sometimes seek our own path? In what ways does the world encourage this?

- ❖ What do we have to give up to follow God's path? What do we gain when we do?
- ❖ What temptations had led Maribel off the path she should have followed? Did she sense that she was going the wrong way?
- ❖ How was God working in her life to call her back to Him? What had been keeping her from seeking God?
- ❖ Can you see times in your life when you had gone astray? How did God call you back?
- ❖ When Maribel recalls this verse, what kind of mood is she in? What thoughts or feelings is she experiencing? How is God using this to get her attention?

Read more:

John 10:4

1 Kings 19:11-13

Ezekiel 3:12

Acts 2:28

Luke 1:79



## Lesson Twelve

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

Our physical bodies are the place where the Holy Spirit resides, meaning God's presence lives within these fleshly forms we wear on earth. Wherever we take our body, we are taking God. Whatever we do to our bodies, we are... well, dragging God right through it to.

Temple is a word that makes us think of a building that is grandiose and magnificent. Something big and reverentially ornate. Something flawless and beautiful. But whoever feels that way about their earthly bodies?

In an earlier lesson, we discussed what it means to be fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God knit us together in our mother's womb exactly as we are knowing that one day this body we walk around in would be home to His Holy Spirit. This is the same God who went through painstaking detail instructing Solomon exactly how to build the temple, God's dwelling place on earth. Why would He now settle for anything less glorious for the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit?

When a woman is pregnant, she goes through a great deal of effort to protect the new life growing within her. She nurtures it by watching what she eats. She guards it by limiting her exposure to things that could cause injury or bring harm.

As Christians, sometimes we think of our physical bodies as being separate from our spiritual selves. But God did not design us that way. When He created us, He equipped us to do good works (see Ephesians 2:10). An important part of that equipping is our earthly bodies that allow us to move and react and be present to others.

❖ What words would you use to describe your physical body?

- ❖ What words would you use to describe a place that is sacred or holy, such as a temple or church? Are these words different?
- ❖ Have you ever thanked God for the body He has given you? If so, how often do you do this? If not, why not?
- ❖ What choices are you making to care for your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit?
- ❖ In the story, Maribel often indulged in “comfort food.” How was this harmful to her body both physically and spiritually? What made her seek comfort in food?
- ❖ What things do you and I turn to for comfort instead of seeking comfort from God? Why do we look for comfort in things other than God?

Read more:

Ephesians 2:10

1 Corinthians 3:16 – 17

2 Chronicles 31:21

Matthew 6:25

Psalms 8:5



## Lesson Thirteen

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

A person doesn't have to die to perish. To perish doesn't have to mean that we cease to exist. Sometimes it just means we cease to live.

It can be the result of failures we have experienced or fears that have taken control. We can experience a deep sense of futility to the point where we believe our life has no meaning. This is a lie from the enemy intended to keep us from the life God has for us.

This verse from the Book of John tells us there are only two choices we can make, two paths we can follow. We can be living or perishing. Sadly, sometimes we misjudge, and the things we do in pursuit of living are really causing us to perish.

But God wants much more for us. The word *world* used in this verse really means humanity. If it was only the physical world on which we live—the forest and oceans, the canyons and mountains—He would probably be better off getting rid of mankind altogether. But that isn't His heart. He loves us—humanity, mankind, you and me, His fearfully and wonderfully made children—so much so that He sent His one and only unique Son to receive our punishment so that we might be made righteous and qualified to receive eternal life with God.

All He asks from us is that we believe in His son, Jesus Christ. Not just the kind of belief based on facts—yes I believe Jesus was the Messiah sort of stuff—but that we put our faith in Him. Where we place our faith becomes our hope and our security. When we experience that security, we are transformed from a person trying to guard and protect their own life, to a life in full blossom, going on to produce good fruit.

In the story, Maribel has been allowing fear and guilt to determine how she lives. In the moment when she recalls this verse, she is in a situation where she thinks she might really die. And she

realizes that she doesn't want a physical death, but even more she regrets the spiritual death that she has been given in to.

- ❖ What have you believed was the object of God's love in the words "for God so loved the world"? Has this been a challenge for you?
- ❖ What distinguishes a person whose life is perishing from one who is living? What is the biggest difference in their beliefs?
- ❖ What does it mean to you to "believe in" Jesus? What is the difference between believing with your mind and believing with your heart? Which one influences the amount of hope you experience?
- ❖ What do you think this verse meant to Maribel when she was afraid she might die? What happened to change her thinking?
- ❖ What were the visible signs of Conner's changed life?

Read more:

1 John 4:9-10

1 Peter 1:8-9

Titus 2:11

1 Thessalonians 5:9 – 11

Psalm 13:5



## Lesson Fourteen

*“... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Romans 3:23)*

Sometimes our sins seem greater or lesser than someone else's. And perhaps the consequences for some seem worse than for others. But the truth is that any sin makes the one committing it unclean and separates us from God. One drop of sewage in a pool of water is all it takes to make the water unfit, contaminated. And it doesn't matter what the source of that sewage is.

Though we might believe (erroneously) that some sins are worse than others, the one thing we can probably all agree upon is that everyone has sinned at one time or another. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that even our thoughts and the attitudes of our heart will be judged based on God's word. And in Matthew 5:28 scripture tells us that to even look at someone with lust is to commit adultery. Based on this, it is impossible to believe that even the most up right and good among us could be declared sin-free.

No matter how obediently we try to follow God's word, we miss the mark more often than we'd like to admit. To be human is to be a sinner.

But that was not God's original plan for us. He created us for His glory. Webster's dictionary defines glory as the “splendor and beatific happiness of heaven.” How can heaven be filled with such splendor if its occupants come dressed in their filthy rags? The same as one drop of filthy water will destroy the entire pool, one unclean sinner would mar the beautiful perfection of heaven.

God provide the solution in the form of His son Jesus Christ, that all those who believe in Him will be washed clean.

- ❖ Have you been led to believe some sins are worse than others? What does God say? Why do you think He views all sin the same? Do you agree? Why or why not?

- ❖ What do you expect heaven to be like? How would the presence of sin alter this expectation?
- ❖ Why did Maribel believe she didn't deserve forgiveness? How did the story Conner told her about the death of Peg's son influence her thoughts?
- ❖ How do you believe God views sins committed accidentally versus those committed intentionally? How do you view them?
- ❖ If the end result of an action is the commission of a sin, does it matter what the intention of the who committed it was?
- ❖ Why is there no other way than the blood of Christ to redeem us from our sins?

Read more:

Hebrews 4:12

Romans 8:1

Hebrews 10:22

2 Peter 1:5-9

Psalm 103:12



## Lesson Fifteen

*The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. (John 10:3)*

Once we realize we have become trapped in a pit, we start looking for the way out, often to find the way out is beyond our reach.

Sheep in a pen can't climb out. Their only way out is through the gate, but there is a gatekeeper who only opens the gate for the shepherd. And when the gate has been opened and a rescue has come, we have to listen for and recognize the voice of our Shepherd.

In the book, Maribel has rescued Daylee and discovered her heart again. She wants out of the pit she has sunken into and thinks she has found a way out until she overhears something that causes her to doubt true and lasting redemption is possible. What she hears causes her to lose hope that escape from her past life can happen.

When this verse enters her thoughts, she wonders if God is going to come for her. She wonders if He even knows her name. Guilt and shame have made her doubt she is worthy of being known by God. But in Luke 15:4, He assures us that He will come for us: *“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”*

Luke 15 would have reassured her if she'd had it handy. She recognized the open gate, but she didn't yet know her Shepherd's voice. She was as trapped in the sheep pen as if the gate had still been closed.

Sometimes as Christians, we see an open gate and take off after the first thing that leads us out, thinking we are heading to freedom. In reality, it only leads us into another pen, another trap, or prison.

There is only One who will lead us into the redeemed life of purpose and meaning, but we must learn to recognize His voice. And we do that by the same way we learn anyone's voice—by listening.

Our Shepherd's voice is found in Scripture. Not just reading Scripture, but studying it, meditating on it, lingering in it with long pauses, allowing Him to speak to us. It is a wonderful truth that we don't need our ears in order to hear the voice of our Shepherd.

- ❖ What is your most common response to finding an open gate into something—a ministry, job, relationship? How has this worked for you? What other “pens” has it led you into when you thought you were headed to freedom?
- ❖ How do you discern the voice of your Shepherd? How does Satan try to imitate Jesus in your life?
- ❖ Has there been a time in your life when you wondered if God even knew you existed, much less knew your name? What caused you to feel that way and how did you respond? What changed?
- ❖ Why did overhearing the conversation between Cindy and Conner cause Maribel to doubt forgiveness and a better life was possible?

Read more:

Matthew 18:12-14

Psalm 95:7

Acts 22:14

1 Samuel 3:10

Psalm 32:7



## Lesson Sixteen

*Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you. (Daniel 6:21-22)*

*... and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God. (Daniel 6:23)*

Daniel ended up in the lions’ den because of his faithfulness to God. Refusing to hide his daily commitment to praying to God, he persisted knowing exactly what was at stake. I doubt Daniel was surprised to end up in the lions’ den.

Unlike Daniel though, Christians today tend to either be surprised when we experience negative repercussions of our faith or avoid the possibility altogether. We forget that God can “shut the lions’ mouths” in whatever situation we are faced with.

Sometimes the lions’ den we enter is of our own making. When we say or do things we shouldn’t have, usually with the intent to argue with or hurt the other person. Sometimes the lions in the den are our own thoughts, lions we’ve raised up ourselves, fed with negativity or sinfulness, and given the free will to destroy us.

In either case, it is God alone who can shut the lions’ mouths.

When Maribel thinks of this story, Conner reminds her that Daniel’s trust in the Lord was the key to his survival. But it has been a long time since Maribel trusted anyone, including God. She worries that it is too late, that God will be mad at her. She is afraid she’s rejected Him for so long that He will now reject her.

Daniel was faithful to God, even in his captivity. When he could have believed that God had abandoned him, he chose, instead, to believe instead that God is always faithful.

God's faithfulness to us is not dependent on our faithfulness to Him. His word and His actions prove that He is a God who is "slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness" (see Psalm 86:15).

- ❖ What things in your life or the life of someone close to you have caused your faith to falter at times? Is doubting God's existence the same as or different from doubting His faithfulness?
- ❖ How was Daniel able to remain faithful to God even after he had been made a slave in a foreign and pagan country?
- ❖ What do you think Daniel believed about God as he was thrown in the lions' den?
- ❖ Have you ever experienced a time when you were afraid God was mad at you or wouldn't come through for you? What did your fear reveal that you believed to be true about God?
- ❖ Do you think Maribel was only thinking about the possibility of being bitten when she recalled the story of Daniel? If so, what did she learn from this experience? If not, what do you think her thoughts were?

Read more:

Psalm 37:3

Romans 5:3 – 5

Daniel 3:17-18

Colossians 1:13

Psalm 143:9



## Lesson Seventeen

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)*

There comes a time when we realize we can't keep carrying the load all on our own. We are weary. Weary of trying to make ends meet, maintain relationships, keep up with everything we think we alone are responsible for. Our souls are drying up until we feel either numb or completely frazzled.

In this world that values image, we give everything we have to maintaining an appearance when in reality we are running around desperately seeking answers to questions we don't even know we're asking.

Pause for a moment and consider where you feel most tired and weary. What is the cause of your weariness? It may be an overly filled calendar or a seemingly hopeless situation you are fighting for. Or it may be the weight of guilt or regret. It might be a dozen other things. But that is just the cause, not the source.

The source is unanswered questions of the deepest kind. The kind of questions that exist in our hearts long before they exist in our heads.

Am I enough? Am I worthy? Am I loveable? Do I have a purpose? What is the purpose? Am I important? Am I all alone?

I'm sure you can add a few to the list. We've all experienced at least one of these questions at some point in our lives. They leave us feeling alone, ugly, unworthy, and afraid. They hurt. So we set about trying to be our own answer instead of going to the only One who has the answer.

If others see how busy I am doing things for them, then I'll be enough. If I keep getting promoted at work, then I'll be worthy. If I can make enough people happy, then I'll be loveable. If I had a more important role in ministry, then... the list goes on.

And we grow weary. Ironically, the wearier we become the more we fill our schedules with our own brand of remedy. After all, we can't let anyone know we're weary.

In the story, Maribel finally recognizes her weariness. She understands she can't keep carrying the burden she's tried to manage on her own.

When we finally see and understand the truth that we can't carry our burdens alone, there is an immediate sense of lightening of the load. But it takes more than an awareness of our condition to bring us the rest needed to restore our strength. Our restoration happens when we go to Jesus: *"For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30).*

The world tells us that nothing worth having is easy, that if we aren't laboring under the weight of a little more than we can always handle, then we aren't doing our part. It tells us that then we will be unworthy, unlovable, unimportant. It will throw us into the joy killing trap of comparison.

But Jesus says, *"Come to me... and I will give you rest" (see Matthew 11:28).* Jesus knows the burdens we carry. He understands what it feels like to have one's strength, patience, endurance, and tolerance completely exhausted. The One who carried His cross to His own execution understands weariness.

- ❖ What are the things that leave you feeling exhausted, worn-out, or weary?
- ❖ What do you think made Maribel feel weary in the story? Why do you think it took so long for her to recognize her weariness? When do you think she realized what the source of this was? When do you think she understood the answer?
- ❖ What could you give to Jesus right now that would lighten the load you are carrying? What might happen if you did?
- ❖ What would it look like for Jesus to give you rest? How would you feel if you received it?

Read more:

Psalm 23:1-4

Psalm 38:4

Galatians 5:1

1 Peter 5:7

Colossians 1:9-11



## Lesson Eighteen

*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)*

To take heart means to be confident and courageous. It was easy for the disciples to be courageous while Jesus was with them, but now He was talking about a time to come when He wouldn't be. Of course, His statement about overcoming the world would seem strange considering His coming crucifixion.

But that was exactly how He overcame the world. He rose again, not only defeating death but providing us the means by which we can do the same. When Jesus is our Lord and Savior, His blood covers us as well. His death pays our debt. The world is overcome.

He wanted the disciples to be aware that the world wasn't going to change. It was still enmeshed with trouble. Sin was still going to splash its filth on everyone it could, causing wounds and hurts that would seem impossible to heal. Satan was still going to come to kill, steal, and destroy (see John 10:10).

Thankfully, this world isn't all there is. As Christians, we have the promise of heaven. We are eternal from the moment we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. The world may wound us, but it can't take our eternal life from us.

When Maribel recognizes her weariness is from the burden of guilt she carries, she realizes there are many people in her life that are modeling the truth of this verse. She begins to see that the world is not her problem. Her lack of faith is her problem.

- ❖ In what way does this verse give you courage and confidence? In what ways does it help you experience peace?
- ❖ How do you think the disciples might have interpreted it as they watched Jesus being arrested, beaten, and finally executed?

- ❖ How does it change your perspective toward the problems and challenges you are facing to know Jesus foretold we would experience them? What does our discouragement when we face trials reveal about our faith?
- ❖ Why was it necessary for Maribel to witness others living out forgiveness before she could accept it for herself? How did their actions and this verse combine to influence her thinking?

Read more:

Psalm 34:19

1 Corinthians 15:57

John 14:27

Revelation 12:11

Galatians 6:14



## Lesson Nineteen

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. (John 15:13)*

Jesus was the ultimate model of sacrificial love. He willingly and without complaint chose a brutal death in order that we might experience life. We may have friends we love enough to do a great deal for, but if we're honest, friends we would die for are few and rare. Friends we would suffer and die for are even rarer.

Until the moment comes when we are faced with such a choice. What if the choice involves a stranger instead of a friend? I believe that in such moments the Holy Spirit answers for us.

In the story, Tracy is faced with this choice. And I believe she did what most people would do. We don't know much about Tracy's relationship with the Lord, but good things have been happening and we can be hopeful that she had found salvation. Her act of sacrificial love can be seen as the proof of a much greater love working in and through her.

When we are truly in Christ, we are filled with the love of God—the same love that filled Jesus with the strength to make the ultimate sacrifice. It is the perfect love of God, in which there are no doubts, no fears, no thoughts of self.

Few of us will be faced with the choice of laying down our life for another, but that doesn't mean we won't be given other opportunities for sacrifice. Perhaps we must choose to put our career on hold to raise our family? Maybe we'll need to give up an opportunity to travel so we can stay home and minister to a friend. We may need to give up a comfort or a luxury to help a family member through a health crisis.

In Matthew 10:39 we read, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

❖ What are these verses speaking to you?

- ❖ What are the ways we lay down our life for others (other than through death)? Have we looked at it as a burden or loss instead of as a joy? What part of your life are you sacrificing right now? Do you feel it is enough? Too much?
- ❖ Has there been a time in your life where someone sacrificed something of great value for you? Did you recognize it at the time?
- ❖ Maribel faces more than one such moment in the story. What was the difference in each instance? Do you think one time mattered more than the other? Why or why not?
- ❖ What do you believe made Tracy do what she did to protect Leah?
- ❖ Which characters in the story made sacrifices that impacted the lives of others in positive ways?

Read more:

Matthew 19:21

Luke 6:35

Romans 12:1

John 13:34-35

Psalm 37:38



## Lesson Twenty

*I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (Psalm 40:1-2)*

Sometimes we accidentally stumble into a pit not of our doing, but more often we jump in with both feet. It never seems like a trap until we're standing at the bottom looking up, wondering how—or if—we can ever get out. It's only from the inside of the pit that we see it for what it is. Call it a grave or a tomb or the belly of the whale or Sheol, but when that's where we find ourselves, our situation can feel hopeless.

But the author of this psalm, David, had been through trials and suffering before. He knew trying to forge his own way out wasn't going to work. Instead, he waited patiently for the rescue he knew God would bring. But he wasn't just passively waiting. He was crying out to God. He was engaged in fruitful waiting.

Sickness, suffering, and sorrow can be our pits. Conviction for our sinful life can be a pit. There are many paths that can lead us into a pit, and the pits themselves may all be unique. But the feel of being in one is the same, hopelessness and despair. For the Christian, we have memories of past victories God has brought about, pits from the past He has lifted us from. Even if our memories fail us, we still have Scripture filled with promises and stories of divine rescues.

For the unsaved, the pit can seem the darkest. But God in His great mercy still hears their cries. And if they are willing, He will lift them out in His good and perfect timing.

In the story, Maribel felt trapped by the mistakes of her past. Yet a glimmer of hope remained that a rescue was still possible.

- ❖ What does waiting patiently for the Lord look like?
- ❖ Where does hope come from when things seem beyond rescue?

- ❖ What are the things in your life that represent an unstable place to stand? Where do you find “a firm place to stand?”
- ❖ How is it possible for the lost to have hope when they are in a situation that seems hopeless?
- ❖ What role was God playing in Maribel’s life before she turned back to Him? Did He hear her cries?
- ❖ What had caused her to slide into a pit?
- ❖ What was the source of her “firm place to stand” at the end?

Read more:

Isaiah 25:9

Psalm 69:13-14

Psalm 3:8

1 Samuel 2:2

1 Colossians 1:13