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COMFORT IN AN ANXIOUS WORLD

SEVEN DAYS OF PRAYER FOR
FINDING PEACE IN GOD'S
PROTECTION

PHILIP DE COURCY

Finding Peace in God's Protection

It takes courage to live as well as to die. For the Christian, death is not the worst thing. Because of Christ's substitutionary death for our sins and triumphant resurrection, death for the believer opens the door to an eternity with God and pleasures forevermore ([Psa. 16:11](#)). As the apostle Paul declared, to be with Christ is "far better" ([Phil. 1:23](#)).

But to live day after day facing uncertainty, trapped in a body wracked with pain or surrounded by harsh and unyielding circumstances, is often much harder to face with courage. The coronavirus pandemic has brought to us a season of uncertainty that is unlike any in recent memory. Schools have been closed, businesses have been shuttered, and everyday activities have been severely curtailed. Unprecedented numbers of Americans are now seeking courage for things they never imagined facing.

The apostle Paul exhorted believers to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" ([Phil. 4:6](#)). This prayer guide is designed to help you take cover in the Lord in the midst of this uncertain and difficult time. Each day will present a brief meditation as well as suggested topics to focus on in prayer. The believer will find biblical encouragement to take cover in the promises and presence of God.

Day 1: Get on Your Knees

In the chaos and alarm of our times God offers through His Son, Jesus Christ, the promise of peace that surpasses human comprehension. This is the kind of peace that allows us to enjoy a little bit of the hush of Heaven on Earth. It is a perfect peace for an imperfect world as promised in [Isaiah 26:3](#).

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

“Gracious Father, I thank You for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. I thank You that Christ offers the promise of peace which surpasses all understanding. I pray that in the midst of the difficulties all around, that You would keep me in Your perfect peace. Help me to keep my mind fixed on You in the midst of all the distractions of life. I place my trust in You and lean not on my own understanding. I pray that You will keep me in Your perfect peace. In Jesus’s name, amen.”

Day 2: Keeping Your Balance

Let's be honest, life in the real world doesn't feel as good as a feel-good Hollywood movie. In the real world, terrorists become folk heroes, sexual deviants become cultural icons, corporate crime gets whitewashed in a bankruptcy court, children are abused, and Christians are martyred for their faith. Life in the real world isn't fair. Life seems to be, as someone put it, a theatre in which all the worst people have the best seats. Does it not feel like ours is a world where it is good to be bad and bad to be good? Morally it's all upside down and back to front—the wicked prosper, and the righteous suffer.

In Psalm 73 we meet a believer who failed and recovered, stumbled and regained his footing, and wrote to tell us about that experience of moving from fear to faith, despair to hope. Through this song, we discover how to take cover in a life rooted in God-centered worship. You can read the whole Psalm, but here is a taste:

For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all Your works ([Psalm 73:27–28](#)).

“Heavenly Father, I thank You that You minister to those like Asaph who struggled with their faith. I thank You that You are gracious to me even when I struggle with understanding why the world is the way that it is today. I pray that I may experience the goodness to drawing near into Your presence and the joy of engaging in God-centered worship. Father, I pray that You would grant me a clear understanding of Your unchanging character in the midst of life's challenges. In Jesus's name, Amen.”

Day 3: Don't Be Surprised

The story is told of two brothers who got into a fight with each other. Hearing the commotion from a distance, their father rushes to break up the scuffle and find out what is going on. After scolding both of them, he asks, "Who started it?" The younger of the two answers, "Dad, I hit him back before he hit me." Now there is a young man who is not going to allow himself to be surprised! He anticipated what was coming and prepared himself for it. Either drawing from intuition or past experience, he was ready.

In a similar manner, Christians need to anticipate persecution and suffering at the hands of an unbelieving world. The Bible does not allow the follower of Jesus Christ to expect to get to Heaven without some scrapes and scars. Peter says to the pilgrims of the Dispersion:

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you ([1 Peter 4:12-14](#)).

"Father, thank You for the comfort of Your Word as I walk through the trials of this life. I pray that the experience of these trials would not catch me by surprise, but that I would be armed and prepared by the truth of Your Word. Thank You for your faithfulness and Your constant presence with me—for the truth that I am never alone. Grant me to experience the blessing of the Holy Spirit as I trust in You during seasons of suffering. Teach me this day. I pray this in Jesus's name, amen."

Day 4: The Real Enemy

When World War I broke out, the war ministry in London disseminated a coded message to a far-flung British outpost in the heart of Africa that said, “War declared. Arrest all enemy aliens in your district.” This prompt reply was received back in London, “Have arrested ten Germans, six Belgians, four Frenchmen, two Italians, three Austrians, and one American. Please advise immediately who we are at war with.”

When it comes to the pursuit and prosecution of war, you need to know who and what you are up against. The enemy must be clearly identified before he can be engaged. No fighting force wants to go blindly into battle regarding the strength, weaponry, location, and tactics of the enemy. As far back as six centuries before Christ, the famed Chinese general and military mastermind Sun Tzu was teaching soldiers a simple strategy: know your enemy. The Christian life is a call to arms, and what is true in the field of military conquests is also true in the realm of spiritual warfare: We need to know the enemy. According to the Bible, the Christian fights on three fronts: against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God ([Rom. 12:1–2](#)).

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish ([Gal. 5:17](#)).

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

“Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your love and Your faithfulness. Thank You for being faithful to me in the midst of the spiritual battle. I praise You for the spiritual resources that You have given to me to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. Thank You for the victory Christ has won through His death on the cross and resurrection from the grave. Help me to be sober and to know my enemy, so that I may live a holy life and be pleasing to You. Grant me Your strength this day through Your Spirit and through Your Word. In Jesus’s name, amen.”

Day 5: The Beginning of the End

In looking upon the world and the emerging events of our day, the Christian must take both a near and far look. We must simultaneously live in the meantime with a view to the end time, and Jesus's soon return. In order to understand the events of our day we must view them from an eternal perspective. We must look beyond the temporal world; we must look up and away from our present and painful circumstances in the anticipation of a coming Kingdom.

While the immediate news of the day often captures our attention with all its alarm and horror, we must push past the depressing news of what our world is going through and view in Christian hope what the world will become when the Lord Jesus returns in power and glory to establish a new Heaven and new Earth. The view of His return to Earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords must shape and reinterpret how we see the world and the events of our day.

Therefore, we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal ([2 Cor. 4:16–18](#)).

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was

clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS ([Rev. 19:11–16](#)).

“Father, help me to have an eternal perspective on the events of our day and the trials of this moment. Help me not to be overcome with a nearsighted view of current events. I thank You that when Jesus returns to this earth that there will be joy in every believer’s heart. Help me to live this day with my eyes focused on that day when I shall see my Savior face to face. I thank You that in the meantime, You are with me and have promised to strengthen me for the struggles of this moment. In Jesus’s name I pray, amen.”

Day 6: Keep Calm and Carry On

Surely the success of this simple and straightforward slogan in our day testifies to the fact that people still seek reassurance in a world riddled with a heretofore unseen disease, widespread death, economic collapse, job loss, personal tragedy, technological overload, natural disasters and crime. The average person on the street wants to know how to keep calm and carry on; they want to live without fear, to believe good will triumph over evil, and to hope the best is yet to come. Today, we desperately need to be calmed down.

To help us “Keep Calm and Carry On,” I want to turn our attention to Psalm 46, which was written in a context of impending disaster and national peril. And yet we see the people of Israel remain fearless; they were able to remain calm and carry on, all because the Lord of Hosts was with them and the God of Jacob was their refuge. In the face of great anxiety, they put their trust in God and experienced the hush of Heaven within their hearts. They were able to fortify their shivering souls against wintry fear by taking refuge in God. They calmed down by looking up.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song for Alamoth. God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah

There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth

melted. The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

Come, behold the works of the Lord, Who has made desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah ([Psalm 46:1–11](#)).

“Father, I thank You that You are my refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. I thank You that even though the earth gives way, that You are my fortress in the midst of the storm. I pray that I may experience the blessing of the Psalmist—that I may be still and know that You are God. Help me to know that in the midst of life’s storms, You are ruling and reigning over Your creation. Give me the quiet calm of a sanctified heart. And grant me the strength to face life’s troubles with faith and not with fear. I give You the glory for the great things You have done. I pray this in Jesus’s name, amen.”

Day 7: Peace is Not the Absence of Danger but the Presence of God

In bringing this prayer guide to a close, we are reminded that security is not the absence of danger but the presence of God. God is a help in trouble, not an escape from it. God is in life's most difficult circumstances, supplying the grace we need to overcome. And God tells us to be at peace as we await the Prince of Peace.

The God who is sovereign over life stands by our side within life, giving us a sense of peace in the face of death and danger. Since nothing threatens God, nothing threatens the lives of those who make God their refuge and take cover in the promise of His presence and protections ([Psa. 46:1](#)). The Christian is immortal until God says otherwise.

Confidence is not to be found in the absence of danger but in the presence of God. John Wesley was right: "Best of all, God is with us!"

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus ([Philippians 4:6-7](#)).

"Our Father in Heaven, I bless Your holy name. I boldly approach Your throne in the confidence of Your grace. Thank You for Your constant presence and power. I give my life fully to You and ask that You would glorify Yourself in my life. In Jesus's name, amen."



Philip De Courcy is the senior pastor of Kindred Community Church in Anaheim Hills, California, and is featured on the daily radio program *Know The Truth*. Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, he trusted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior at age sixteen. Civil tension was commonplace, and many of his friends became involved in acts of terrorism, so De Courcy decided to serve as a part-time reserve police officer in the Royal Ulster Constabulary in North Belfast. Although some of his comrades were injured and even killed during that six-year period, he was unharmed, and he is convinced that God used this faith-building season to prepare him for pastoral ministry.

After receiving pastoral training, De Courcy spent six years shepherding the congregation of Carr Baptist Church in a suburb of Belfast. In 1994, he relocated his family to the United States, serving in churches in southern California and central Ohio. Since 2007 he has been the senior pastor at Kindred Community Church. *Know The Truth* was launched in March 2010 on three local radio stations in southern California. De Courcy and his wife, June, have three grown daughters and one son-in-law.

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