

# Introduction



There will be glory after this! Have you ever been so deep in a situation that you couldn't see how God could possibly get any good out of it? Well I'm not ashamed to admit that I had several days like that. There were some days that I didn't sense that God was near. And still there were some days that I wondered if He cared. *"Yet my soul refused to die."* When I couldn't see a way out and my mind and body was ever so weary, the Spirit whispered the words of Psalm 1:1-3 to me:

*Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is **like a tree** planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.*

This psalm is what God placed in my heart during a season of extreme testing and prolonged waiting. This song became one of the many scriptures that I "stood" on and it has become my banner and the premise of this book.

As I've "stood" on God's word and the strength of our relationship, I am ever more convinced about three things with regard to the struggles of life: they serve an eternal purpose, the children of God will survive them all, and in the midst of troubling times, God is always in control.

"You have enough word in you to deal with your situation." My pastor, Carl Solomon said these words one day. They revolutionized the way I was thinking. These few words reminded me that I had enough to make it through. The gift God gave me by grace, through His spirit, would not be quenched. My fire would not go out. My voice, the voice God gave me would not be silenced. God has blessed this book from beginning to end and declared unto me and to you, that whatever you're in, whatever you're going through, "There will be glory, after this." You can make it but in order to make it, you have to be able and willing to stand!

Standing requires patience. It requires enduring like a good soldier. Standing requires faith and works. Standing is denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following the Lord, no matter how you feel, no matter what happens.

My prayer is that through Like A Tree, you are spiritually blessed to keep on waiting, working, worshipping, and witnessing. Your storm will pass but in the meanwhile, you can stand, ***Like A Tree***.

Let's journey together through these words to stand on. Use the ***Personal Reflection*** section after each devotion to allow the word to work on you. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister to your heart and mind. Don't move on too fast. Meditate on each word and I promise you, you won't face the next storm the same way you did your last. Now let's stand!

Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an  
extraordinary destiny.

C.S. Lewis

## **Don't Wave That Flag**



God began doing a good work in you, and I am sure he will continue it until it is finished when Jesus Christ comes again.

Philippians 1:6 NCV

When I talk to suffering Christians, I walk away from the conversation either encouraged or confused. I'm encouraged by Christians who know how to put the word on their problems. I'm encouraged by people who understand that weeping lasts for a night and that joy comes in the morning. But I'm confused when people who say they believe God in one breathe and then in the next they exalt the devil. I'm confused by Christians who are pessimistic and controlled by a spirit of fear.

Suffering happens to the just and the unjust. I've discovered the purpose of our suffering. The enemy isn't satisfied with just taking our stuff or messing with our health or our family. His intent is to beat us down so bad that we give up. He wants us to quit. He wants us to quit believing in God's love and His influence in the earth. He wants us to quit on our assignment, our purpose. He wants us to wave the white flag and say I'm done! That's His goal.

If God has gifted you to encourage, the enemy will burden you with personal situations that are discouraging. If you're gifted to teach and preach, the enemy will burden you with situations that challenge your faith in the One you teach and preach about. Look at where you are frustrated the most. Does this frustration impact other areas of your life? Have you stopped doing something in the kingdom as a result of it? If so, this is where you have to press harder. You can't wave the white flag until all of the good work that God has begun in you has performed.