

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

# activated

Vol 14 • Issue 11

## **FOREST FIRE!**

Facing the heat

## **Mr. Rabbit and I**

Happy to be alive

## **Effective Prayers**

Seven keys



## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION A WALK WITH GOD

"If anyone says that they love Jesus," the catchy song in my daughter's Christian cartoon goes, "they should walk as He walked too. Walk and talk and be just like Him, in everything you do." Many of us are probably used to hearing advice along those lines, and maybe we take that to mean we're supposed to

live by a set of rules and regulations, or we make resolutions that we end up not keeping, and we get discouraged.

To me, though, maybe because walking isn't in itself something I'm particularly fond of and I wouldn't walk with just anyone, "walking with God" implies a lot more than simply obeying Him.

When God walked with Adam in the garden of Eden,<sup>1</sup> He was making it clear from the very beginning that He wants a relationship with us that involves companionship, dialogue, and intimacy. God walked with Adam, and later with Enoch,<sup>2</sup> because they were His friends, and He longs to walk with each of us and for each of us to be His friend as well.

Walking with God isn't a guarantee that things will always be easy. There are times when we feel great joy, passion, and excitement about being God's friend, and other times when we don't feel much at all, or we even feel distant from Him. Feelings change, but God doesn't. He is always close to us, even when we don't feel close to Him.

If we do our best to follow in Jesus' footsteps, regardless of our moods and self-perceived inadequacies, we will discover the blessings that result from becoming more like Him. Then we will be able to say from experience, as King David did, "How good it is to be near God!"<sup>3</sup>

Samuel Keating  
Executive Editor

1. See Genesis 3:8.
2. See Genesis 5:24.
3. Psalm 73:28 NLT

Browse our website or contact one of the distributors below to enjoy the inspirational, motivational, and practical help offered in our books and audiovisual material.

[www.activated.org](http://www.activated.org)

### *Activated Ministries*

P.O. Box 462805  
Escondido, CA 92046-2805, USA  
Toll-free: 1-877-862-3228  
Email: [info@actmin.org](mailto:info@actmin.org)  
[www.activatedonline.com](http://www.activatedonline.com)

### *Activated Europe*

Bramingham Pk. Business Ctr.  
Enterprise Way  
Luton, Beds. LU3 4BU, United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 845 838 1384  
Email: [activatedEurope@activated.org](mailto:activatedEurope@activated.org)

### *Activated Africa*

P.O. Box 2509  
Faerie Glen  
Pretoria 0043  
South Africa  
Tel: 0861 888 918  
Email: [activatedAfrica@activated.org](mailto:activatedAfrica@activated.org)

### *Activated Philippines*

P.O. Box 1147  
Antipolo City P.O.  
1870 Antipolo City, Philippines  
Cell: (0922) 8125326  
Email: [activatedPI@activated.org](mailto:activatedPI@activated.org)

### *Activated Australia*

Email: [info@activated.org.au](mailto:info@activated.org.au)  
[www.activated.org.au](http://www.activated.org.au)

EDITOR Samuel Keating

DESIGN Gentian Suçi

[www.auroraproduction.com](http://www.auroraproduction.com)

© 2013 Aurora Production AG. All Rights Reserved. Printed in Taiwan by Ji Yi Co., Ltd. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. Other Bible quotations are from the following sources: New Living Translation (NLT). Copyright © 1978, 1996 by Tyndale House Publishers. Used by permission. The Message (MSG). Copyright © 1993 by Navpress. Used by permission.

# ONE WHO KNOWS HIM

BY JOYCE SUTTIN



**A FRIEND AND I HAPPENED TO WALK PAST A CINEMA JUST AS SEVERAL MOVIES ENDED AND HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE FLOODED ONTO THE SIDEWALK.** One man stood out in the crowd—literally—and he was walking straight toward us. He must have been seven feet tall and had the athletic build of a basketball player. As I turned to tell Abi what I was thinking, she ran up to him.

“Francisco, let me shake your hand!” she said excitedly. “No, let me hug you! You are doing such a good job! I think your team will win the championship!”

Abi’s enthusiastic reaction also stood out in the crowd. She was animated and excited. Everyone else seemed to ignore him. Some noticed but didn’t respond. Some may even have recognized him.

Many, however, paid no attention to the seven-foot man in their midst. They were lost in their own worlds. Out of hundreds, only Abi ran to him, greeted him by name, knew his accomplishments, and praised him for the good basketball season that he and the San Antonio Spurs were having. Being the avid sports fan she is, Abi laughed and talked about it all the way home. That moment had made her day, and she couldn’t wait to tell her husband and children. She also seemed to have made Francisco’s day.

Reflecting on that experience the next morning, I was struck by a surprising thought. How many of us recognize Jesus as the hero He is? Do we recognize Him in others or His handiwork in the world around us? Do we excitedly run to Him, proclaim His goodness, and tell

others whenever we catch a glimpse of Him?

Those of us who know Jesus can see Him walking among us. We are thrilled by His presence and are changed. He may not appear as a seven-foot-tall basketball player. He may appear as a baby whose smile turns your day around. He may appear as a friend who knows the perfect word to say. He may appear as a doctor who deftly mends your broken body. He may come to you as a friendly stranger who tells you that Jesus loves you and wants to come into your heart.

Those of us who know Him love Him. We can’t contain our excitement whenever we see Him, and we want others to know Him too.

JOYCE SUTTIN IS A TEACHER AND WRITER, AND LIVES IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, USA. ■

# FOREST FIRE!

BY EDMUND FAROE



**OVER THE PAST DECADES,** violent forest fires have swept the wooded areas of North America, wiping out huge tracts of woodland and often destroying entire neighborhoods. It has not always been like this. Although some fire has always been a part of the local ecology, these problematic massive fires are a fairly recent development.

In the not-so-distant past, fires rolled sporadically through the forest, not only leaving a smoky trail of devastation, but also bringing

1. Matthew 5:45
2. John 16:33. See also 1 Peter 4:12–13.
3. 2 Corinthians 1:4 MSG

life. Fire transforms the ground layers of dead vegetation into rich soil—a process which otherwise takes decades. Rotting trees tumble under the roar of the fire, making room in the canopy for healthy new growth. Pine cones release their seeds when in contact with the heat, giving birth to new trees. So beneficial was this process that Native American tribes were known to regularly set fire to the forest to preserve its robustness.

Things began to change in the early 1900s. Well-meaning conservationists declared fire the forest's number one enemy. What they didn't realize at the time was that in trying to prevent destruction, they were

setting the stage for greater, deadlier fires.

While the natural fires had burned mildly and superficially, leaving the trees charred but alive, the new fires were another story. Fueled by years of accumulated tinder, they would climb the heights of full-grown trees, ending their lives in minutes with a final deafening clap. The accumulated heat would create its own weather systems—literal firestorms, where barreling masses of searing air would ignite the forest grounds in seconds, outrunning even a sprinting human.

Gradually, foresters began to understand the extent of the



## GOD WITH US

My barn having burned to the ground, I can now see the moon.

—*Mizuta Masahide (1657–1723)*

It is not a question of God allowing or not allowing things to happen. It is part of living. Our Father knows about every bird which falls to the ground, but He does not always prevent it from falling. What are we to learn from this? That our response to what happens is more important than what happens. Here is a mystery: one man's experience drives him to curse God, while another man's identical experience drives him to bless God. Your response to what happens is more important than what happens.—*Chip Brogden*

The most beautiful people are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.

—*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926–2004)*

As cold as everything looks in winter, the sun has not forsaken us. He has only drawn away for a little, for good reasons, one of which is that we may learn that we cannot do without him.—*George MacDonald (1824–1905)* ■

disservice they were doing to nature, and now, nearly a century later, the pro-fire approach is gaining support once more.

We often try to remove all suffering from life, without realizing we are causing a greater ill. It's easy to forget that times of difficulty and trials are an integral part of life and can have positive effects, and we seem to easily lapse into thinking that they are a sign that there is something wrong with us, that our life is somehow jinxed, or that God has turned away from us.

Christ dismissed this reasoning by stating that good and evil are both liberally distributed in the world, with

no distinction as to the religious or moral inclinations of the individual. “[God] makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”<sup>1</sup> God is not some kind of Santa who only brings presents for the good children.

“In the world you will have tribulation,” Jesus told us.<sup>2</sup> In other words, troubles are more of a guarantee than a stroke of bad luck. Actually, the process of tribulation can help us reevaluate our lives, shed outdated mindsets, and discover our priorities.

Hardship is bitter enough on its own, without adding guilt to the package. We could grow so much

more if we would embrace our trials as learning experiences, moments of profound significance that equip us to help others. God “comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.”<sup>3</sup>

EDMUND FAROE WORKS IN TRAINING AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA. SOMETIMES HE ALSO SCRIBBLES DOWN POETRY, STORIES, AND RANDOM THEOLOGICAL MUSINGS WHICH HE POSTS ON WWW.BOTTLESOFGLASS.BLOGSPOT.COM. ■

# Mr. Rabbit and Me

BY DINA ELLENS

**IT ALL STARTED WHEN WE GAVE IN TO THE CHILDREN'S PLEAS AND BOUGHT A CUTE LITTLE RABBIT.** At first, the little fellow was too small to be left alone in the garden while the children were at school, but neither could he remain in his hutch all day without any exercise.

So the task fell on me to take the rabbit out in the garden daily. It soon got to be our little ritual. Whenever I'd unlock the screen door in the morning, there'd be a "Thump!" from his hutch, as if he was saying, "I've been waiting for you!" As soon as I set bunny on the ground, he would do a few little happy jumps, showing how glad he was just to be alive.

Seeing how easy it was for him to be happy helped me relax and enjoy my time outside as well. Pausing to

take in the calm morning sky and breathe deeply of the fresh air, I could feel my tensions easing and my heart lifting.

I found I could leave all my work, worries, and stresses behind me in the house. In the garden, I was enjoying the timeless peace of God's creation, and those mundane problems seemed small and petty. Every morning, the trees and bushes presented themselves anew, adorned with the sparkle of the morning dew. I felt drawn to partake of their freshness and be renewed as well.

I began bringing my Bible with me to read while bunny nibbled on grass and flowers. Reading a Psalm each day, I realized that King David was a lot like me. He too faced obstacles and difficulties, got depressed, and would worry. Each time, though, he overcame through

praising God and meditating on His goodness.

Here I thought I was doing our little rabbit a favor by taking him out in the garden every morning. In reality, I too was being called out to green pastures and beside quiet waters, so that God could refresh my soul.<sup>1</sup>

Bunny has now grown enough to be let into the garden on his own. However, I've found that I can't go without my time in the garden with God. I've learned how to do "happy jumps"—just like bunny—and be thankful, simply for being alive and part of God's creation.

DINA ELLENS TAUGHT SCHOOL IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR OVER 25 YEARS. ALTHOUGH RETIRED, SHE REMAINS ACTIVE IN VOLUNTEER WORK AS WELL AS PURSUING HER INTEREST IN WRITING. ■

# The GOD Factor

BY PETER AMSTERDAM

**GOD IS IN THE HEAVENLY REALM**, but He works in the real world. He deals not just in spiritual blessings and rewards, but in tangible, black-and-white, dollars-and-cents material blessings and rewards as well. He's the God of heaven, and also the God of this present world. He transcends both, rules in both, lives in both, dominates both, creates in both, and has the power to pay us in both currencies.

We need to learn to trust Him for the material things that we need—not just our spiritual needs like happiness, purpose, and peace of mind. He's just as powerful, just

as capable, and just as willing to give us the tangible, practical blessings we need. We need to not limit God in our minds, but to realize that His influence is all-encompassing and that He is capable of performing miracles in both the spiritual and physical realms. He can and will bestow on us both spiritual and material blessings.

God has given us some amazing promises in His Word. These promises are for real. They have been given to us by our truthful God who never lies. He doesn't exaggerate. He doesn't pump up His promises to lift Himself up or to make us feel good. He gives us His promises because He wants us to believe and claim them as our own, so He can give us all of the great things He has in store for us.

They're not fake promises, but each one is conditional. "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He

shall give you the desires of your heart."<sup>1</sup> "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."<sup>2</sup> "Give and it will be given to you."<sup>3</sup> "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."<sup>4</sup> They're each dependent on us fulfilling our part of the bargain, which nearly always comes down to keeping His two great commandments: love God, and love our neighbors as we do ourselves.<sup>5</sup> But if we do our part, they are guaranteed to come to pass—not necessarily in the way we want or think they will, but in God's time and way. Like a wise and loving parent, He always knows what's best for us and is happy to give it to us.

PETER AMSTERDAM AND HIS WIFE, MARIA FONTAINE, ARE DIRECTORS OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL, A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF FAITH. ■

1. Psalm 37:4
2. Matthew 6:33
3. Luke 6:38
4. Psalm 84:11
5. See Matthew 22:37–39.





# STAR DUST

BY MIKE INGER HELMKE

IT'S BEEN OVER A DECADE SINCE THIS EVENT WAS REPORTED,<sup>1</sup> yet the story of a commercial airplane that mysteriously disappeared while on a routine flight still fascinates me.

It was 1947. A British passenger airliner called *Star Dust* had taken off from Buenos Aires, Argentina, bound for the Chilean capital, Santiago, a trip that should have taken less than four hours. The route was across the Andes Mountains, the captain and his first and second officers were experienced pilots with Royal Air Force combat experience during World War II, and the aircraft model—an Avro Lancastrian—was perfectly suited for the task.

Reliable men, excellent machines. *Star Dust* radioed its position at 5 PM while near Mendoza. The ground was still visible, but the mountains were shrouded by clouds. So far, everything seemed to be going according to plan. At 5.41 PM, the pilot contacted air traffic control in Santiago, confirming the flight would arrive in just four minutes.

Then ... silence. The plane simply disappeared. For years, no wreckage was found, and there was no indication—no clue at all—of what had happened to *Star Dust*, the five crew members, or the six passengers.

The incident had remained a mystery for over 50 years. Then on a glacier high on Mount Tupungato, one of the highest mountains in South America, the wreckage was finally found. The plane had not

been outside Santiago, as the pilot believed, but 50 miles away, still on the wrong side of the mountains.

What went wrong? Investigators now believe they know the answers.

*Star Dust* had told air traffic control that it intended to climb to 24,000 ft (about 7,300 m) in order to avoid the bad weather. This seemed a safe and sensible decision. Little did they know that they were about to encounter an invisible meteorological phenomenon. The jet stream is a powerful, high-altitude wind that blows at speeds in excess of 160 km an hour from west to east around the earth. However, it only develops above the normal weather systems, and in 1947, very few planes flew high enough to encounter the jet stream, so the phenomenon was still largely unknown.

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/horizon/2000/vanished.shtml>

2. John 8:12



Dear Jesus, I want each day that comes

To share some part with You,  
Where I can sit, receive Your peace,  
And hear You speak to me.

A place where I can turn aside  
And leave the cares of life,  
Where I can get the strength I need  
To banish storm and strife.

A quiet, serene, and trusting place  
Where You alone can give  
The very blessing that I need—  
Here would I rest and live.

—Author unknown

The BBC reports that as *Star Dust* climbed and began to enter the jet stream, it slowed down dramatically, but the crew had no knowledge of this.

The jet stream's effect was devastating. Confident the Andes were well behind them, the pilot, Reginald Cook, began the descent, sure that when Stardust [*sic*] emerged from the clouds it would be above Santiago Airport. In fact, they were descending straight towards Mount Tupangato [*sic*] which was still invisible in the clouds ahead. Disaster was seconds away. Hopelessly off course because of the jet stream, Stardust flew straight into the cloud-covered glacier.

It's believed that the plane crashed into a vertical wall of ice, causing an

avalanche that immediately covered it in snow. And so it vanished from sight. Over the decades, the wreckage traveled downhill through the glacier toward the lower rock-covered section. And there, where the glacier melts, *Star Dust* finally became visible once again.

Examination of the wreckage indicated that the plane was in perfect working order. It was apparently flying normally right up to that final moment when it crashed head-on into the glacier.

There is no blame attached to the *Star Dust* crew. No matter how professional, competent, and experienced they were, they had no way of knowing that the jet stream was slowing them down, messing up all their navigational calculations.

Despite our best efforts to navigate life, to do what is right, to faithfully

discharge our responsibilities, we can never be fully aware of or avoid the invisible jet streams and pitfalls of life. In many respects, we are actually walking in the dark. We don't have the ability or the navigational skills to foresee the future and to avoid the perils.

So while we keep forging ahead using all the knowledge and devices that are available to us, it's important that we keep a strong connection with the all-knowing God, who is an unfailing navigational system for our lives. We don't have to walk in darkness, for Jesus assures us, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."<sup>2</sup>

MIKE INGER HELMKE LIVES IN BRAZIL, WHERE HE WORKS AS A TEACHER AND LECTURER. ■

# effective prayers

BY ALEX PETERSON

DO YOU SOMETIMES FORGET TO PRAY, or not know where to start or how to go about it when you do remember? It takes a while for prayer to become a habit, but it's one that's worth cultivating because it can solve so many problems, sometimes before they even happen. If your prayer times need a jump-start, these tips should help.

## KEEP A PRAYER LIST.

Write down a list of people or situations that need prayer and carry it with you or post it somewhere you'll be sure to see it at a good time. Then, as each prayer is answered, give thanks and mark that item off your list. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."<sup>1</sup>

## ESTABLISH REGULAR PRAYER TIMES.

Regularity is a key to forming any good habit. The more often you pray, the easier it will be to form a habit of praying about decisions and committing your activities to God.<sup>2</sup>

## HAVE PRAYER PROMISES HANDY.

God has made hundreds of promises to us in His Word, and He likes for us to hold Him to them—"ask and it will be given you,"<sup>3</sup> for example. As you read and study the Bible, mark promises that stand out to you and compile them into a list that you can refer to and claim when you are praying.

## FIND A PLACE CONDUCIVE TO PRAYER.

When possible, find a quiet, distraction-free spot. God looks at the position of your heart, not the position of your body, so get comfortable enough to focus—but not so comfortable you fall asleep.

## BEGIN YOUR PRAYERS BY PRAISING AND THANKING GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving."<sup>4</sup> In the words of Charles Spurgeon, "The presence of thanksgiving in the heart together with prayer produces peace."<sup>5</sup>

## TAILOR YOUR PRAYERS TO THE SITUATION.

Some situations call for longer, more fervent, or more frequent prayer than others. It's always important to be specific and definite. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."<sup>6</sup>

## JOIN FORCES.

Pray with others when possible, or ask others to pray separately for the need at hand. It can be humbling to pray with others if you're not accustomed to doing so, but you'll soon find that it's as inspiring and faith-building as it is effective.<sup>7</sup> ■

1. 1 John 5:14

4. Psalm 95:2

7. See Matthew 18:19.

2. See Proverbs 3:6.

5. See Phillipians 4:6-7.

3. Matthew 7:7

6. James 5:16

# the BRIDGE

By JANET BARNES



I'D JUST ARRIVED IN THE PORT CITY OF TAMPICO, Mexico, and I was being shown around the townhouse our volunteer work would be based out of. It is located fairly close to the busy downtown, but also not too far from the poorer outlying areas where we conduct most of our projects. *What a nice setting*, I thought to myself, looking at the beautiful lagoon where folks gather to mingle in the cooling twilight, and also just a short drive from a clean uncrowded beach.

As we climbed the last flight of stairs, I discovered the best was yet to come. A door led onto the balcony, where we were greeted by a panorama of palm trees, rooftops, and, in the distance, a magnificent bridge spanning the bay. The combination of the brightly lit spans

of the bridge, the rooftops, and the cool night breeze was breathtaking.

It's been awhile since I settled in to my new location, but I usually try to take a few minutes each day to go up to our rooftop balcony and take in the magnificent view. Of all that I survey, that beautiful bridge is somehow the most inspiring and comforting. It connects two worlds, making all sorts of things possible that wouldn't be otherwise.

One morning when I looked out of the window of one of the rooms adjoining the balcony, the bridge had vanished! The coastal weather can be changeable, and although it's usually sunny and clear, at times there are storms, unexpected cloudiness and rain, and some very windy conditions—occasionally even a hurricane. *Maybe a fog rolled in and is obscuring the view*, I thought. But I soon

realized that it was my position that was off. I moved over a bit and was able to view the inspiring scene once again.

Then I was struck by a new thought—that bridge is a lot like our relationship with God. It's always there to both inspire and comfort. By it, we have access to another realm, and by it, we are able to receive the help and guidance that we need. Sometimes it can seem as though the “view” is gone or that the help we've learned to rely on has somehow failed, just this once. But actually, we just need to change the position of our heart. Then that sweet inspiration and comfort and peace comes back into “view” once again, and our faith is restored.

JANET BARNES HAS BEEN A VOLUNTEER EDUCATOR AND MISSION WORKER FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS. ■



# SAND BETWEEN MY TOES

BY SHUPING SICHROVSKY LI

**THE SMALL CARD FELL OUT OF A PILE OF PAPERS.** It was an old photograph, nothing special, a tiny fishing boat crossing a calm ocean underneath a blue sky. I don't know how it got there, but I smiled as it triggered memories of my younger years playing by the seaside, feeling the sand between my toes, collecting shells with my neighborhood friends, and seeing who could throw stones the farthest out into the waves.

I grew up in a small fishing village in southern Taiwan. The narrow lanes and simple houses were crammed into a small sliver of land that jutted out into the sea as a peninsula, with the harbor on one side and the deep, wide ocean on the other. During my teen years, I lived

in a tiny upstairs room. From its single, wood-framed window, I could see the harbor light at night, and the boats returning with their catch the next morning.

My family was poor, and we lived a very simple life, but I didn't realize how rich I was in the things that really mattered until many years later when I was working as a volunteer in Japan. It took a drive of several hours from the crowded and busy city where I lived at that time to be able to smell the salty air of the sea.

One day, our team visited an orphanage, and I got to talking with an 18-year-old resident. Out of the blue, she asked me if I had ever been to the beach. She told me that she had never been there and that it had

always been her heart's desire to have a chance to play by the ocean, to feel the sand and the small waves lapping against her feet. I had to excuse myself and ask for the restroom, as I didn't want to cry in front of her.

There have been times when I prayed and wished for this or for that, thinking it would make my life's journey easier and happier. But the answer to my prayers and wishes has often come in the realization of how blessed I am and how much I have to be thankful for.

SHUPING SICHROVSKY LI IS THE MOTHER OF NINE CHILDREN AND WORKS AS A MISSIONARY AND CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR IN TAIWAN. ■



# WALKING WITH GOD

## QUIET MOMENTS

BY ABI MAY

**PERHAPS YOU PREFER TO WALK IN THE EARLY MORNING**, like Jesus who rose a “great while before day and went into a solitary place to pray.”<sup>1</sup> Or maybe you enjoy walking peacefully in the evening.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps your walks are purposeful, part of your journey to work, school, or shopping. Wherever or whenever you walk, you’re following in a great tradition:

1. Mark 1:35
2. See Genesis 3:8.
3. See Genesis 17:1, Hebrews 11:8.
4. See the book of Exodus.
5. See Joshua 18:8.
6. See John 5:2–9.
7. See 1 John 2:6, Deuteronomy 13:4.
8. See Psalm 16:6.

Abraham took a walk at God’s command.<sup>3</sup> Moses led the children of Israel on a long trek to the Promised Land.<sup>4</sup> Joshua’s spies were sent to walk through the land.<sup>5</sup> The followers of Jesus walked with Him through Galilee and beyond. The paralyzed man lying by the pool at the sheep market took up his bed and walked after Jesus healed him.<sup>6</sup> Paul walked for God, spreading the Good News throughout Asia.

Of course, not every scripture about “walking” refers literally to taking step after step, but many are references to a way of living. That’s why reminders to “walk like He walked” mean so much more than a mode of getting around.<sup>7</sup> So how is our life’s walk progressing?

## LOOK BACK AND REMEMBER.

I have been with you wherever you have gone.—*2 Samuel 7:9*

As we have traveled along the road of life, there have been pleasant places<sup>8</sup> and some less enjoyable routes. It has not always been an easy path, but one thing is sure: whether His footsteps beside us were visible or not, God was with us.

I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. I ... will hold your right hand, saying to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”  
—*Leviticus 26:12, Isaiah 41:13*

Thank You, Lord, for Your presence on my journey.

#### THE LORD SHOWS THE WAY.

The shepherd of the sheep ... when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

—*John 10:2,4*

God will continue to be with us, just as He has always been. He is the Good Shepherd who knows the way.

Always long and pray that the will of God may be fully realised in your life. You will find that the man who does this walks in the land of peace and quietness.—*Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471)*

When I am with God  
My fear is gone  
In the great quiet of God.  
My troubles are as pebbles on the  
road,  
My joys are like the everlasting hills.  
—*Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918)*

Help me, Lord, to follow You.

#### GOING FORWARD MEANS PUTTING ONE FOOT AFTER THE OTHER.

You do not know what will happen tomorrow.—*James 4:14*

We look back and remember where we've been; we look around and see where we are now; but the place we can't see—the direction we can't fathom—is the future. Yet as an old saying tells us, "We don't know what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future." Our not knowing the future seems to be part of His plan.

God doesn't always remove obstacles out of our way before we reach them. Yet when we are on the edge of our need, God's hand is stretched out. Many people forget this and are forever worrying about difficulties that they foresee in the future. They expect that God is going to make the way plain and open before them miles and miles ahead, whereas he has promised to do it only step by step as they may need. You must get to the floodwaters before you can claim the promise.—*Author unknown*

When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you; and through the  
rivers, they shall not overflow you.  
—*Isaiah 43:2*

Lord, help me to trust You for what I cannot see.

#### WALK WITH GOD.

We will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.

—*Micah 4:5*

O Christ, the keeper of us all,

Let Thy right hand guard and protect me day and night, when I rest at home, when I walk in my work abroad, when I lie down and when I rise up, that I may not anywhere fail.

I commit my whole being unto Thee; take charge of me; provide for all my real needs, from this moment forth and always.

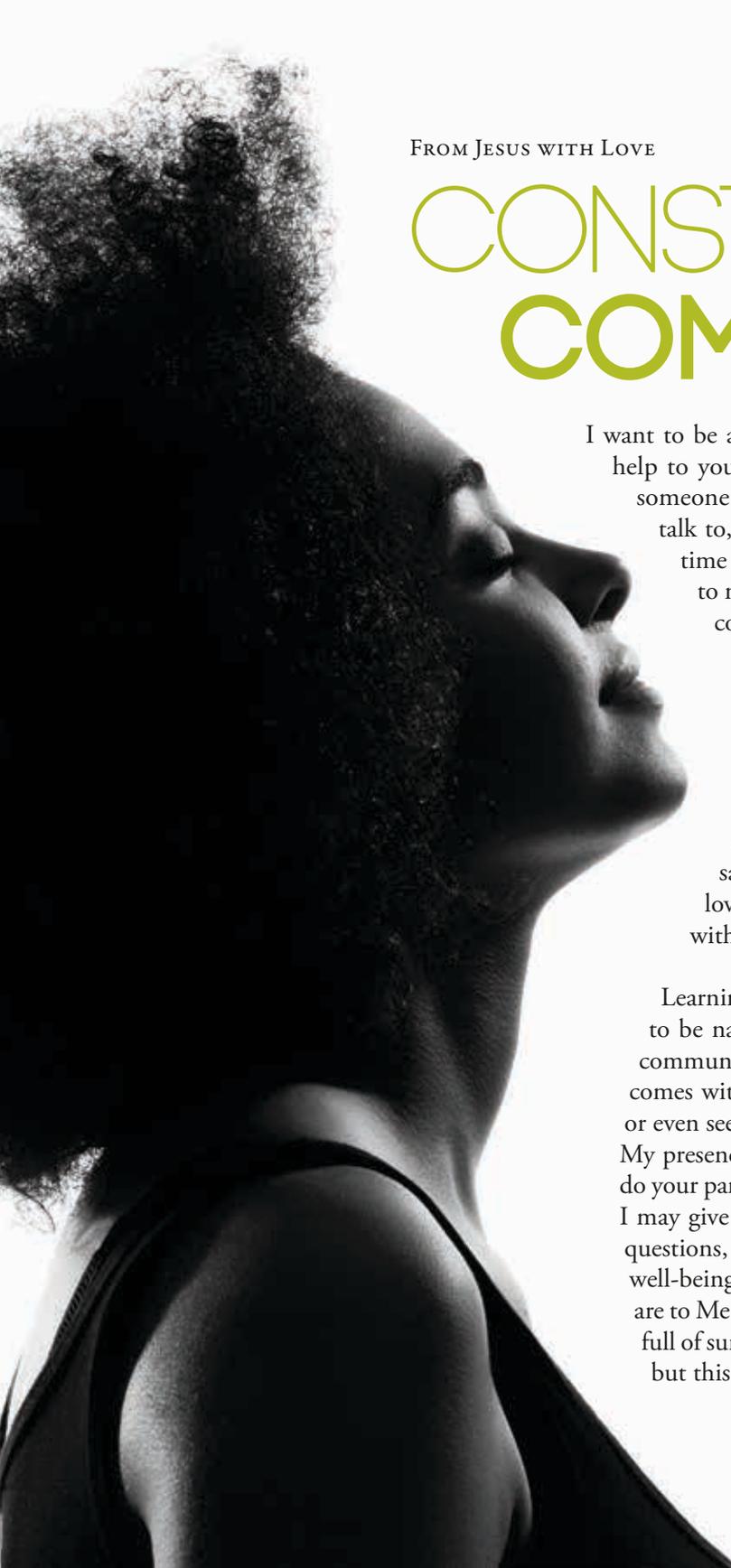
—*Saint Nerses (4<sup>th</sup> century)*

Walk in the light! Thy path shall be  
A path, though thorny, bright;  
For God, by grace, shall dwell in thee,  
And God Himself is light.

—*Bernard Barton (1784–1849)*

Lord, help me to walk with You all  
the days of my life.

ABI MAY IS A FREELANCE WRITER  
AND EDUCATOR IN GREAT BRITAIN,  
AND ALSO ACTIVE AS A VOLUNTEER  
IN HEALTHCARE ADVOCACY. ■



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

# CONSTANT COMPANION

I want to be a very present companion, counselor, and help to you—not merely someone you know of, or someone you met once but rarely think about or talk to, or even an advisor that you consult from time to time when you have a problem or need to make an important decision. I want to be a constant, loving presence.

I want to communicate with you personally and directly, and not in a distant, formal, or mental sort of way, but heart to heart. I want us to commune as intimates would, to talk things over, to reach decisions together, and to sometimes communicate without saying a word. I want to develop a bond of love between us that you've never experienced with anyone else and can't even imagine.

Learning to converse freely with Me, like learning to be natural, open, honest, and trusting in your communications with any friend, is something that comes with time and practice. It may feel awkward or even seem like work at first, learning to come into My presence and recognize My voice, but if you will do your part by making that effort, I will speak to you. I may give you ideas or solutions or answers to your questions, or I may give you a feeling of peace and well-being, or I may simply tell you how special you are to Me and how much I enjoy being with you. I'm full of surprises, so you'll never know what to expect, but this I promise: I will never disappoint you!