

UP THE MOUNTAIN!

How many times have you been down in the valley, seeing nothing but insurmountable mountains surrounding you? You scan the bottom of the mountain trying to find a way of escape; seek a path of any kind that would help you start the journey upward. Nothing! Your mind is swirling with negative thoughts, your heartbeat pounding in your ears, as frantic thoughts threaten to overtake you. Panic builds. You've never felt so alone. You cry out in desperation. "Help me! I'm stuck! I see no way of escape! How am I to climb this mountain without even a starting point? Please Lord, don't forget me. Don't leave me to face these mountains alone." Can you relate as you read this? I believe most of us can.

Yet in the inner man we know that God is with us. Perhaps our faith is once again being tested; yet we remember that Romans 8:28 tells us, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." And Father, we know that Your hand is working in the troubled areas of our lives. Darkness abounds and can cast long shadows over our perspectives and blot out our goals, our dreams, our passions. Still, we will trust in You.

We ask You, Father, to increase our faith and belief for each day, allowing us to grow in the warmth of Your light. Let faith blow away the clouds of darkness. Let the Holy Spirit hold us steadfast as You reveal the way we must go and lift our hearts. Therefore, encouraged in Your love, we contend with the valleys; knowing they are only for a season and the path to the mountain top we will find together.

YOUR TRUTH—"he rescues you from hidden traps, shields you from deadly hazards. His huge outstretched arms protect you—under them you're perfectly safe; his arms fend off all harm. Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night, not flying arrows in the day, not disease that prowls through the darkness, not disaster that erupts at high noon." **Psalm 91:3-6 The Message**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: And don't be wishing you were someplace else or with someone else. Where you are right now is God's place for you. Live and obey and love and believe right there. **1 Corinthians 7:17 The Message**

Believing in a loving God and using the talents He gives every individual enables us to climb beyond even the most intimidating "mountains"—those obstacles that challenge our goals. **Mark 9:23** *—If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.* Our desires must be in accord with God's will.

The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones. `Chinese Proverb