



Marriage Growth-Track

Week 10 - Day 1

Seeking Refuge

by Wes and Kim Holloway

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

Psalms 46:1-3

Isn't it a good thing that we don't know what the future holds? Whether you're talking about tomorrow, next week, or five years from now, we're sure to come face-to-face with trouble along our life's journey, but don't you agree that we're better off not knowing what's coming? For some of us, it seems like we put out one fire only to be faced with another...then another...then another. Others of us can go for lengthy periods of time without facing serious challenges, but boy, when trouble hits, it hits HARD!

Maybe you've heard the saying, "You'll never get out of this life alive." It's all too true. But what's also true is that God holds every aspect of our lives in the palm of his hand. This is what we see in these verses:

- We will have troubles;
- Even though we will face challenges, God is always present to provides us comfort, courage, and strength;
- When we rely on God, we have no reason to be fearful about life's difficulties;
- God will see us through the storms of life

Every time a substantial thunderstorm, tornado, hurricane, or snow storms forms and approaches a city, the first thing weather forecasters tell us to do is, "Take cover. Seek refuge." That's because they know something stronger than us is headed our way. Sometimes the storm passes through and the warning was unnecessary as the storm breaks up before reaching us. Other times, the storm sirens and media blasts are literal lifesavers—warning everyone in the storm's path to seek the most secure shelter available to them. Those who follow the warnings are usually the ones spared and live to tell about it. Sadly, those who try to rely on their own strength and their own provisions oftentimes don't survive because the storm—the difficulty—ends up being just too much for them to endure.

It's just like that with the storms of life that come at us every day when we face storms that attack our marriage, our children, our homes, our friendships, and our careers. And when we face these storms, we all take refuge in something, whether we're intentional about it or not. Some of us seek the counsel of friends; some of us power through on our own strength; and some of us look for answers in the latest self-help book or an online forum. And while all of these options are strong possibilities, they all work best when we bring God into the equation and seek his ways, his comfort, his encouragement, and his promises first.

Instead of *after* we've tried things our way.

The good news is that turning to God, seeking his ways, and craving his comfort is an all-together easy thing to do...once you give up the crazy notion that you can handle everything that comes your way. All it really involves is taking a simple step of faith whereby you relinquish control of your problems and ask for The Lord's intervention. That's it. No long and rambling prayer; no outlandish sacrifice; no sackcloth and ashes; just a heartfelt cry to The Lord of all asking for his intervention in whatever trial you find yourself facing.

He's on-call 24/7. All day, every day. Don't be a wounded hero, risking life and limb for the sake of ego or negligence. Cry out for help and count on Christ to see you through the storm.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where do you turn when trouble comes your way?
2. Do difficulties throw you in turmoil, or do you take them in stride?

Action Steps:

This week take some time to discuss with each other how you expect the different stages of marriage- for example, childbirth, parenting, the empty nest, physical separations, financial setbacks, retirement, illness, and aging- are likely to impact your relationship. Make a plan on how you will cope with them.

Prayer:

God, we ask you to be with us and our families as we experience the storms of life. We commit these storms to you and ask you to help as we go through these difficult times. Please protect us from the strongest of storms and turn to you as our refuge. As we go through the storms and difficulties of life, help us to grow closer to you by depending upon you more and more.