…stoically, living mechanically. Other people put their hope in problem solving, medical treatments, the stock market, the lottery, and so on. But I challenge you to place your hope fully in *Me*.

The worst-case scenario in your life – that I might stop loving you – is not even in the realm of possibility.

Since the worst thing imaginable is not possible, you can relax and live *more abundantly*.

Even though you live in a world where trouble is inescapable, you can *be of good cheer* because *I have overcome the world*!

Create a collection of brief prayers, such as “Help me, Jesus. Fill me with your peace. Show me your way.” These requests are spiritual nutrients – soul vitamins. The more you use them, the healthier and happier you will be.

Keeping your focus on my presence is the best protection against self-pity and depression.

If the world were perfect, you would never experience the pleasure of receiving comfort from me. Instead of letting problems discourage you, use them as reminders to seek me – my presence, my peace, my love.

Whenever you start to feel insecure – about anything – come to Me. Talk with Me about your fears and concerns; then affirm your trust in Me. Voicing your trust connects you with Me at a deeper level.

Confess your sins to Me. Do not be afraid to face yourself honestly – in My presence.

“I trust you, Jesus. You are my Hope.” (short prayer)

“Jesus, keep me aware of you.” (simple prayer)

Grief is a season, and I use it for your good.

Unlike the four seasons of the year, the seasons of your life are not orderly or predictable.

Beware of feeling entitled to My good gifts. Receive blessings from Me thankfully, yet be willing to release them back to Me – without growing resentful.

I have called you to a life of Peace and thankfulness. The more grateful you are, the better able you are to receive My Peace. Conversely, the more peaceful you are, the easier it is to be grateful. Your calmness helps you to think clearly.

Distractions, deception, and discouragement…

“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” – John 8: 32 (Honest confession will set your mind free.)

Fill your mind with thankful thoughts till your heart overflows with joy. Take time to praise Me for all that I am – the One from whom all blessings flow.

Be constant in prayer – at all times, but especially when you are struggling. During trials, you need close communication with Me more than ever.

Your prayers need not be pretty or proper. Just let them flow out of your current situation.

Ask Me also to increase your awareness of My presence with you.

Finally, sing praises to Me. This will lift your spirits like nothing else.

If you are not careful, you will succumb to self-pity, a sinful snare.

Make Me your default focus.

Short prayer: “Jesus, draw close to me.” This can help you return your focus to Me.

To live peacefully, you need to forgive people quickly – including yourself.

I want my children to be brave – not cowardly.

When you are going through very tough times and there is no relief in sight, you usually start looking for a way out. These escapist longings stem from self-pity and a sense of entitlement: You think you deserve better conditions than your current situation.

I will strengthen your heart.

Say “Jesus, I choose to enjoy You – hear and now.”

Do not be weighed down by yesterday’s failures and disappointments. Begin this day anew focusing on today!

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Pretension

Admonishes

Presumptuous

Constancy

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Depression, fear, and self-pity vanish when you engage in heartfelt worship.

Because scripture is alive, active, and full of power, it can touch hearts deeply and transform lives thoroughly.

The more scripture you have in your mind and heart, the more readily I can mold you.

Whisper, “I trust you Jesus,” while you relax – body, mind, and soul – in My protective presence.

You love Me because I first loved you.

Whether or not they realize it, all people lean on – depend on – something: physical strength, intelligence, beauty, wealth, achievements, family, friends, and so on. All these gifts are from Me, to be enjoyed gratefully. However, relying on any of these things is risky, because every one of them can let you down.

Ask me to open your eyes so you can find Me in the moment.

Don’t try to pretend that you have it all together or that you’re stronger than you really are.

When you are feeling confused, it may be helpful to write out your prayers, asking Me to show you the way forward. Then wait in My presence, giving Me time to guide your mind while you focus on Me and My Word. You can whisper, “Jesus,” to help you stayed focused. My name is a strong tower; those who run to it are safe.

I don’t waste anything in your life, including your suffering. I use it to teach you important lessons here and now.

Worry is largely a matter of thinking about things at the wrong time. To avoid wasting mental and emotional energy, timing is very important. If you think about certain things at the wrong time – for example, when you’re lying in bed – it’s all too easy to start worrying about them. You can interrupt anxious thoughts and change the subject. Tell yourself, “Not now!” and direct your mind elsewhere.

People who trust mainly in themselves and their own abilities often crowd Me out of their lives.

When a man and a woman are deeply in love, they often bring out the best in each other. Just being near the beloved can soothe irritations and increase happiness.

Waiting in itself is not a virtue. The important things is *how* you wait: in a resigned, impatient way or *in hope.*

You are exceedingly blessed because the kingdom of heaven is yours. When the strain of living in this fallen world is getting you down, resist the temptation to feel sorry for yourself. Instead, say to yourself, “I am blessed and thankful – and on my way to *Glory*!”

Someday you will be with Me in heaven.

I designed you to need me continually.

I call you to lead the life that I have assigned to you, and to be content. Beware of comparing your situation with that of someone else – and feeling dissatisfied because of the comparison.

If I have called you to a situation, I will give you everything you need to endure it – and even to find Joy in the midst of it.

I will give you everything you need to cope with the challenges you face. Don’t waste energy projecting yourself into the future.

Pray continually as you make decisions about this journey.

And waste no time returning to Me by praising Me in thought, word, or song. Even whispering My Name – reverently, lovingly – can be worship.

As you come into My Presence, let go of your worries and cares so you can cling to Me in childlike trust.

Obsessive thinking

You can choose the subject of your thoughts.

Do not be defeated by wrong choices you have made in the past. And don’t let past decisions define who you are in the present. Each moment provides a fresh opportunity to draw near Me and enjoy My Presence. One way to do this is to pray, “Jesus, I choose to seek You in the midst of my problems.” Refuse to get discouraged, even if you have to say this hundreds of times daily.

My ways are very mysterious at times, even to those who know Me intimately.

You must leave room for mystery in your worldview – accepting the limitation of your understanding and knowledge.

When adversity strikes you or your loved ones, remember the words of Job: “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Though Job faltered at times during his excruciating ordeal, at the end of it he confessed, “Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.”

Short prayer: “I trust You, Jesus; my hope is in You.”

To become aware of My loving presence, you need to relax and stop trying to control things. Give up your futile efforts to think your way through problems. Cease striving and simply enjoy being in My presence.

Resigned

Do not look to your hope, but to Christ, the source of your hope.

Lay down your problems long enough to gaze at Me. Picture yourself standing at the edge of an ocean, on a beach covered with pebbles. The pebbles represent problems – yours, your family’s, your friends’, the world’s. As you pick up these small stones and hold them close to your eyes – examining their details – they obscure your view of the grandeur all around you. Usually, as soon as you put down one pebble-problem, you pick up another. Thus, you fail to enjoy the beauty of My presence and to receive My help. The ocean represents Me – endlessly glorious and continually present with you. I am calling you to put down all the pebbles for a time so that you can experience My presence and receive My unfailing love. Draw near Me by praying, “I choose you, Jesus. I choose to see You – to find You – in this moment.”

I am present not only in pleasant things but also in unwanted circumstances.

Short prayer: “I seek You, Jesus.”

Receptive

Make Me your primary focus. Many, many things vie for your attention, but do not let them crowd Me out.

Fervently

Nothing will lift you out of the doldrums faster than thanking and praising Me.

The higher you go, the better view you have.

There is nothing wrong with seeking solutions, but problem-solving can turn into an addiction: your mind spinning with so many plans and possibilities that you become confused and exhausted. To protect yourself from this mental exhaustion, you need to remind yourself that I am with you always, taking care of you.

Magic of 3 – Memory

Continually focus on what I’ve already done (1. died for your sins), what I am doing (2. living in you), and what I will do (3. take you home to heaven).

If you are feeling distant from Me, it’s time for you to stop everything and pour out your heart to Me. Carve out some time and space to talk with Me about your problems and your feelings. Let Me help you carry your burdens and show you the way forward.

People are always trying to diminish Me: to cut Me down o a god who is understandable and predictable. When these attempts fail, they often respond by judging Me or denying My very existence.

Be still and focus on Me. You need to set aside time for listening to Me – blocking out distractions and reconnecting with M in the depths of your soul.

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit. Waiting is often a boring task unless you have something interesting to do or someone interesting to be with. When you wait in My presence, rejoice that you are in the company of the creator and sustainer of the universe.

Delight in this awesome privilege of being with Me now and throughout eternity.

It is also a matter of self-discipline being willing to thank Me even when your circumstances are screaming at you to find a way out. Though it is wise to look for ways to improve your situation, you cannot force My hand – or My timing.

You live in a world where weakness is often pitied – or even despised. However, weakness and weariness are simply part of the reality of living in a fallen world – and in a fallen body.

Experiential understanding.

The easiest way to keep in touch is to begin each day with Me – bringing Me your praises and requests.