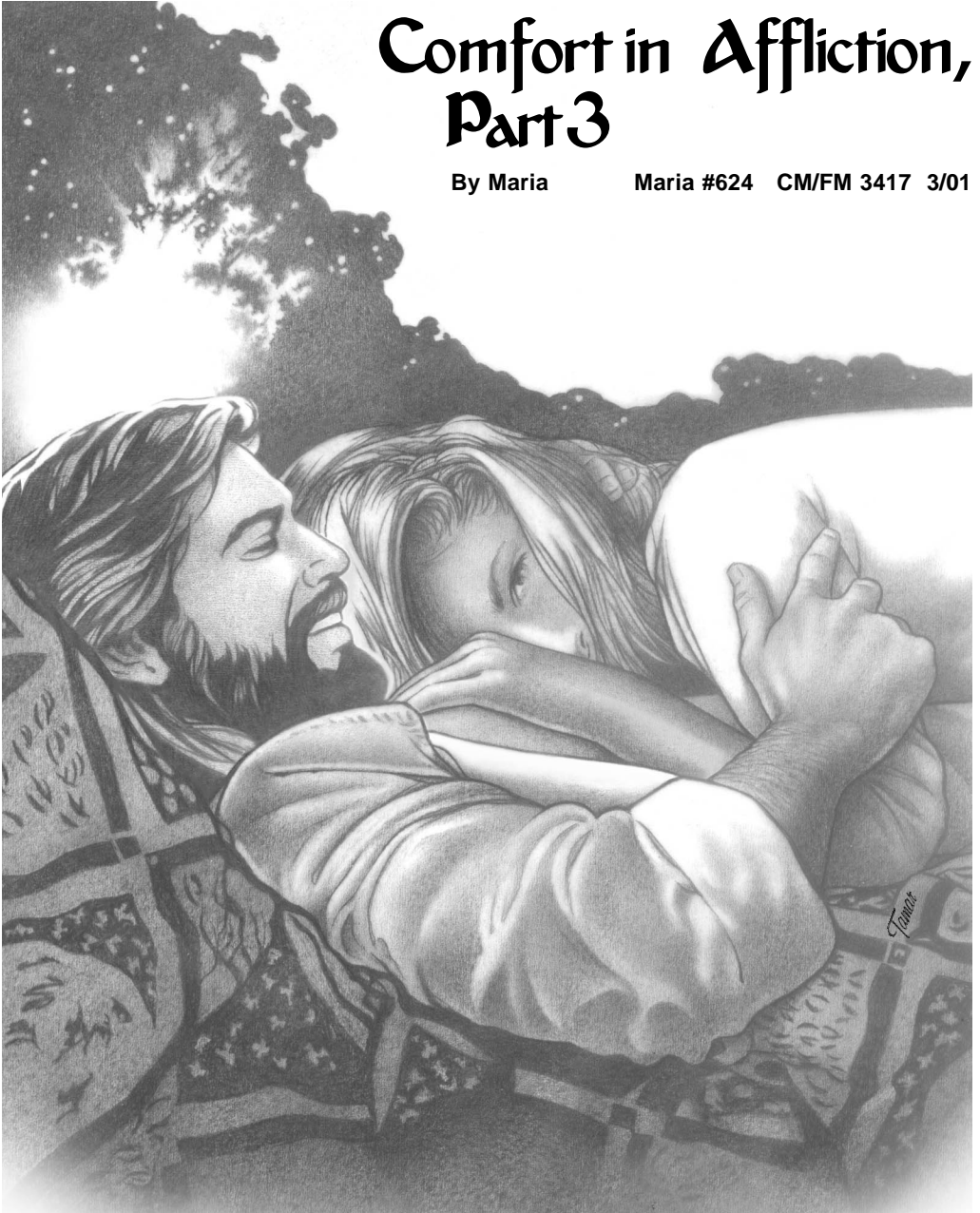


Comfort in Affliction, Part 3

By Maria

Maria #624 CM/FM 3417 3/01



No matter how bad you're feeling, come to Me during this time of affliction, and I'll speak to you. Open your heart and your ears to Me, and listen to the important Words that I'm waiting to tell you as you lie in My arms.

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Dear Family,

I love you! Thank you so much for being faithful prayer warriors for Peter and me and our health, and for all our precious loved ones who are on the prayer lists, as well as any others that you're aware of who are battling affliction. I know that it's a sacrifice to pray. It requires time and effort in the spirit, and because you don't always see immediate benefits, the Enemy can try to make you feel that it's not really worth it. But it is! (See all that the Lord said about intercessory prayer in the "Action Through Prayer" series.)

2. Besides the many benefits for the person who is sick and the wonderful good the Lord wants to bring out of it in their life, there's also a very direct benefit for those who are around or aware of the need, if they're faithful to pray. It unites you in the spirit; it gives you more time with the Lord; it helps you to be more in tune with the Spirit—more desperate, more unselfish and more aware of the needs of others. There are all kinds of wonderful benefits when we take the time to be intercessors for one another in prayer! And I can testify, as I'm sure most of you can, that when you're sick, there's almost nothing more comforting than knowing that your family is praying for you. Please don't stop! Be faithful intercessors!

3. Obviously, there are many reasons why the Lord allows us to have afflictions and sickness. Sometimes it's just a special gift of His love to help us learn or grow in some area. Sometimes it's to shake us up and give us some incentive to get desperate with Him. Sometimes it's a form of His chastisements. Sometimes He just knows that we need the humbling, and will be better for it. Sometimes He even allows sickness as an

attack of the Enemy to teach us to fight back, to stir us up, to strengthen us, and to draw us closer to Him. Sometimes it's a combination of many factors. In every case, He has a good reason. I can't stress enough how important it is to take the time to hear from Him personally and receive His counsel and instruction about your situation. It will make all the difference in the world!

A Time of Spiritual Reflection And Checking Your Heart

4. (Jesus speaking:) You're so precious to Me, and when you suffer, I also suffer. I will be very near to you, fighting for you and sending My ministering spirits to comfort you and to bring you speedy recovery and healing.

5. I call you to come to Me in earnestness at this time, to draw closer to Me and to let Me speak to you. Open your heart and your ears to Me, and listen to the important Words that I'm

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waiting to tell you as you lie in My arms.

6. I know that you may not feel strong enough to hear from Me at this time, but don't let this opportunity pass you by. As you begin to feel better, before you get back into your daily routine, please be sure to take the time to hear from Me the specific things that I wish to speak to you about.

7. There are many reasons why I allow afflictions. To some, I speak concerning My garden. As a gardener must be vigilant to purge his garden of weeds, to clear it of rubble, and to protect its tender plants from the pests and plagues that would infest the fruits and produce, so must I be vigilant to protect the gardens of your hearts and homes, to keep them purged and cleaned and protected from anything that would eat up the fruits and spoil the tender vines.

8. You are My garden, and I must make sure that you don't become weakened by the pests of the Enemy, and that he is not able to come in and plant any weeds that would choke out the good seeds of My Words. I must take special care to make sure that your plants don't become diseased or weakened in any way. So although it hurts Me, I must allow you to be purged of anything that is not of Me.

9. Therefore, if you will look to Me, I will use this attack on your health to purge you of those things that would weaken your spirit and hurt your fruitfulness. I ask you to check your heart, to make certain that you don't allow any weeds to grow up next to your vines, and that you don't allow parasitic pests to suck from you the life-giving sap of My Words. The fruit that you bear must be good and free from disease and pests; it must give life and nourishment to others.

10. For some of you, I use affliction as a time of softening your spirit, a time to help you appreciate others more and to appreciate all that I do to keep you and protect you. But there are many who battle debilitating illnesses—not for one day or two, but for weeks and months on end. Many of your brethren are often attacked with sickness of one kind or another. During those times, they struggle to take care of each

other, while having to continue to care for their children and also be concerned about raising their support and taking care of their ministries.

11. So please use the time that you're in bed to pray for your Family worldwide, and especially for those who are fighting life-threatening and very debilitating diseases. Take this time to praise Me for the blessings of protection and good health that I normally give you because you have given your all to Me. Let this time soften your heart for those in need, those who are weak and afflicted and who need your fervent daily prayers.

12. Everything good comes from My hand. Your health and strength, your supply and protection, your talents and abilities, your ministries and your service—all these are from Me and are given according to My will. During this time when you are weak and not able to carry on as you normally do, please remember how nothing you are without Me, and how much you depend on Me to accomplish anything through you. Without Me you can do nothing good, so praise Me for all that you normally have, for health and happiness, for good times and for your many blessings. Blessings upon blessings have I showered upon your head!

13. For some, I use affliction and sickness to be a serious time of reflection, a time to realize what can happen when you let down your guard in any way, allowing a breach in your spiritual protection. I do not afflict willingly; I am more than able to keep you from attacks on your health and home. But each of you must stay very close to Me and within the circle of My protection. Truly, the Enemy is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and you are each responsible to keep the standard high in your hearts and spirits, so that he may not find a breach of any kind or any means of entering into your Heavenly Home.

14. As you come to Me, I will speak to your heart and show you what I want you to learn from this sickness; there is something in it for you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

15. (Mama:) I wondered about the place in that message where the Lord said that He understands if you don't have the strength to hear from Him in the throes of your sickness. I was concerned that if someone didn't have the strength to hear from the Lord while they were sick, or until they were almost better, that they wouldn't be able to benefit from the Lord's comfort during that time, or whatever He wanted to tell them about recovering and how to best claim His healing, and I wondered what the solution was. Here is what the Lord said when we asked Him about that.

16. (Jesus speaking:) There are times when My children feel so weak that they don't have the strength to make the effort in the spirit to hear from Me aloud. But they can always hear My voice in their heart. They can always lift their heart to Me and be comforted by My Words. When I say that I understand that they may not have the strength to hear from Me, that's because in some cases they don't have the strength to receive a long complete message regarding why they're sick, or

about some other major question.

17. But they can always point their antenna toward Me, ask Me to speak to them, and I will. They don't even have to feel like they have to record it. They can just lie in My arms and hear My whispers, between Me and them. Some of the most precious times are had in this way. Then, when they feel stronger and can put forth more effort to receive a message that will be recorded and more complete, they can do so. But they will have benefited from My whispers all along.

18. In times when someone is very sick, it often helps to have someone else pray and receive a message for them about things, if they so desire. Each case is different, and in some cases they might feel up to it themselves. But if they feel too weak, they can just listen to My whispers and have private conversations with Me, and someone else can help to receive more of the details or the complete message that I want to give for the sake of the body or whatever the case may be. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

What the Lord Means When He Calls It a "Chastening"

19. (Mama:) First of all, what does chastening itself mean? As Dad has taught us, it's based on a Greek word meaning to train up a child; to discipline, to instruct, to teach. And the word discipline comes from the Latin word *disciplina*, literally "instruction given to a disciple." So please bear in mind that when the Lord uses the word chastening, He often means more than punishment or discipline. But even if He is disciplining you through sickness or affliction, He doesn't want you to be discouraged about it. Here's some very good counsel on "how to take it."

20. (Jesus speaking:) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Oh, how My children cringe when they hear that verse. How they dread My

chastening hand. But My hand of chastening is sent with as much love as My hand of blessing—and indeed they are one and the same. All that comes into your life from Me is given with such great love—the same love that compelled Me to lay down My life for you. And yet you dread it or try to turn away from it.

21. It is through the chastening—the blessing, the love which is given in a way most precious, the instruction, the guidance—that you are able to stay on track and useful to Me. Without it you would grow cold and hard; you would stray and become of no use. And so it is that out of love I give My children that which they dread—but which I know they need so desperately.

22. Yet, even though at times I may call it chastening, for the most part I call it blessings in disguise—treasures hidden under hard places,

precious experiences and lessons learned from trial and affliction, gifts of great value earned through the struggle and the tears. It all brings about the same result when My children are exercised thereby.

23. When I work in your life through sickness or trials, it doesn't always mean that you've gotten greatly off track. Sometimes I allow these things to keep you from getting off track, or to simply purify and soften you and make you more dependent on Me. Sometimes the changes in your spirit are so slight that you and others around you might not even notice them—but I notice them, and I know that you will be much happier if you're purged and gently brought back to the place of humility and gentle and complete submission to Me.

24. There are other times when I allow sickness or afflictions, chastenings or scourgings, to prepare you for something which is soon to come. You have not yet come face to face with the need, but I know that it stands around the corner, so out of My love for you I prepare you for it.

25. No, to Me chastening doesn't hold the same meaning as it does to you and to so many of My children. To Me, it's a part of My pure love for you. As many as I love, I chasten, because I deal with you as My sons and daughters, for your profit and benefit, that you might become all that you need to be and wish to be. It's not a sign of My angry displeasure or wrath, or that I think you any worse than another. It's not a sign that I'm nearly giving up on you. It's not a sign that My love for you has lessened or that I'm allowing nature to take its course unchecked. No, it's a sign that I care deeply about you, that I need you and want you, and that I'm either gently trying to bring you back onto the right track, or that I'm preparing you or simply purifying you and making you all the more precious to Me. All are for the best, all are given with great love, and all will bring about good fruit—if you let them.

26. If My children could only realize this, they would be so much happier. They would not dread My chastening and instruction and they

would not fall so easily into condemnation and discouragement when they are faced with My love in the form of chastening. For as soon as I move My hand in one of My children's lives to bring about good fruit, the Evil One is there just as quickly to point out to them their many failings and sins, and through pride and discouragement and condemnation keep them from grabbing hold of My promises—which brings faith, and thus the victory, and with the victory the purity of My strength and grace and overcoming.

27. When they lay hold on Me and My Words, when they rest in My arms and surrender all to Me, it becomes a cycle of faith and victory. When they're besieged by the Enemy and don't recognize his device of discouragement and condemnation for what it is, they're caught in a vicious cycle of doubt, weakening, lack of faith, failure, and continued defeat.

28. My poor loves—if only they could learn to recognize My love in the form of chastening! It often seems grievous to them rather than joyous, but that's because they do not see the peaceable fruit of righteousness, the good fruit, which will result from it as they learn their lessons and grow! My chastening is a sign of My love and care, and should be considered a positive experience, a compliment of love.

29. I want to help you see things more as I see them. I know you're thankful for My working in your life, and you even pray for it and desire it. But still you consider it a difficulty; you look at it through the eyes of discouragement. You want My correction, because you desire to do well for Me and be what I want you to be, but when I give you a touch of My love, you become discouraged, thinking that if you'd been doing better, you wouldn't have had to suffer such a thing.

30. You're seeing things all wrong. No wonder it's so difficult for you to receive; you take it as a punishment rather than a compliment. Learn to see it as I see it, and receive it as the wonderful gift that it is, and it will delight and encourage your heart. You'll grow more through it and enjoy life more—I promise! (*End of message from Jesus.*)

The Variety of Reasons

The Lord Allows Afflictions

31. (Mama:) When you take the time to listen to the Lord about what He wants to show you through your affliction, you'll probably often find that He's allowed it in your life for many reasons, not just one!

32. (Jesus speaking:) Often I use small afflictions in the lives of My children to give them a spiritual tune-up. Stop for a moment and consider what it does to you when you face a little affliction like this.

33. Right away, it slows you down. You're not able to keep going along, business as usual.

34. It checks you in the spirit. You check your heart. You examine your life and see whether you're doing those things which you know please Me. You take stock of whether you've been getting your Word time. You're reminded to reevaluate your priorities.

35. It humbles you, because it reminds you how weak you are, and it often humbles you because you realize there's something I want to teach you through it. You become more open to My Spirit, and you ask Me if there's anything I want to show you.

36. It forces you to ask for prayer, and to depend on the body not only for their prayers, but often for physical help as well. It gives you more time with Me if it's something that requires rest. If it's something contagious that can easily be spread to others, it gives you time away from everything and everyone, which helps you to see things more clearly, and often to get My perspective on things.

37. It gives you a greater appreciation for the good health you normally have. It gives you greater compassion on others who battle afflictions, and it makes you more desperate in your prayers for them.

38. It helps you to be desperate with Me personally, because you don't want it to continue forever, so it stirs you up in the spirit. It helps you to fight the Enemy. You're willing to make commitments that I'm asking of you in order to receive My healing. You're motivated

to make progress in the spirit.

39. Often you get hit with other tests at the same time—discouragement, condemnation, etc., and again, that's a wonderful opportunity to draw close to Me.

40. It takes you a step back from your work. Sometimes you have to stop your work completely; other times you just have to slow down. It reminds you that you're not indispensable. If you're not able to do as much as normal, it helps you to look at your priorities and remember those things which are really important.

41. It brings out the best in others and teaches them about loving and caring for those who are weak. It's humbling for you to be waited on or cared for, and that's also a good experience. It makes you appreciative of your loving Family and those around you who care for you.

42. It stirs everyone up to pray and generates more prayer, which is always a good thing. It reminds you to pray for others who are struggling or suffering, and each time you pray for yourself, you're convicted to pray more for others. You realize how important prayer is.

43. Often I also use it to get you to change physical habits, to live more healthfully or more godly. I use it to regulate your work. If you've been pushing too hard in the physical and you're getting out of step with Me, an affliction slows you down real fast. If you need to rest more, eat better, or take better care of yourself, an affliction will often be a catalyst to bring those things about.

44. You see? So many benefits—and those aren't even all of them! I use afflictions and sickness with My children to help them get tuned up in the spirit. It pulls you up in areas where you've been slacking, and it motivates you to grow, to progress. It automatically makes you desperate. It draws you closer to those around you and helps you depend on the prayers and love of others. It unites you. The desperation cleanses your spirit, and you often come out of it with a clearer perspective of the way that I see things, and a clearer sense of priorities. All of these things are healthy for your spirit. I could bring about some of the same benefits in other

ways, but they're often more costly to the work.

45. Sickness and affliction also affect others, but even the effects on others are good—teaching greater sacrifice, uniting together, fighting together, caring for each other, generating more prayer and desperation in general, and the list goes on. I know that sometimes it seems that more is left undone and that the effects are not good. But whenever I allow sickness or affliction, it's because I want to bring good not only in the life of the person who is afflicted, but in the lives of all those who are around. So look for the blessings, the benefits, the lessons, so that you can benefit fully, and so will My purpose be accomplished. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

To Humble Us and Keep Us Humble

(Received by someone who was new on the staff, who was immediately hit with several debilitating afflictions.)

46. (Dad speaking:) You probably don't feel that you're being much of a blessing, and I'm sure that's one of your biggest battles—feeling so useless. Isn't that how you feel—that you're just being a burden, that you can hardly do anything, that you take people's time, that you don't contribute what you'd like to, when you want to be such a blessing and get so much done?

47. I know it's very humbling for you to be in such a needy situation, because you're the one who's used to doing the serving and being needed and being in control. You've been strong in your mind, strong in your determination, almost self-willed. You've had such strong willpower that in some cases it's almost been a matter of making up your mind to do something, and then with all of the strength you can muster up, you bring it to pass.

48. But I've gotta tell you, those days are over, because you don't have enough strength. You don't have enough willpower. You can't, through your own determination, make it any longer.

49. That's what the Lord is trying to show you, that only He can do it—only His strength, His Word, His inspiration. So He's brought you to the place where all you can do is just lie in

His arms. He's made it so obvious because He's taken away all of your strength, all of your natural ability, all of the strength of your mind, your power of concentration, your ability to accomplish—it's all gone.

50. But don't worry, this is all a part of His plan. This is all a part of the humbling. It's all part of making you a great man, by making you a weak man. So just relax and let the Lord do it, and flow with His plan. It's simple! Just ask the questions, hear His Words, and do what He says.

51. I know you're trying hard to learn your lessons, you're trying hard to be humble, and now you're trying hard to be weak. But you see, all you have to do is yield and let the Lord do it. He is doing it! Because your heart is in the right place, the Lord is doing it and you are learning your lessons, you are being made humble, and you are becoming weak in yourself.

52. It's not something that you can try to do in the arm of the flesh. You can't even work up these lessons or these personal changes, this progress in the spirit. All you can do is yield to what the Lord is doing in your life, the circumstances that He's placed you in, and then He will bring it to pass. Yes, you've gotta do what you can, and you are doing what you can. You're asking for prayer, you're confessing your weaknesses and faults and sins to your loved ones, you're hearing from the Lord and from me, and you're doing what you can to put the counsel we give into practice.

53. But other than that, you just have to trust that the Lord is doing the rest, and He will, and He is! So know that all is well. Be encouraged. I love you! Love, Dad. (*End of message from Dad.*)

The Humbling Keeps You Useful

54. (Jesus speaking:) My dear son, this light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I know that I must keep you humble. I know that I must keep you very close to Me, so I use these things in your life to accomplish that purpose. But it's only because of My great love for you. It's only because I greatly value your

usefulness in My hands. So I care for you as I know I must, in order that you might bring forth sweetness to glorify Me.

55. Don't be discouraged or worry that I'm displeased with you—for the contrary is true! I'm very proud of you. I allowed this weakening affliction at this time so that you would not be tempted to be proud of yourself, but so that you could remember how weak you are before Me in the spirit.

56. Thank you for being willing to be a vessel of love for Me to pour through. It comes with a high price. These humblings are part of that price. For what is it that I want to get across? Is it a sample of perfection? No! The sample I wish to portray is that of vessels of My love—faulty in themselves, but with such great love for Me that they're willing to go back and back and back again to the potter's wheel, that they might be re-formed according to My desire. Willing to be humbled that others might learn. Willing to be open, honest, sharing their hearts, knowing that they themselves have nothing good to show, but because I have asked it of them, they will do it for Me. Willing to live My Law of Love, even with the price that is required. Willing to give up the freedoms of the flesh in order to accomplish My purpose.

57. It is only for a short while. Soon time will be no more, and these weights of the flesh will fall from you. It will be such freedom. Thank you for being willing to be My tool, useful in My hand, and kept close to My bosom. Thank you for enduring these things in order to learn the strength of weakness. I know that lesson is far more valuable to you, and the humility you will gain through this time of weakness is far more important than all that you could be accomplishing now if you were whole.

58. I knew that you would be tempted with pride, so I allowed this to keep you soft and humble, because I have great need of you. I can't use you when you're proud or stiff in My hand. So receive it as a compliment, that I need you so greatly that I'm willing to give you this suffering, that you might once again be soft and humble before Me. I need you, and I love you dearly. I

kiss you with My kisses of love and healing— healing of body and healing of spirit.

59. When you recover, you will be stronger for it—weaker in the flesh and in your own eyes, but stronger in the knowledge that in yourself dwells no good thing, and thus stronger in dependence on Me. I will continue to keep you close to Me, that I might use you fully. When you're strong in yourself, you're more wobbly, and with cracks and weak spots. But when you're weak in yourself, and so very desperate with Me, you're a strong staff of support that others can lean upon, for they know that your strength is in Me.

60. So rejoice for this humbling, because it's a sign that I will continue to use you and will continue to mold you into the vessel of My choosing. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A More Humble Man

61. (Jesus speaking:) I know that the difficulties you face with your back being out have been discouraging for you. You see it as a hindrance to the work, a hindrance to doing the things you want to be doing. But through this affliction I've shown you a better way, a more humble way, and you've yielded your spirit to Me. You've accepted this "intolerable compliment" as a gift from My hand, so I've been able to use it to work in your life.

62. Even though you may not see all the ways it has changed you or it has helped you, I see and others see. They see a more humble you walking around, one who is not so confident and capable in himself, one who is weak in himself. Though it's been hard for you to be like this, it helps to show you how I wish for you to be always. For it is through humility and weakness that I can work through you and use you to accomplish My will.

63. I have blessed you with this affliction. I've been teaching you and showing you the better way through this affliction and through all you've been through in the last few months— showing you that through your weakness I will be able to be made strong. It's a manifestation in the flesh of what I'm doing in the spirit. It has

forced you to slow down, it has humbled you, and through your yieldedness I've been able to use it in your life.

64. Take care to not lose the lessons or the humility and dependence on Me that you've gained through this experience. The man that I need for your tasks ahead will be a new man—not one who operates in his old mindset or weaknesses, but one who is dependent on Me, one who cares about My plan and My will above his own, one who is willing to seek Me about each facet of this plan, one who is not sure of himself or his abilities and talents, but who humbly acknowledges that he doesn't know enough to be able to accomplish the task in front of him, and who is willing to ask others for their help and input and to ask Me most of all. And this is the man that I see before Me now.

65. It's been at the expense of your pride and self-assurance, but it's been worth it, for the fruits of the Spirit it has borne in your life have been beautiful and have made you a better, more useful man. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Touches of Love To Slow You Down

66. (Jesus speaking:) You have been touched with My love. I will release My hand and release this touch when the time is come and it has accomplished its purpose.

67. There is no fear in love, because perfect love casts out fear. This touch of love causes you to love more. It causes you to stop, to look, to listen, to be strengthened, to be desperate, to seek Me, to cry out to Me, and in this I am well pleased.

68. I'm trying to stop you from the busyness, the affairs of the Kingdom, so that you will look up and live. The addiction is strong, and I'm making you go cold turkey. I wish to break the addiction so you will understand that time with Me is more important.

69. Be not afraid that it takes time, because it is time well spent, for it is time with Me. Ask yourself, without this, would you have stopped and taken this much time? Would you have praised Me this much? Would you have cried

out to Me this much? Would you have sung to Me this much? Would you have loved Me this much and worshiped Me this much had you not had this touch of love? No, it would have been impossible; you just wouldn't have stopped. But I do all things well, for I have a plan and a purpose, and I will accomplish that plan and bring forth that purpose. I will bring it all to pass.

70. When I've taught you these lessons of love and faith, trust and prayer, I will lift My touch from you. You'll be new and you'll have a greater depth of understanding. You'll see things more as I see them, and you'll understand in a new and better way. You must hear My voice and follow My instructions and spend time with Me and with those things that I have commissioned to help you and to serve you, to counsel you and to guide you. The answers you seek are not in the busyness, the discussions, or the hurrying. You will not find them in rushing and worrying. The answers and greatest accomplishments come in prayer, in quietness, in listening, in peace and in calm.

71. As much as you pushed in the accomplishments and the getting things done and the hurrying and the deadlines and the seeking of information, that is how much you must now push the quietness and the confidence and the peace which passes all understanding, and the seeking of answers in prayer and in quietness and in love.

72. I wish to tip the scales heavily the other way, and where can I start but here? Ask yourself, would you have stopped without this touch of love? Would you have trusted Me? No. But now you are stopped and you are looking and you are listening. You're not worrying about the wings. You're beginning to understand that the answers are in the temple. The answers are here with Me.

73. So fret not and worry not because of these afflictions, for they work well in many ways. They draw you close to Me. They cause you to trust Me. They cause you to love Me. They make you stop. They cause others to pray. I do all things well. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Slowing Down Helps Us Pace Ourselves

74. (Jesus speaking:) You need a little extra rest, My dear one. With all that there is to do and yet to do, your body has become tired from the constant pressure, the projects, the many things to pray about and discuss. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and when your body gets tired you suffer afflictions easily.

75. I allowed this affliction to help you to slow down a little and pace yourself, so that you can keep running the race and accomplishing My work. There's still more to do, and I'll help you as you work day by day. I'll give you the spiritual and physical strength that you need to keep going and accomplishing one task after the other.

76. Even though there's much to do, continue to look to Me each step of the way and I will help you to do each project, to finish it, and to go on to another one. You can't do it all, you can't work on all the projects at once, but you can work on one at a time. You can pray and ask Me what to do, which one needs your time and attention today, which job needs to be taken care of first, and I'll show you. And as you keep looking to Me, each project will be taken care of and finished according to My timetable.

77. Don't let yourself feel the pressure, but have faith, trust Me, and let Me take the pressure for you. I am with you, and all that you're doing is being guided by My voice. You're doing the things that I want you to do and you're accomplishing My will one step at a time. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Afflictions Help Us Gain Understanding

78. (Jesus speaking:) Everything that happens to you is part of a plan and there is always a reason. I have allowed this affliction over the last few weeks for two reasons. The first is to help you to learn to go slower, and you have been, as you don't really have a choice. The second is to teach you to have more compassion on others who have afflictions and things that keep them from going as fast as you.

79. In the past you've been hard on those who you thought couldn't keep up, either physically or mentally. You didn't understand what was wrong with them. Well, now you're seeing what it feels like to not be able to move around as fast as you want. I want you to learn more love and compassion. This affliction is just for a time, but in this time you need to learn the lessons that I have for you, so I can be free to finish the healing process. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Being Weaker in the Flesh Teaches Patience

80. (Jesus speaking:) I wish to instruct you in patience, even as you wait for the pain to go away and to subside.

81. You must learn patience, for you are too quickly impatient. You want things to happen immediately; you want the pain to go away immediately. But this I don't allow, that you may learn to endure, that you may learn to go on despite the difficulty, despite the pain—even as My children around the world go on, despite the pain, despite the difficulties in their lives. They're learning patience—patience in waiting on Me—and you must learn patience—patience in waiting on Me, and patience with others. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, and the impatience of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

82. You must be patient with those who are weaker, or those who struggle or battle. You mustn't look down on them. You mustn't look upon them condescendingly. You mustn't expect them to get instant victories. This is self-righteousness. This is pride. This is not of Me. I am patient with you in many ways, and in many areas of your life which you have yet to change and grow in. Therefore you must be patient with others and you must learn this, and this pain will remind you of this. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

We Learn Endurance and Faith

83. (Jesus speaking:) Through your afflictions you're learning to endure, and you're learning to smile through the pain. You're learning to speak faith, to trust, and to know that

even if it looks as though everything is not going the way it should go, I'm not failing, and I'm not deserting or forsaking you. I am answering your prayers. I'm healing you by strengthening your faith and your spirit. For faith is believing in things you don't see or feel. Faith is knowing. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

**It Helps You Pray More,
And Makes You More Thankful**

84. (*Jesus speaking:*) One thing sickness does is help you to be more prayerful, more mindful to pray and not take prayer or health or safety or the times when things do run smoothly for granted. It reminds you that everything depends on prayer, everything needs prayer, and without prayer anything can go wrong.

85. Sickness helps to put more meaning in your prayers, so prayer doesn't become a ritual or meaningless or a vain repetition where you get in the habit of just mumbling, "Please bless this food," and afterwards can hardly remember if you prayed for the food or not. Once you've been sick, you pray a lot more fervently for health and safety and protection. You pray more whole-hearted prayers, because you know what can happen if you don't.

86. Sickness also helps you to be more praiseful and thankful. When you get very sick and it's hard to do anything or painful to do anything—to move, to sleep, to eat, to go to the bathroom—then that helps you to be thankful for these seemingly small things, to be thankful for good health, or the strength, or the energy just to do a normal day's work, even thankful for every breath you take, or just to be able to sit up in bed.

87. Sickness is much like the verse about correction, in that's it's grievous at the moment, but afterwards yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. After you've returned to good health, although the sickness was hard to bear at the time and difficult to go through, you will be happier, more thankful, more praiseful and more prayerful, and it will bear a lot of very good fruit. (*End of message from Jesus.*)

**There's a Reason for Affliction
—Nothing Happens by Accident**

88. (*Jesus speaking:*) Behold and marvel at the beauties of My creation—the endless blue of the sky, often covered by a cotton blanket of clouds, the waves that splash upon the sand in such beautiful rhythm, the majestic heights and valleys, shadowed in vegetation, the colors of the tropics, and the contrasting sandy or snowy regions. I created all these things in perfect balance, perfect alignment, and perfect sync, with a word of My mouth.

89. Then I created man—and though I could have spoken a word and it would have been done, I chose instead to mold him and fashion him with My Own two hands. I took special care to put every bone, muscle, and organ in its proper place. The intricacies of the human body could have only been fashioned by Me; the capabilities of the human body are unfathomable. Although modern man tries to emulate My work of art in creating a living and thinking being, they fall so very short, and there are countless defects that render their creations faulty.

90. Each of you has been fashioned and formed by My Own two hands, has received the breath of life from My mouth, and is created perfect in My sight. You seek to know why, then, so many afflictions and so many physical ailments befall you, and befall those about you. These too are given or allowed by My hand, as a chastisement to some and a reward to others. For some it is the only way to get them to look to Me and spend time with Me. For others it is a physical manifestation of the spiritual or emotional, that something is out of alignment, that proper care is not being bestowed on their temple.

91. For you it is not a punishment, nor because you've left the straight and narrow and I'm trying to call you back; but it is My love for you, My gift of love to cause you to desperately cry out to Me, to see that you're nothing in yourself and you need Me, your other half, your whole, to survive. I have asked more of some, because I know they can do more than merely survive these testings that I bring their way—they can thrive from them, they can flourish and

grow. Troubles and difficulties are the fertilizer that you need to spring up and mature quickly and become ripe and ready for Me to harvest and use.

92. I need for you to remain especially close to Me, to spend more time with Me than with anyone else, hearing My Words, sitting at My feet, feasting upon My love, drinking in the whispers of My voice. And so I have called you to set aside these times when you are suffering, alone in your room, to cause you to cry out to Me and seek Me for your daily strength, for you now know you cannot make it without Me.

93. I also ask you to pray for My children during your times of loneliness, when you can't work, can't eat, can't get anything done in the way of accomplishments. To be a prayer warrior is a very important mission, and one which I call you to during these days.

94. Praise Me for these times that you can spend with Me, just you and Me together. Thank Me for them, because these times are what keep you close to Me. You'll look back on these precious times nestled in My arms with great fondness and thankfulness for all that you learned, and the comfort that you received, the training I gave you in the quiet of your bed through My communing with you, the accomplishments of your prayers, and the weakness you found in yourself which was overshadowed by the strength you found in Me. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Lord Needs Your Love!

(The following was received by someone who hurt their eye in a little accident in the course of their daily duties. Thankfully, there was no permanent damage done, but it was very sore for a few days.)

95. (Jesus speaking:) Yes, I allowed this to happen to you. It was no accident in that sense of the word. I wanted to get your attention, to draw your attention to some things in your life.

96. Honey, I want you at My feet drinking in My seeds and My love. I want you desiring My attention. I know you say how much you need Me and how you can't make a move with-

out Me, that you need Me so desperately, and I'm so very thankful for that. But I want to drive the point home that this is true and I don't want you to make a move without Me. I don't want just lip service, I want action. I want to see your eyes and your heart turned up to Me, yearning for Me and My touch of love.

97. You've been allowing too many things to come between you and Me lately. I feel more like a convenience in your life than a Lover. You come to Me when you need direction and counsel, you try to ask before you do things, but these are like a service without love. I know you have a great love for Me, but I haven't felt it so much lately; all I feel is your desperation for answers or guidance, but not for My overflowing love to come upon you.

98. I poked you in the eye to wake you up to what you're doing to us. You're going too fast and not taking love-up time with Me. I need your love most of all. I'm glad you're seeking Me more in prophecy and trying to ask Me before you do anything, but what is all of that without your love for Me? It's a works religion, not a love religion. You're fulfilling the letter of the law. I want your love, Sweetheart. I want to hear those love words to Me again. I want to hear how you hunger for My touch, how you love My arms around you.

99. I don't want to cause you pain and I'm so sorry you're suffering. But as with a child, I sometimes need to give you a spanking to wake you up, and so I have. I want you to spend time with Me in the bed of love, not just in the duties. I want a love relationship with you, not a job relationship.

100. I so love you and so long for you. My heart beats fast when I think you're going to come to Me in the bed of love and love Me passionately, but then I'm disappointed when you only stay with Me for such a short time.

101. Right now, Honey, I need your love, just you. I will heal your eye as you come to Me. I love you, My darling bride, and long for you as a bridegroom longs for his bride. Please don't disappoint Me. Please come to Me. I'm begging. Please come so we can get full of each other.

Let's dwell in the bed of love till we are full. I love you, My precious bride. Hurry into My arms for a love feast. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Love Links

(Someone received this prophecy when they experienced some strong pains in their heart. This pain has recurred from time to time. As the message says, it's the Lord's love gift to them, and He always uses it to pull them back to His side when they start to stray.)

102. (Jesus speaking:) My heart belongs to you, and when you get distant from it, it begins to hurt and cause Me pain. So I've given you this thorn, this blessing that keeps you close on the end of My key chain. You're like a special gift to Me, and I guard it and keep it. When you start getting too far away, I just give a little tug on the key chain connecting us and your heart quickly returns to Me.

103. Do you realize what a blessing this is, what a blessing it can be? For this is the golden cord of My love. This is My precious love chain that keeps us close together in love. I love you so much that when you start to pull away, it hurts Me so, and so I have given you this feeling of My heart, My touch of love, letting you know just how much I love you and care for you.

104. It's not a punishment, but a blessing—a gift of love from Me, a way to know that I'm calling you and asking you to come and be close to Me. It is as a beautiful ring with a diamond-studded chain that is connected to My heart, a hot-link with Me and with My love. Whenever you feel My little tug on your ring, you know that you're getting too far away and that it's starting to pain Me. When you feel that tug, come running back to Me and shorten the cord, and I'll feel better again.

105. I love you so much that even the thought of losing you is more than I can bear, so I've installed My special love chain, My special love gift to you from Me. Do you like it? Will you be thankful for it and not murmur? If I gave you a special gift and all you did was murmur and com-

plain about it, what would I feel like? Or if you gave Me a special gift and all I did was seek out the impurities and weaknesses, how would you feel? So it is with Me.

106. In My great love I've given you this gift. In My great caring for you I've given you this blessed present, a special attachment of My love, a love link, just between you and Me. How about that? A love link! I love you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Honeymoon of Affliction

107. (Jesus speaking:) My precious sweetheart, you are My love! Our love affair is strong and deep, which began in the honeymoon of affliction where I taught you how to make love with Me, where your heart learned to put Me first, where I taught your ears to hear My voice and I trained your eyes to look up. In the passion of our lovemaking, the seed of faith was planted and conceived, watered by My love, so that out of your weakness has sprung forth strength.

108. The lame shall take the prey. I have laid you down in the bed of affliction that I might raise you up in My time. I set you apart that you might learn of Me. You had no friends, that I might become your Best Friend. I took away the earthly desires so that I could give you heavenly burdens.

109. Oh, how I wish that all My brides would give themselves to such passion, putting Me first, loving Me most, in such intimate lovemaking with Me, to give them the faith, the victory, the dedication, the conviction, the boldness, the courage, and the love that comes through having such an affair with Me!

110. My beautiful bride whom I adore, because you adore Me!—Continue to be open to Me, and I will reveal to you those things you have asked for in secret. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

Gentle Love Pats

111. (Jesus speaking:) This is a light affliction which works in you a far greater reward. I am once again reminding you of your

weakness, of your need for Me, of your need to depend on Me. You are one with much determination, much strength of will, much ability to press forward. But with these strengths is also the weakness of the tendency to lean to the arm of the flesh and to push too hard beyond your strength and capabilities, so that you no longer depend on Me but on yourself.

112. So I give you these afflictions of the flesh to weaken you, to slow you down, to cause you to be more prayerful, to cause you to reflect more. In your weakness, you look to Me more, and thus I am able to speak to you and direct you and lead and guide you in the way that you should go.

113. Don't fear that you've displeased Me or that you've gotten outside of the protection of My will, but know that this is My intolerable compliment, as I keep you weak and small in your own eyes and tender before Me, constantly knowing that without Me, you can do nothing.

114. I would be able to deliver you from these afflictions of the flesh, and I would be able to bless you with more strength and freedom from this pain and from this annoyance and from this weakness of the flesh if you were more faithful when you were strong to take time with Me, so that I could speak to you. If you were faithful in your strength and your health to take time with Me and hear from Me and rest in Me, then I would not have to afflict you with these light afflictions to keep you constantly weak and to constantly remind you of your need for Me.

115. Look to Me. Rest in Me. Hear from Me daily. Put that as your priority. When I know that you'll take time for Me even when you're healthy and strong, then I'll be able to deliver you from these weaknesses and these afflictions, and I'll be able to bless you with greater strength and greater freedom from pain.

116. Every day, before you do anything else, take time with Me. Rest in My arms and hear My Words and let Me speak to your heart about your priorities, lead and guide you, remind you, instruct you, and speak to you with My still, small voice. Take time each day to be My channel. Take time each day to hear My Words, to

love Me, to rest in Me. Make this your priority. And when this has become a part of your nature, when I know that you will no longer neglect it, when I know that you will be faithful to do so even when you're strong, then I will deliver you from these thorns in the flesh and this weakness of the flesh.

117. But for now, I must keep you ever close to Me, so I must remove from you some of the strength of your flesh. But this is only for a time, and it depends upon you and your willingness to put Me first and put taking time with Me first.

118. You are prayerful in your labors, and you are hungry in the spirit, but all of this is part of your service for the Kingdom. You are faithful and diligent and conscientious, and I am well pleased. But you must constantly remember that before being a servant in the Kingdom, you are My bride and My lover. I must always have first place in your heart before your work, before other relationships, before the needs of the flesh. Before all else, I must come first.

119. So take your choice. If you choose to take that time with Me each day, first and foremost before anything else, then I will be able to deliver you and bless you and strengthen you with strength that you know not of. But you can't be driven by your strength of determination, by your willpower, by your enthusiasm, by your desire to see the job done. You must be carried along by My Spirit and My strength. I've given you gifts and strengths of the flesh, but they must always take second place to the strength of the Spirit.

120. Put Me first in all that you do. Drink deeply of the wells of My water. Let Me refresh your spirit every day, without fail. Rest in My arms every day, without fail. Let Me speak to your heart and establish your thoughts every day, without fail. In doing so, I will not fail to give you all that you need.

121. Don't be disheartened by these many reminders. Don't become discouraged that I tell you again and again of your need for Me, for these are just little love pats that keep you on the straight and narrow, lest you stray. I want

to keep you walking down the perfect center of My will where I can continue to use you and lavish upon you blessing after blessing—showers of blessings as long as you stay in the center of My will. Don't be weary of these love pats that keep you walking straight ahead, straight down the narrow path of My perfect will. This is My way of strengthening you and fashioning you and molding you, to make of you the vessel that I so desire.

122. This is not a chastisement or a rebuke.

These are just My gentle love pats, My light afflictions and My words of instruction so that you may grow thereby. I am well pleased in your love and in your labors. It's just that you're so dear to Me that I want more of you—more of your time, more of your thoughts, more of your undivided attention. I have in My hands deliverance and strength and renewal. But first come to Me and drink deeply of My waters and My Spirit every day without fail, putting Me first. Then everything else will fall into place, for it will be a work of My Spirit.

123. You're My lover and My bride, and I only want the best for you. These light afflictions are tokens of My love, disguised if you will, but My love nonetheless. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Weaknesses of the Flesh
Keep You Strong in Spirit

124. (Mama:) The Lord gave this for me during one of the many times when I was constantly feeling on the verge of a serious cold, and I asked Him why that was, or if there was anything I could do to prevent it.

125. (Jesus speaking:) These weaknesses of your flesh help to keep you strong in My Spirit. These light afflictions help you to cling to Me, because you're constantly having to seek Me and pray for My strength to keep going. These afflictions help to keep you bathed in prayer as you constantly beseech your loved ones to pray for you. This surrounds you with a force field of protection and gives you spiritual strength and power.

126. If you didn't have these light afflictions, constantly having the initial symptoms of a bad cold, then your loved ones wouldn't be so compelled to pray fervently for your strength and resistance, for your protection and health. I take their prayers and translate them into the things that you need—not only for physical health, but also for spiritual wisdom, discernment, understanding, and the leading of My Spirit.

127. I delight to keep you close to Me, My love. Your light afflictions keep you constantly coming to Me and help you remain firmly connected to Me. It keeps you and your helpers seeking Me, running to Me for the strength and anointing of My Spirit that you need. I'm sorry that it's difficult in the flesh to endure, but know that it's accomplishing a very worthwhile work in the spirit. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

The Road of Affliction

128. (Jesus speaking:) You are afflicted to keep you close and to keep you seeking, for you've asked to remain close to Me. You've pledged to do all that I've called you to do, and you seek to walk hand-in-hand with Me. You desire that closeness with Me in spirit. But there is a price to pay, for the Enemy seeks to have you drift or falter, and his attacks on you drive you to Me.

129. Do you feel it's worth it? It's not an easy road. It's a road of hardship and of difficulty, but it's the road of My will. It's a road of communion with Me. It's a road of dedication. It's a road of My anointing. If you will choose this road and follow it, I will bless you and honor you, and I will love you through your sufferings and through your afflictions, through your difficulties in flesh and in spirit.

130. I know your heart. I know that you choose this road out of your love for Me. I will carry you through the hard times and help you through the rough spots. Let Me carry you, and have faith, for I will strengthen you. *(End of message from Jesus.)*

A Time to Be Alone with the Lord

131. (*Jesus speaking:*) Think of this as a good time when you can rest not only your body but your spirit in My arms. When your body is tired and sick, you can't use it to work or move around very much; you have to give it the rest it needs. This is My way of also giving you time alone with Me—time to pray and listen to My Spirit, time to think and meditate and talk to Me, to reflect and commune with Me. Even though your body isn't feeling well, your spirit can spend more time with Me in the bed of love.

132. You work so hard, My love. You're constantly busy with My work, serving Me, ministering, researching, and spending long hours at your ministry. All of this takes a toll on your body and spirit, and there comes a time when you must rest.

133. This is a sweet touch of My love for you—a time when you can set your work aside, your deadlines and the business of the day, and leave it all behind. It will be there waiting for you as soon as you're better. No one is going to steal your crown of service, for it is your crown which I have given to you, and it's waiting for you to pick up again as soon as you're strengthened and have recuperated. I've chosen this time for you to be sick, to lie back on your bed, so that you could also lie back and rest in the spirit and take the time your spirit needs to commune with Me.

134. You must not worry about the work, for if you worry about it, it will not help you to get better as quickly. You must trust Me that I will help you to do your work even better, even more quickly and prayerfully and with the anointing of My Spirit, if you take this time now to rest and trust and depend on Me.

135. I know your heart's desire is to be able to do your work and meet your deadlines, but I want you in My bed of love right now. I want you to cuddle up in the arms of My Spirit and lie with Me. I appreciate your service, and I want you to continue to serve Me, and I will raise you up again to serve Me. But I know what's best for you, and right now time in My arms is even more important than your service.

136. Even in this discouragement you're being blessed and strengthened as you draw close to Me and let Me uphold you and sustain you. The Enemy would like to keep you discouraged and tell you that you're really out of it or have done something very bad. He'd like you to believe that you're failing or that I am judging you for your sins and shortcomings, that this results from My anger toward you rather than My love for you. He tries to tell all My children the same lies whenever they fight afflictions. But you must not listen to his doubts and fears; you must simply look up to Me and let Me fill you with My whispers, My encouragement, and let Me hold you close and comfort you.

137. This is not a time of punishment, failure, or defeat, but rather it's a sweet time of communing with Me. A time when your physical body is too weak to do anything but rest on My strength. A time when you must show Me how much you trust in My perfect will by lying back and letting Me take full control of the day and the events, of your work and deadlines. A time when you must simply trust My Spirit to heal you, and a time when you must look to Me for the grace and strength that you need.

138. Isn't it a blessing and a wonderful thing to have this special time of sickness when you can draw even closer to Me and listen to My whispers? Know that as you do this, I will strengthen you, I will help you, and I will speak to you, so that when you get up from your bed you will find new strength and a new peace of heart and mind. Make wise use of this time of rest, for your work awaits you, and many things await you.

139. Invest your time wisely now as you rest in My arms. Use this time to talk to Me, to listen to Me, and to draw new strength of spirit, answers, and a renewing of My Spirit for the days ahead. My Spirit and My anointing are powerful, and I am able to fill your tired and weak body and spirit with even more strength than you had before. (*End of message from Jesus.*)