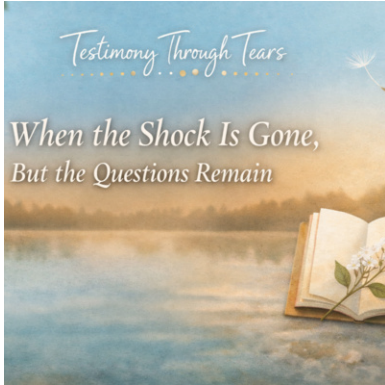


When the Shock Is Gone, But the Questions Remain

Episode Companion Guide



“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my ” — Psalm 42:11 (ESV)

For the question-askers — when the shock fades and the whys get loud.

A Note From Janet

Friend,

There’s a strange shift that happens somewhere after the first shock wears off. For me, it came when the casseroles stopped arriving and the house got quiet again. That’s when the questions rushed in — loud, relentless, and usually at two in the morning. Why? What if I had...? Lord, if You had been here... I replayed moments like a movie I couldn’t turn off, searching for the one frame where I could have changed everything.

Here’s what I want you to know, sweet mom: the questions are not a failure of faith. They’re the sound of a mom who loves deeply trying to understand something that doesn’t make sense. Even David cried, “How long?” Even Martha said, “Lord, if you had been here.” You are in good company.

This guide is a place to put the questions somewhere instead of carrying them all in your head. You don’t have to answer them here — some of them may not get answered on this side of heaven. You just have to bring them honestly to the God who can handle them. He can. I promise.

Write messy. Skip what isn’t for today. Come back whenever the questions get loud again. There is nothing to fix here and no grade at the end.

— Janet

How to use this guide

- **Look up each Scripture** in your own Bible and copy the verse in your own handwriting if you like — your journal is the perfect place for that.
- **Go at your pace** — answer the questions as you feel ready. There is no timeline for when you answer; come back later if needed. Use them as morning devotionals if you would like.
- **Complete each prompt in your journal**, so you can look back later and see how God has been working.

Scripture quotations in this guide are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway.

Name What's Loud Today

When the shock fades, the questions don't arrive quietly — they move in and turn up the volume. Take a moment to notice what's loud in your heart today. Naming it is the first step toward bringing it to Him.

- My own words for what I feel:
- The question that's loudest today is...

The Question I Can't Shake

Most of us have one — the question that loops in the background no matter what else we're doing. Let's get it out of your head and onto paper, where God can meet you in it.

- The question that loops loudest in my head is...

Now say it to Him directly. He already knows it — but there's something healing about saying it out loud to His face.

- What I want to say to God about it...

What I Replay Most

Replaying is love looking for a different ending. It doesn't mean you're stuck — it means your heart is still searching. Describe the replay, and then set one true thing beside it.

- The moment I replay most is...

The replay tells one story. But it isn't the whole story. What's one true thing you know alongside it — about God, about your child, about yourself?

- One true thing I know alongside it...

Anchors

Questions can make everything feel unmoored. Anchors are the truths that hold steady even while the questions swirl. You don't have to feel them to write them — write what you know, and let your heart catch up later.

- Things I know are true even while I question:

If the page above feels blank, borrow these starters:

- God is...
- My child's life mattered because...

Leave It Unanswered for Now

You don't have to solve grief like a math problem. Some questions don't get answers on this side of heaven — and that doesn't mean God is withholding. It means some things are too big for today, and today is all you have to carry.

A testimony through tears is still a testimony with tears in it. Leaving a question unanswered isn't giving up — it's trusting that the God who holds the answer also holds you.

- Something I'm willing to leave unanswered for now:
- And I can trust God with it because...

Scriptures to Look Up & Hold On To

Look up each passage in your own Bible. Read it slowly — out loud if you can. Then notice what stands out to you. Underlining the question that sounds like your own counts, too.

Psalm 13:1–2 (ESV)

“How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day?”

David asked “How long?” four times in two verses — and God kept every one of them in His Word.

- What stands out to me in these words:
- My honest response to God:

Scriptures to Look Up & Hold On To (continued)

John 11:21, 35 (ESV)

“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ... Jesus wept.”

Martha said the “if you had been here” out loud — and Jesus didn’t scold her. He knew resurrection was coming, and still He wept.

- What stands out to me in these words:
- My honest response to God:

Scriptures to Look Up & Hold On To (continued)

Psalm 42:11 (ESV)

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”

Notice: David talks to his soul. Preaching hope to your own heart is an act of faith, not a feeling.

- What stands out to me in these words:
- My honest response to God:

Scriptures to Look Up & Hold On To (continued)

Psalm 62:8 (ESV)

“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.”

Pouring out your heart is not the same as presenting a cleaned-up heart.

- What stands out to me in these words:
- My honest response to God:

Keep looking up

When you’re ready, these passages are waiting for you. Choose one to read slowly today — even one verse counts.

Psalm 42 — the whole psalm: “Why are you cast down, O my soul?”

Psalm 77 — crying out in the night watches

Habakkuk 1:2–3 — “How long shall I cry for help?”

John 11 — the whole chapter: Jesus with the grieving

- What did you notice as you read?

A Letter to Your Child

Some things are easier to say on paper than out loud. Pour out the questions you most want answered — the ‘why’ and ‘what if’ you’ve been carrying. Messy, honest, unfinished is fine.

- Write a letter to your child: pour out the questions you most want answered — the ‘why’ and ‘what if’ you’ve been carrying.

A Letter to God

Bring Him your loudest question. Say it to His face, honestly — the way David and Martha did. He can handle it.

- Write a letter to God: bring Him your loudest question — say it to His face, honestly, the way David and Martha did.

Bring Them Honestly

You don’t have to arrive at answers today. You just have to keep bringing the questions to the One who can hold them — one day, one prayer, one honest sentence at a time.

A prayer to borrow

Lord, You know the questions I ask out loud and the ones I only ask at two in the morning. You heard Martha say “if You had been here” and You didn’t scold her — You wept with her. Weep with me, Lord. Meet me in the questions. Teach my soul to say with David, “Hope in God,” even while I’m still asking why. Hold me in the not-knowing — for this breath, this hour, and this day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

- One question I’m bringing to God today:

Share This With Another Mom

If you know a grieving mom whose questions are getting loud, share this episode with her. You don’t have to explain it — you can simply say, “I thought of you, and I am here.”

Testimony Through Tears — a podcast and ministry for Christian moms walking through the loss of a child to suicide. Honest grief, enduring faith, and hope that doesn’t ask us to pretend. Even in the questions, even in the not-knowing, even in the tears — you are not walking alone.