



Facing Illness, Finding Peace

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INTRODUCTION

The crisis of ill health affects us all at some time in our lives. For many of us, the duration is short, and recovery is soon.

However, there are others who must confront the crisis of a chronic progressive disease, or a life-threatening illness, and this reality may be a continuing part of life.

The onset of the disease may come
at any age, making the road
ahead one filled with fears,
apprehensions, and anxieties.

Too often, it feels as if the road is traveled alone.

And yet, from the beginning of this journey,
the still and gentle voice of Jesus asks us
if we will allow him to walk with us.
And so we choose love over fear,
and Jesus becomes our blessed companion
on this road.

As you walk with him, this book
will be your companion

- A guide to understanding the
emotional impact of facing a serious illness;
- An instrument that
encourages you to share your thoughts
with a friend, family member, priest,
or minister;
- A source of comfort for
the days when your heart
is weary from the struggle;
- A help to heighten your awareness
of your uniqueness and beauty
that no disease can touch or change;
- A reminder of Jesus' everlasting love.



SOMETHING'S WRONG: SEARCHING FOR AN ANSWER

*Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength
and my might; he has become my
salvation.*

ISAIAH 12:2

How many days or months have
passed with the recurring
feelings of fatigue and discomfort,
and of having a sense that all is
not right within?

The internal messages are
constant, yet subtle,
reminding me of storm clouds
ominously forming in the skies.

I am left to wonder when
the storm
will
appear.

I feel helpless and
frightened.

My doctor is concerned.
His face mirrors my
apprehensions. He
cannot diagnose the
problem until more tests
are done. I am tired of
subjecting my body
to the invasions of strange
tubes and X-rays.

I am becoming an illness
to be diagnosed
instead of a person
who is suffering.

See me.

See *me* please!

It is over. The illness
has been named. I am
part of a national
average—a statistic—
and I am sometimes
referred to as my disease.

That only increases my pain.

It is over.

The illness has been named.

It is over—

or is this only the

beginning for

me?

Reflections

Knowing the disease I must face brings new concerns to me. What do I need to know about my illness?

Has the knowledge of this illness changed my priorities in life?

What is most important to me now?

Prayer

Dear God, I am frightened. I wanted an answer. Now I have received one, and I am afraid. I want this to be a bad dream that will end when I awaken to tomorrow's sunlight. But tomorrow's arrival will not erase the reality of today. Stay close, dear Father, and let me feel the warmth of your Son's light on me as I face today ... and tomorrow. Amen.

*Do not let your hearts be troubled,
and do not let them be afraid.*

JOHN 14:27

