

ALL IS WELL

*A 40 Day Harry Potter-Themed
Devotion Series*

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA GENTRY



Day 1

Snape's confession of his eternal love for Lily is known as one of the most iconic quotes in the entire Harry Potter fandom. With one word Snape spoke a truth so profound no further explanation was required. Always.

It is with a single word we begin this 40 day Harry Potter devotional series.

Always is not only a classic quote in the Potterverse, but it is also an iconic word in scripture. Before He ascended to heaven, Jesus gave the disciples what is now known as the Great Commission.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
– Matthew 28:18-20

Go, tell people about me, Jesus said. Tell the world. They need to know of my deep and never-changing love. Then I picture Jesus pausing and looking into the eyes of each of his disciples. Surely they were full of hope and excitement, but looming over that joy was a deep sadness.

Jesus was leaving. Their Lord and Savior was going to be with his Father, and they would be alone. I imagine Jesus saw their fear and paused.

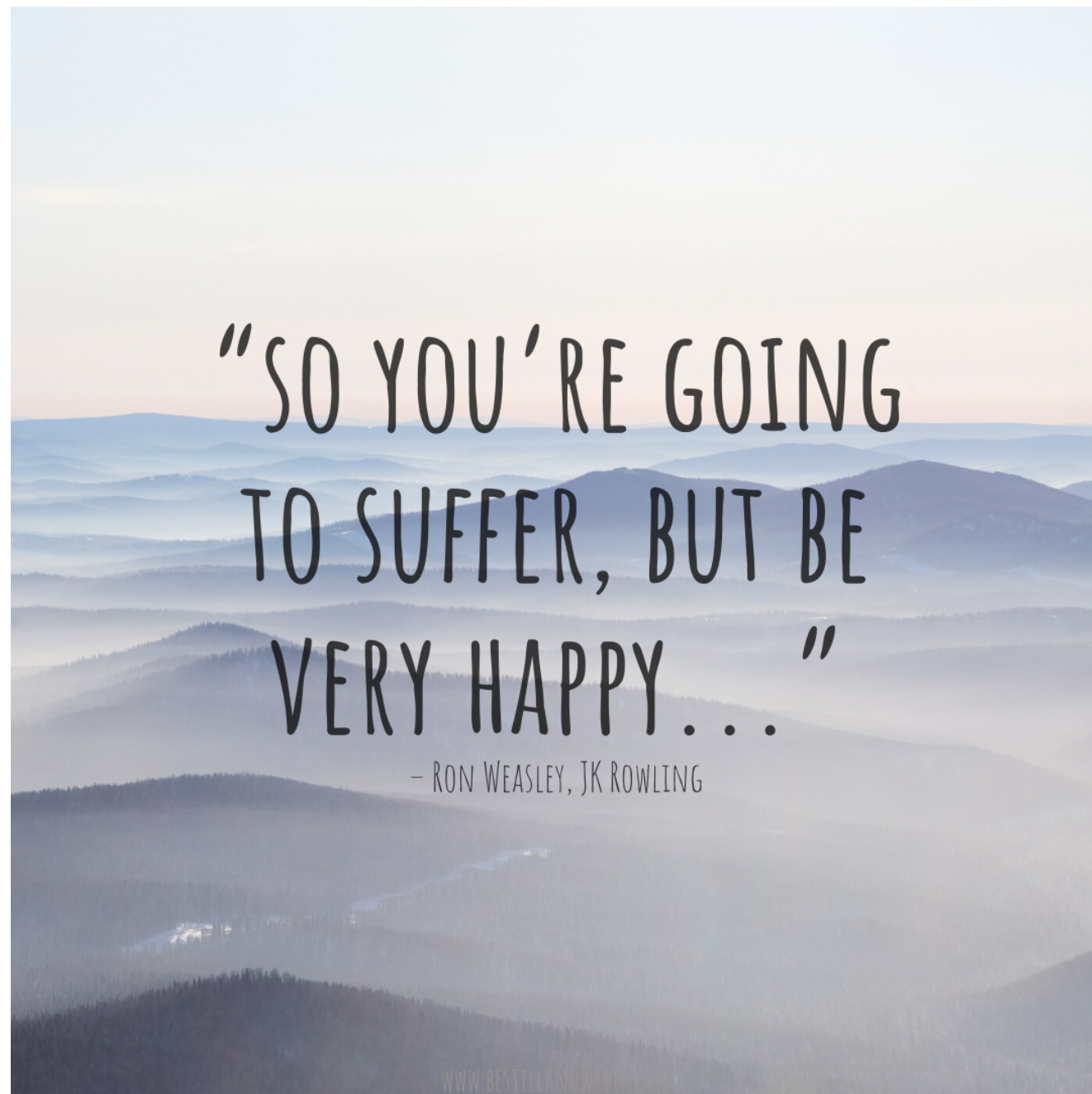
“I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (v.20)

A more comforting sentence has never been spoken. Come what may, Jesus is with me. He is with each of us. Always.

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Write an example of a moment you felt the presence of Jesus in your life.

The Great Commission calls us to share the Gospel with others. How can you share God's Word today?



## Day 2

The book of James is one of my favorite books of the Bible. I love that he starts his letter by saying “*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds (1:2).*” He cuts right to the chase does our pal James, just like Ron in divination class. I like that in a man.

I don't know about you, but life did not get any easier when I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Nope. In fact it got worse. I remember an evening in particular when I was sobbing uncontrollably to my two dear friends,

“I don't understand. Why is everything so hard? Is being a Christian even worth this pain?”

Without missing a beat they assured me that, yes, Jesus is always worth it. Looking back at that day now, I can say with 100% confidence that no matter what mountains I am given to climb or tragedy I must walk through, choosing Jesus is the best decision I have ever made. Through mysterious illness, job loss or change, the death of loved ones, financial distress, anxiety riddled days and nightmare filled nights, the state of the country and the destruction of the environment...

Jesus is worth it.

Sure, I suffer. We all suffer in this broken world. We stumble, we fall, we crawl across the floor until our muscles give out and the Lord himself has to reach down and help us up from the dirt. We suffer, but we are happy about it.

Why?

Because this world is temporary. Or as James writes, “*What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes (4:14).*”

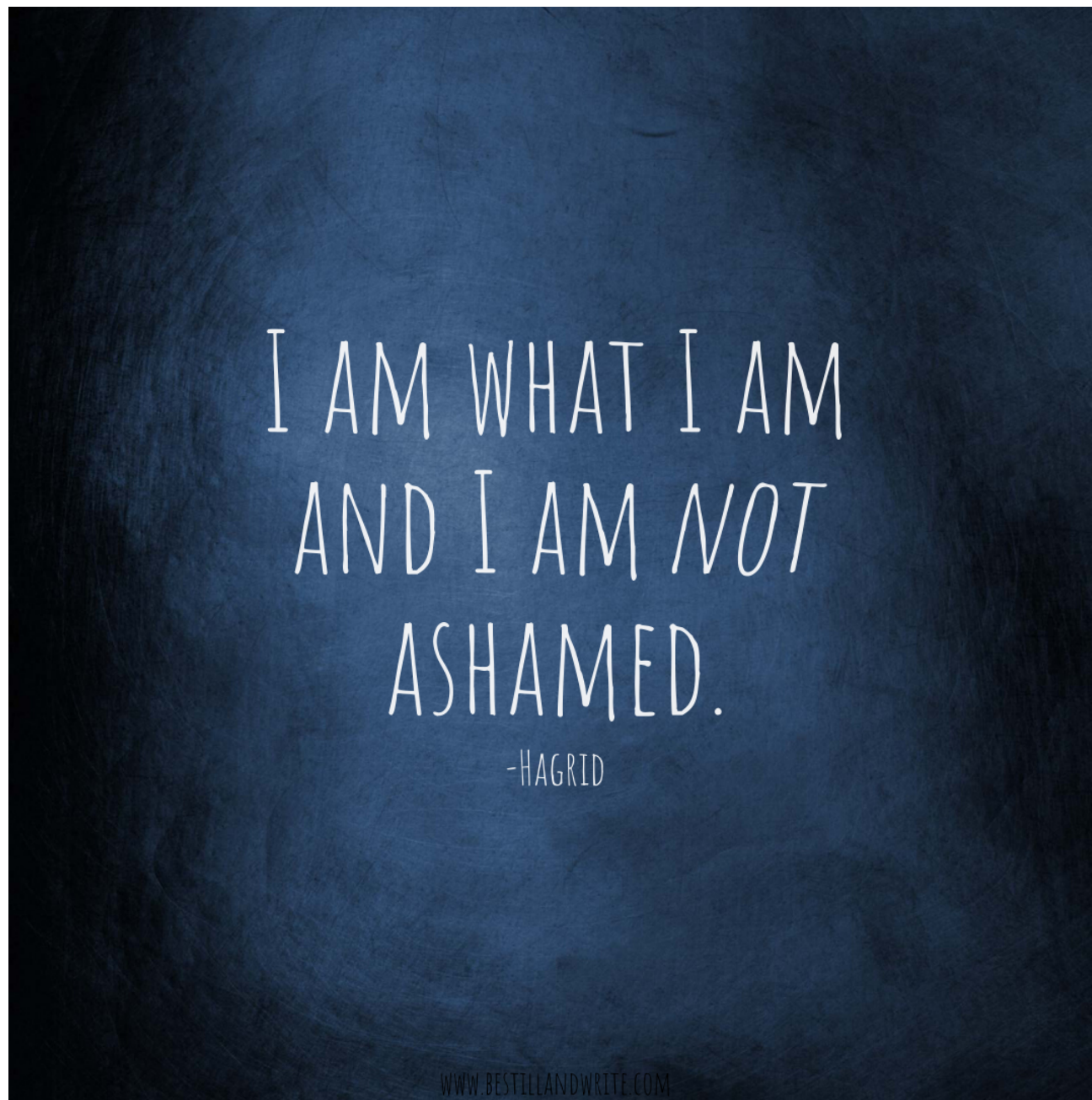
We can be happy amidst suffering, because we know God is in control. He carries us in the palm of his hand, and thank goodness for that. I am an epic mess on my own.

*“But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.”*  
-1 Peter 4:13

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Are you currently going through a season of suffering? If so, spend some time today in prayer and release all your pain and anxiety to the Lord.

Who do you know that might be walking through a time of suffering? How can you spread the love of God to them today?



Day 3

“I am what I am, an’ I’m not ashamed, my ol’ dad used ter say, ‘There’s some who’ll hold it against you, but they’re not worth botherin’ with.” –Hagrid

I’m only saying this because I already told him and he understands, but my dad is low-key Hagrid. I was re-reading the Harry Potter series with my husband in preparation for this study and it just hit me. My dad is Hagrid.

Now, I mean this as a compliment. He is this outdoorsy, animal-loving, sometimes hard to understand, quirky bearded man you just can’t help but love. He doesn’t blend in with the crowd, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. Dead serious, if dragons existed my dad would be hatching an egg on an open fire right now. True story.

My dad is not ashamed to be unique. Never. He is who he is unapologetically, just like Hagrid. He looks at creation and sees an intricate beauty that most people miss. Those people might hold that love for the earth against him. He has been bullied and mistreated, but through it all he remains himself. The people who belittle him are not worth bothering with.

As a Christian, there are days when I feel like the outsider. Sadly, it is not normal to go to church not only on Sunday morning, but for Bible study during the week. To some, giving a 10% tithe or donating to a ministry is maybe not the wisest or coolest use of my money.

There are days when being a misfit really sucks.

However, my life is not supposed to make sense to the world. The moment I blend in is the moment I’ve failed. It’s the moment I am a stranger to Christ.

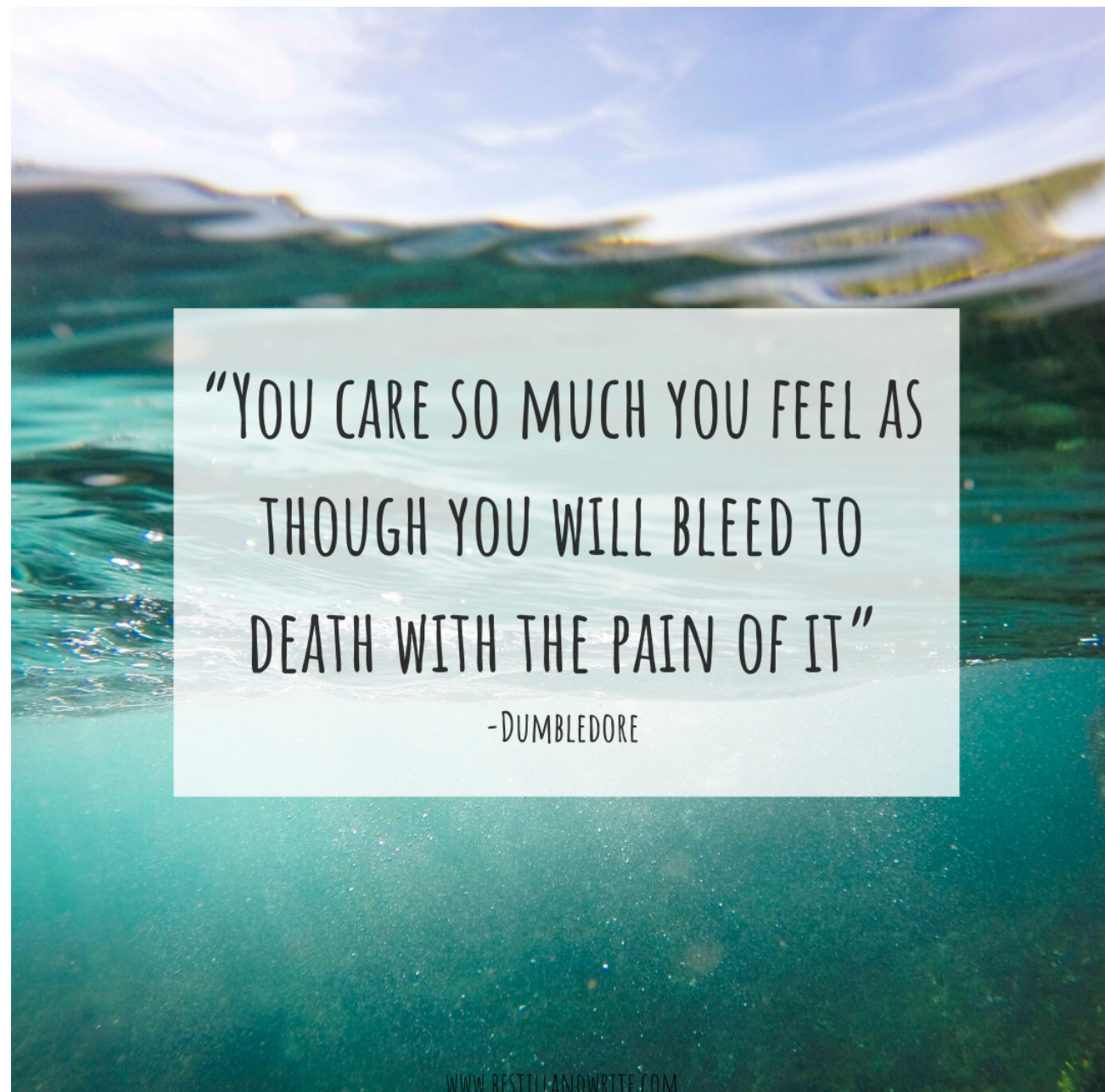
1 John 2:15 says “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Harsh, but true. If we are not careful, our desire to be accepted by the world we live in can rob us of a much greater acceptance into the family of God. Let’s choose to be more like Hagrid in our faith. There’s some that will hold your faith against you, but they’re opinion is not worth bothering with.

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Have you allowed the pressure of acceptance to dictate your faith in Christ? How so?

Being obedient to the call of Christ while living in a broken world isn’t easy, but it’s always worth it. What step can you take in obedience today? (It might be cutting out a TV show, a bad influence, etc..)



## Day 4

"You care so much you feel as though you will bleed to death with the pain of it." - Dumbledore, JK Rowling

Have you ever felt an emotion so deeply it was as though your heart had been ripped from the cavern of your chest? The tears won't stop. Your ears ring as the people around you move in slow motion. There is pain, deep real pain in every fiber of every muscle in your body. You can no longer stand. Falling to the ground you let out a cry so chasmic it shakes the very foundation of your soul.

I have felt that kind of pain, more than once in my lifetime. Harry felt that pain when he lost Sirius. Dumbledore knew exactly what he was feeling, because he too had known loss.

*"I DON'T CARE!" Harry yelled at them, snatching up a lunascope and throwing it into the fireplace. "I'VE HAD ENOUGH, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH, I WANT OUT, I WANT IT TO END, I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!" "You do care," said Dumbledore. He had not flinched or made a single move to stop Harry demolishing his office. His expression was calm, almost detached. "You care so much you feel as though you will bleed to death with the pain of it."*

Jesus experienced this type of pain on the night before his arrest.

He went to the Mount of Olives to pray, and the Bible says *"in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke 22:44)."*

The condition detailed in this passage is in fact a real medical condition called Hematohidrosis. It is a condition caused by acute fear and extreme stress. The condition has been known to cause people to sweat blood.

Jesus was in **pain**.

Christ can sympathize with our hurt, because He Himself has been through the very worst. I find comfort in the fact that my Savior truly experienced such fear, stress, and loss in His time here on earth. It's comforting to know that he has been there. I am not alone. He understands my hurt.

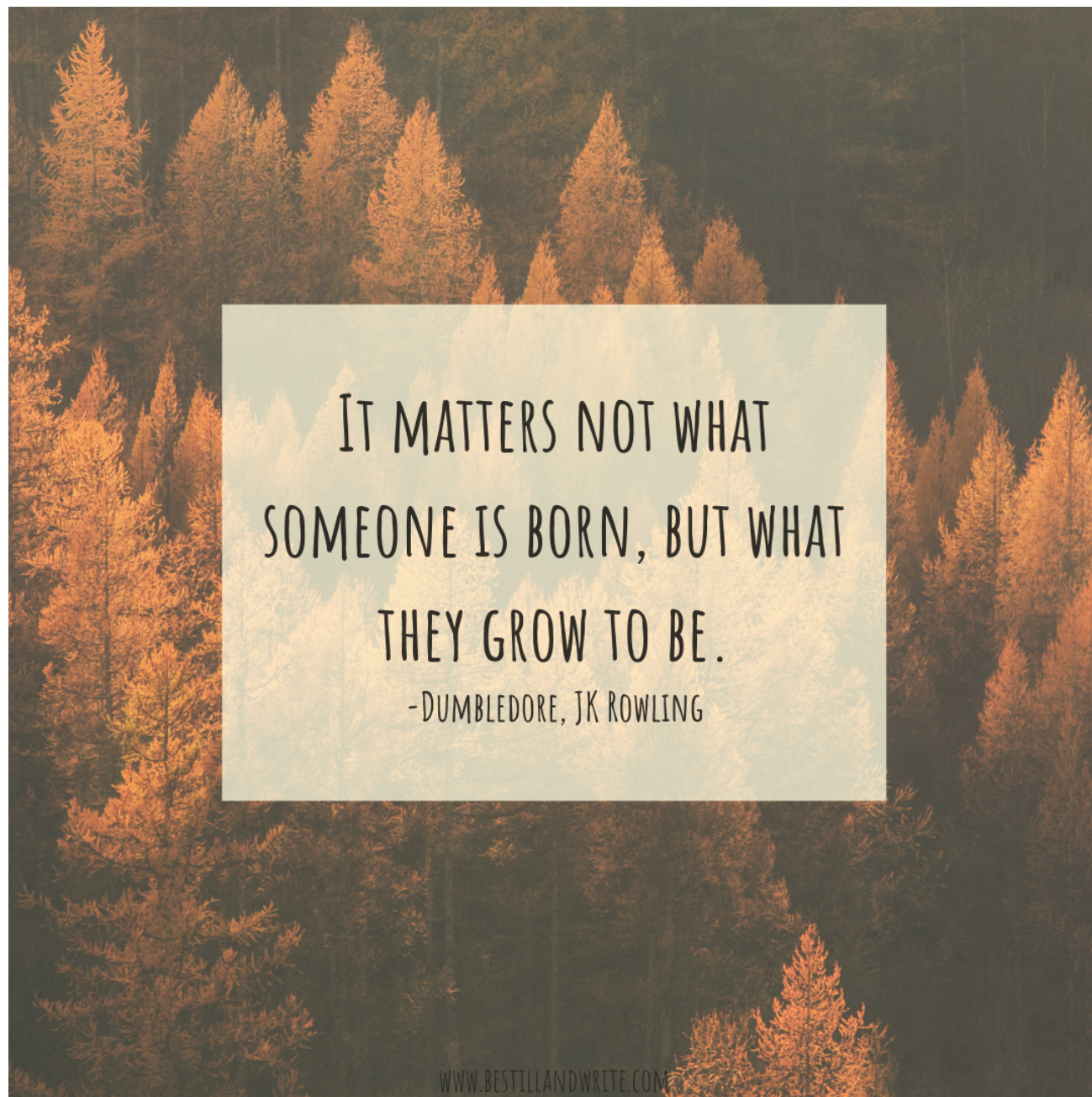
If you are experiencing a season of betrayal, loss, or pain, know that I am praying for your healing. I also pray that in that season you would find comfort in the arms of our compassionate Father.

*"May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant." - Psalm 119:76*

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The horrific medical truth of what Christ went through on the cross is something I did not comprehend until college. Have you allowed yourself to meditate on the truth of the crucifixion?

God is Jehovah Rophe, our healer. How might this aspect of God's character bring you comfort?



Day 5

“It matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be.” – Dumbledore, JK Rowling

One of my greatest struggles is not allowing my mind to dwell on my past – the decisions, mistakes and missteps I have taken in my 28 years on this planet. I can't help but brood over questions like:

Did I make a fool of myself? Will they ever forgive me? Why did I do that? Why did I say that? Do they know I'm not that girl anymore?

Thankfully our past does not dictate our future. It doesn't matter where you have been or the mistakes you have made. Thank the Lord above, it only matters who we grow to be. (Spoiler alert) Harry Potter lived 18 years with a small piece of Lord Voldemort's soul living inside him, but that didn't make him evil. Harry chose good, no matter how hard the fight. We all have that same choice with the start of each new day.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” – 2 Corinthians 5:17

The drama-infused and emotion-led girl from my past was washed away when Jesus made me a new creation. With every year that passes I recognize that version of me less and less. As Galatians 2:20 says, *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*

If you struggle like I do and spend much of your day focusing on your past, rather than your glorious present or future, know you are not alone. It really is a struggle. Something that helps me is repeating to myself that I am a new creation.

Memorize verses like 2 Corinthians 5:17 or Galatians 2:20. Make them your mantra and take those nasty thoughts captive. You are good enough. If you have given your life to Christ, you are saved. God doesn't regret creating you and he doesn't regret saving you. It matters not what you were born, but what you grow to be.

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Your past does not define you. Take time today and write out your most haunting mistakes. Then mark each sin out in red marker. They are covered in the blood of Jesus and may haunt your new creation no longer.

Find a few note cards and write out the verses listed above. Keep these cards in your car, your bathroom mirror, or even your purse. Memorize God's Word and allow it to saturate your soul.



## Day 6

“No good sittin’ worryin’ abou’ it. What’s comin’ will come, an’ we’ll meet it when it does.” – Hagrid, JK Rowling

Shout out to all the other professional worriers out there!

Worrying runs in my blood. I’m a planner, an avid organizer. I like to know what is happening every day and in what order and what the weather will be and if I should bring extra clothes. I am a classic over-packer. Or rather, I am always prepared for literally any situation. When you live in the unpredictable state of Kansas you really do need to be prepared for any situation.

I was born a worrier into a family of worriers. Then I married my amazing husband Colton. He does everything at the last second and usually on a whim. You guys, he naps! I cannot fathom the idea of napping when there are plenty of other things I can do in the daytime. Not to mention he could fall asleep anywhere in like two minutes. He’s the epitome of chill.

God has a funny sense of humor, you know? Bringing together a planner and a procrastinator.

When I am imploding from worry about world peace or when I will get the laundry done (you know, the important things..) Colton is calm, cool and collected. Like Hagrid! “No good sittin’ worryin’ abou’ it,” he’d say.

Jesus has a very similar command in Matthew 6:34 - *“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”*

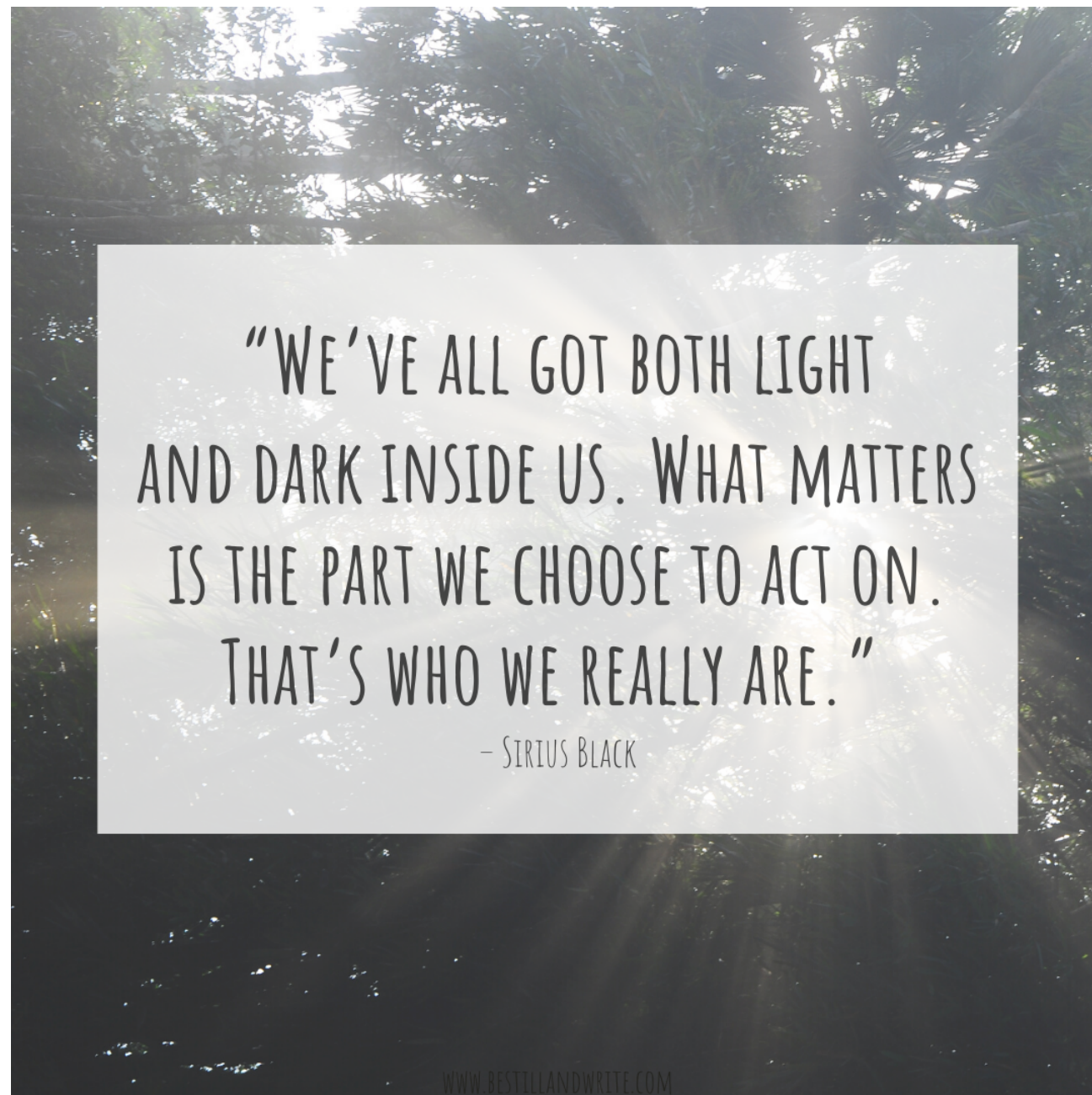
There’s no need to focus all our time and energy on worry. I’m preaching to myself at this point. I’m telling myself to adopt a more Colton-Hagrid mentality. “What’s comin’ will come, an’ we’ll meet it when it does.”

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Are you a planner or a procrastinator?

What do you worry about most?

Use your prayer time today to hand over any and all worries to God.



Day 7

When I was in high school my mother told me a Native American legend about two wolves, and it has stuck with me ever since.

"An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. 'A fight is going on inside me,' he said to the boy. 'It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.'

He continued, 'The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too.'

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, 'Which wolf will win?' The old Cherokee simply replied, 'The one you feed.'"

Harry is going through a sort of identity crisis when Sirius tells him a similar story.

"I want you to listen to me very carefully, Harry. You're not a bad person. You're a very good person, who bad things have happened to. Besides, the world isn't split into good people and Death Eaters. We've all got both light and dark inside us. What matters is the part we choose to act on. That's who we really are."

The year my mother told me this story, I was being bullied. Frequently. Maliciously. It was exhausting, and every day I would come home from school in tears. I begged my mother to home school me. I didn't know who I could trust, and that was the hardest part.

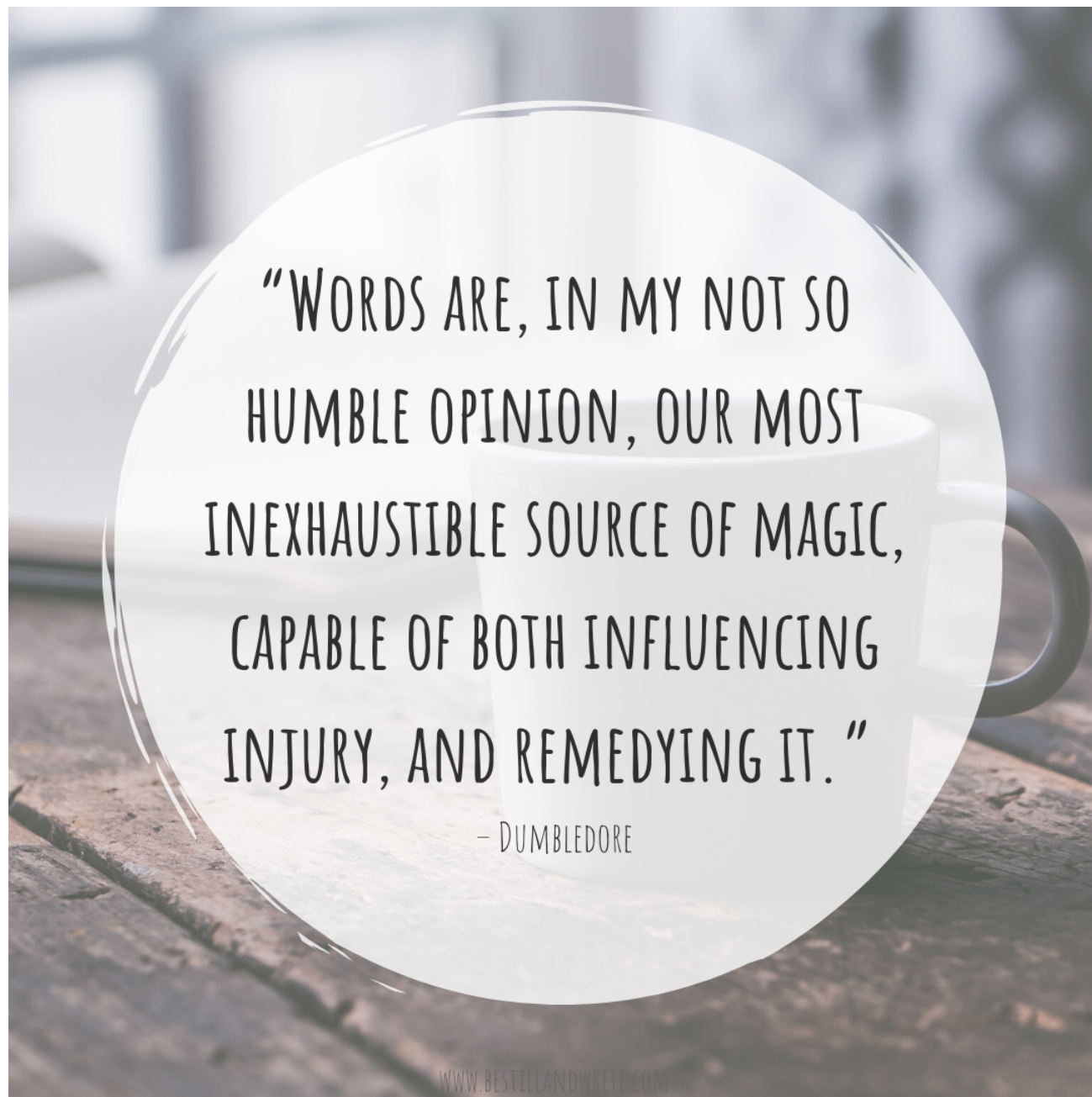
When my mother told me the story of the two wolves, she told me I had a choice. There were bullies in my high school, and I could let them bring me down or I could rise up and continue to fight. I could fight by choosing to feed the good wolf.

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Which wolf have you been feeding this week? This year? Which will you feed today?

What makes it difficult to feed the right wolf?





## Day 8

Words can hurt. They haunt. They bury themselves deep within the recesses of our mind only to reappear years later. Then they hurt all over again. Words like...

*Chelsea, get over it.  
You need to learn to suck it in.  
Demons are just fallen angels.*

But words can also heal. They restore. They pull us into a comforting embrace and tuck our scarred hearts into a warm feather bed. They give us peace, such as...

*I'm so proud of you.  
You're my favorite person.  
I love you.*

Dumbledore knew the power of words when he spoke to Harry in 'Kings Cross' in the Deathly Hallows. He called them an inexhaustible source of magic. Scripture also speaks about the power within our words in the book of Proverbs.

*"The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing." - Proverbs 12:18*

*"Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut." - Proverbs 10:19*

*"The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin." - Proverbs 13:3*

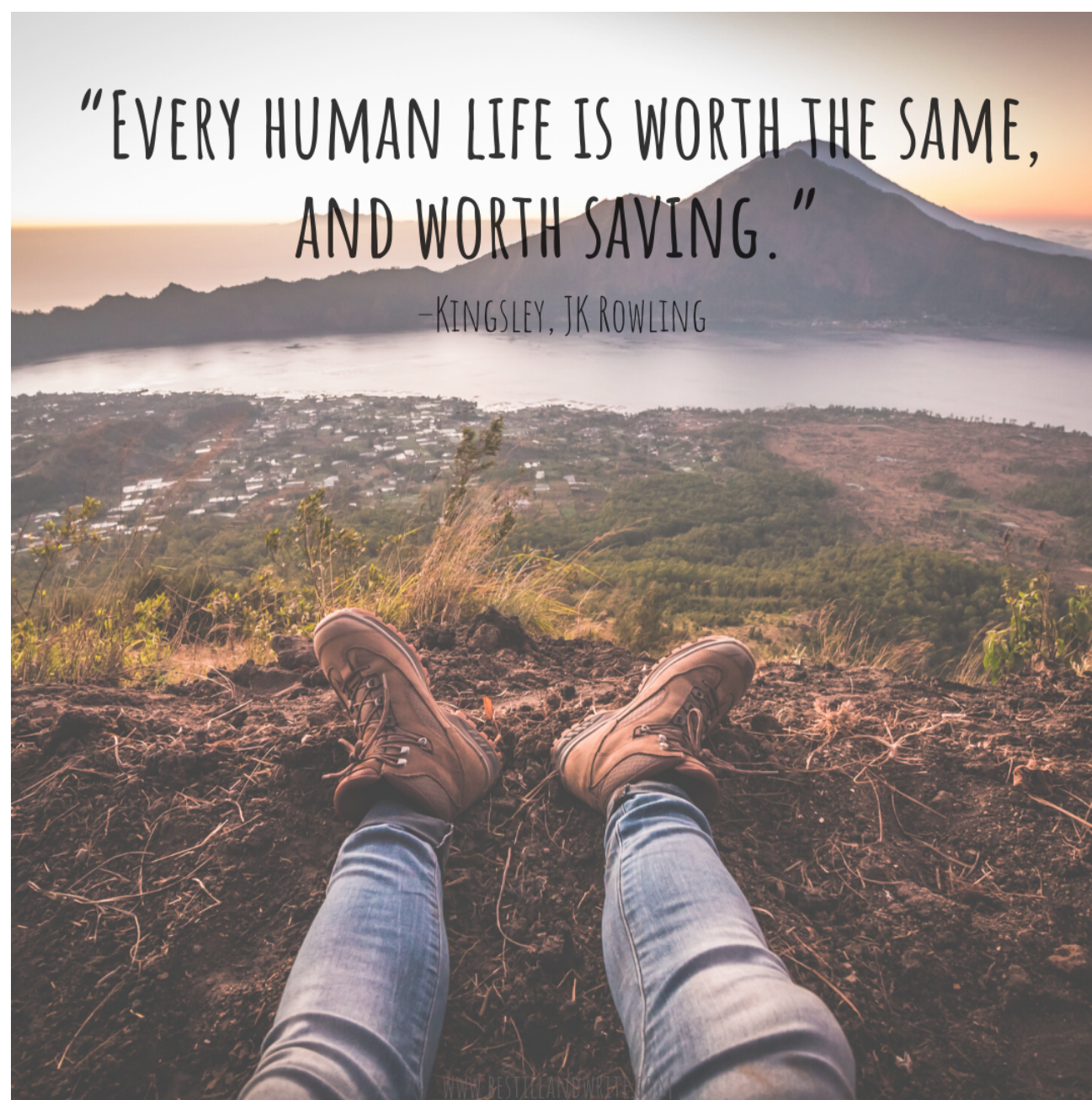
May our words be those of healing, comfort, kindness, and peace. I think the world needs more of that. As Jen Wilkin, one of my favorite authors and teachers, once said (and this is a paraphrase): The tongue is behind a set of teeth and two lips for a reason.

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Have you ever allowed your words to pierce like a sword?

How can your words provide healing today?

God used the written word to bring the Gospel to many. Why might he have chosen the written word?



Day 9

First of all, Kingsley does not get enough credit for the amazing character he is. There's really not much more to say than that every life matters and is worth saving. Throughout the Harry Potter series there is this discussion about Pure Bloods verses Muggle Borns verses Half Bloods. There are some wizards who believe in a hierarchy, while others like Kingsley believe all life is valuable.

It's a similar conversation to one happening in our culture today, but it was also a topic addressed in the Bible.

"For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" – Romans 10:5-15

God's love is not restricted to one people. He desires the whole earth to be saved. There is no distinction, He said. Everyone matters.

There's a lot of hate in our world today. There is division based on country, skin color, political beliefs, social status and even sports team affiliation.

But when you break it all down, we are all God's creation. Each and every person on this planet was hand-stitched together by God. With the word of his mouth and the breath of His lungs we were born. No one is better than the other.

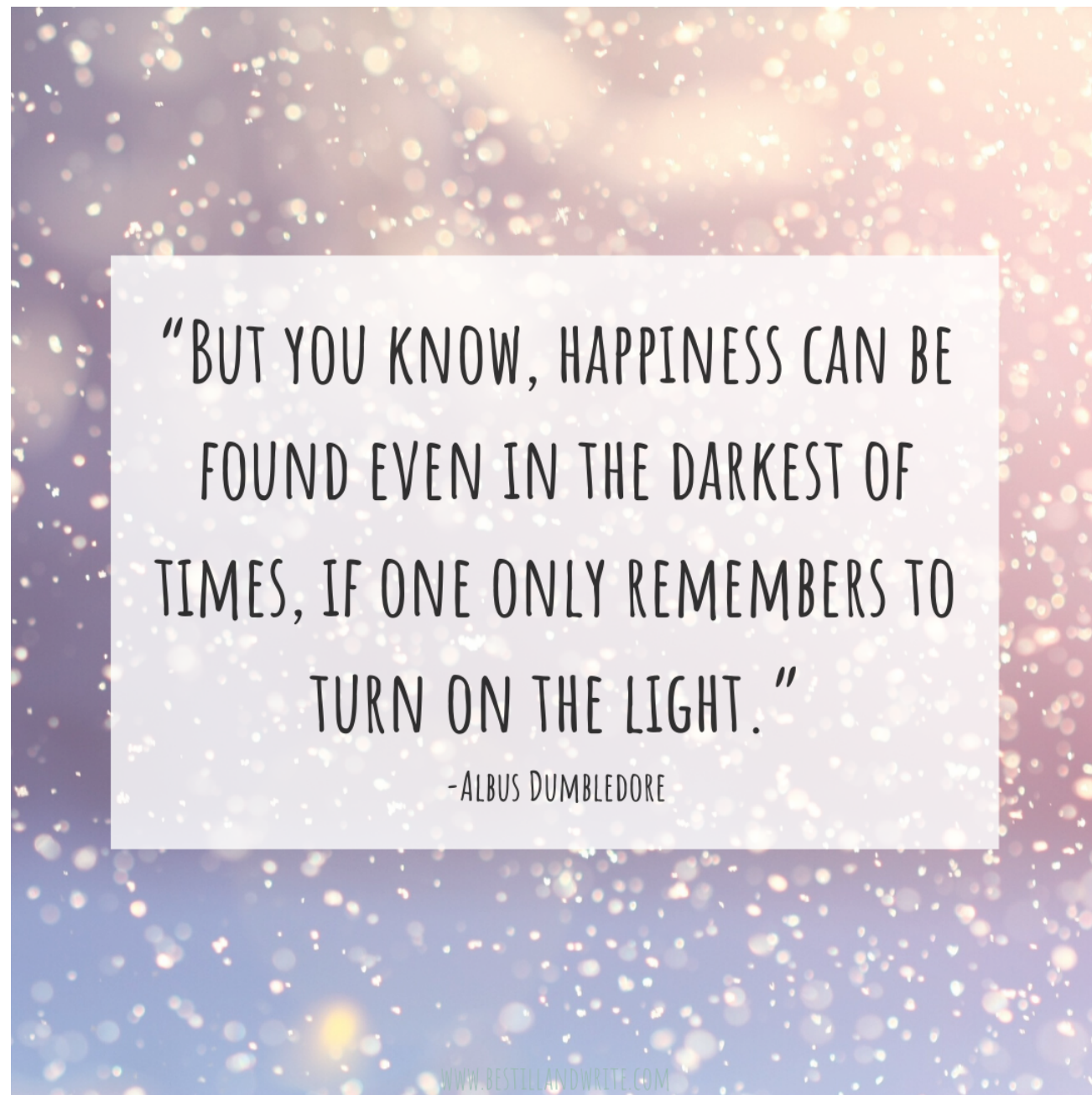
Every human life is worth the same, and worth saving.

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What role can you play in eliminating prejudice in our world today?

Who might you have trouble praying for because they seem like a lost cause?

Spend some time in prayer for them today, as well as for your country and it's leaders.



## Day 10

"But you know, happiness can be found even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light."  
- Dumbledore

When I was a little girl my mother and father took the family to a community haunted house. Halfway through the building my very worst nightmare became reality. I dropped my teddy bear. I dropped my teddy bear in a haunted house.

He fell into the abyss, possibly lost for eternity, when out of the strobe light appeared a witch with a green face, big black hat and warty nose.

Y'all... she had my bear. The Wicked Witch of the West had captured my Bear Bear.

Sobbing became screaming as I buried my face into my dad's chest. I feared the worst, but then something funny happened. The room lit up and the witch spoke in a voice I knew very well. She was my teacher, just pretending to be a witch.

The haunted house wasn't so terrifying in daylight.

In the throes of life, it is easy to get caught up in the drama and lose hope. Sometimes it feels like we have had a very Monday-ish year, and in those seasons we can take a cue from King David (and Dumbledore) by turning on the light.

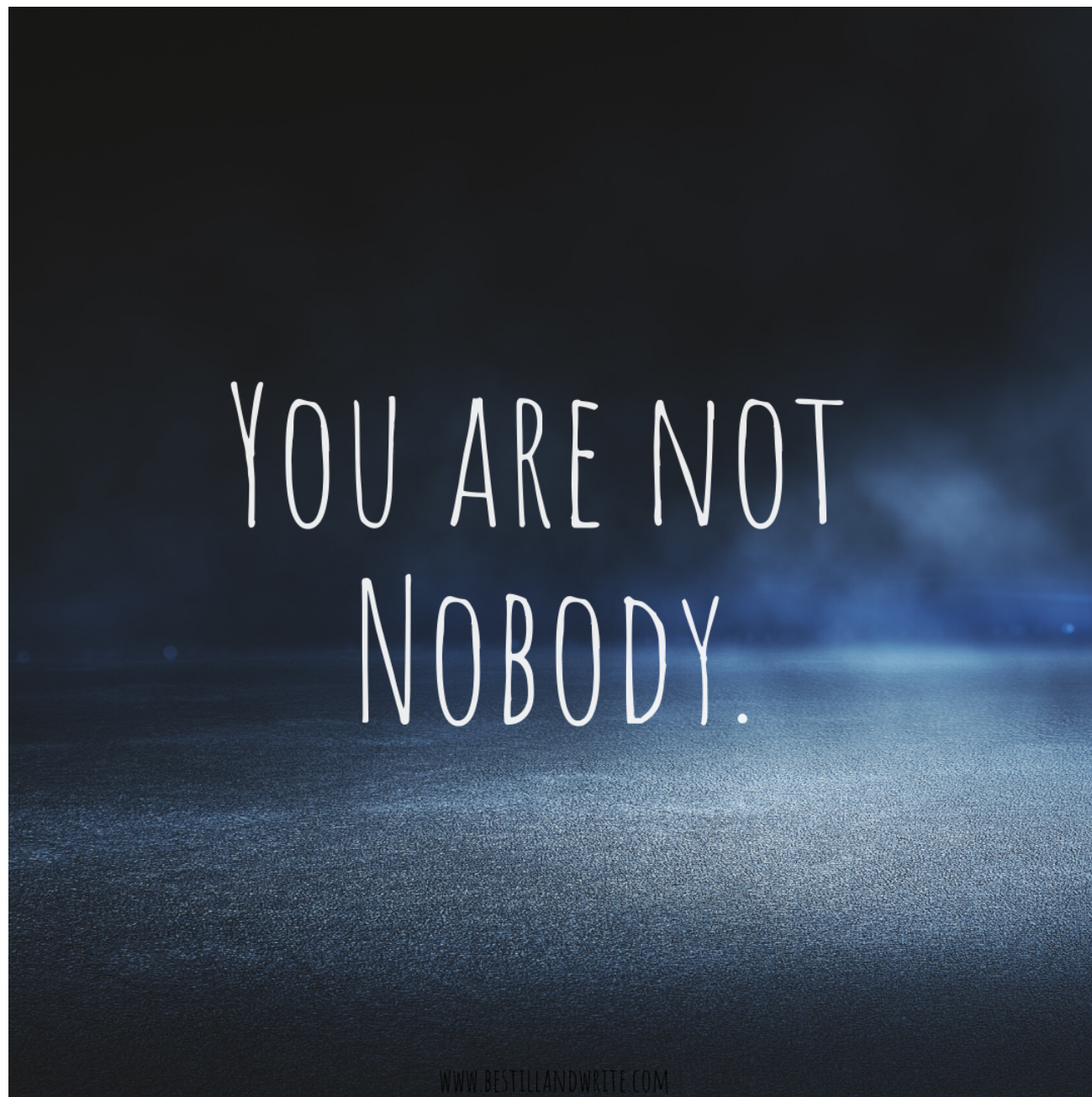
*"How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?... But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation."* - Psalm 13:1,5

David could be in a fit of depression, but he always turned his eyes back to God. What a good example of how we are to react on the difficult days.

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How can you turn your eyes to hope today?

Do you know someone who might need a little light in their life? How can you help them today?



Day 11

"'I'm nobody,' said Neville hurriedly. 'No, you're not,' said Ginny sharply."

In the Order of the Phoenix when Neville meets Luna, he is quick to assure her that he is nobody. I mean, being in the same class as Harry Potter, Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger would make me feel like nobody for sure. Can you imagine being a classmate of the Boy Who Lived?

But Ginny does not allow him to think this way. You are not nobody, she says. You are somebody. You have a name and a purpose. Obviously taking liberty on the dialogue there, but you get the point.

It's easy to think that you are nobody, without purpose or quality, especially if you come from nothing or aren't doing anything extraordinary. But the truth is God tends to use the people we would deem least qualified.

Abraham was too old.

Jacob was a liar.

Gideon was afraid.

Rahab was A prostitute.

Jeremiah and Timothy were considered too young.

David had an affair.

Moses was a murderer.

Jonah ran from God.

Peter denied Christ.

The Disciples fell asleep while praying.

The Samaritan Woman was divorced five times.

And the list goes on and on. You, my dear sweet reader, are not nobody. You were handpicked by the King of Kings for a glorious purpose. You are enough.

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Describe a moment when you felt like a nobody.

Which Biblical character from the list above stood out to you the most?

How can you encourage others like Ginny?



## Day 12

"I am not worried, Harry," said Dumbledore, his voice a little stronger despite the freezing water. "I am with you."

The phrase "I am with you" appears in the Bible for the first time when God is speaking to Isaac in Genesis 26:24. This same phrase appears dozens of times through scripture, all the way to Revelation. My favorite example of this is in Colossians 2:5 when Paul is speaking to the people at the church of Colassae.

*"For though I am absent in body, yet **I am with you** in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ."*

I'm sure they were comforted to know Paul was with them, but in truth that phrasing "I am with you" is much more familiar to the congregation. It was a phrase they would recognize from the Old Testament scriptures. For example, this verse in Genesis 28:15,

*"Behold, **I am with you** and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*

God is not physically with them, as He is not physically with us, but we can feel the tangible presence of the Holy Spirit nonetheless.

Just as Dumbledore wasn't worried in the Half Blood Prince (because he trusted Harry), how much more fearless can we be knowing that we can fully and completely trust God?

I love that this particular Harry Potter quote also says that Dumbledore's voice grew a little stronger despite the freezing water. The truth is, sometimes we are in an uncomfortable situation, but the truth still stands. God is always with us. We can declare that truth in strength.

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How might we take comfort in the knowledge that God is always with us?

Can you think of any other verses in the Bible containing the phrase "I am with you?"



Day 13

Before my grandmother passed away, she wrote me a letter, her last words to me. I hold that letter as one of my prized possessions. In it she says beautiful things about her belief in me, her hopes for my life and her unwavering faith in the Lord. After paragraphs of cherished words came her last sentence, “Have a good life.”

Final words are important.

The last three words of the seven book Harry Potter series: “All is well.” JK Rowling herself is quoted by MSNBC as saying “It's done. And maybe a tiny bit of that was to say to people, "No, Voldemort's not rising again. We're not going to have Part Two. Harry's job is done." So that's why I changed it [to "all is well"].

In comparison, the last few words in the Bible are “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.”

Amen can also be translated as "So be it."

Jesus came to this earth. He lived a sinless life, died for our sins and rose again. His job was done. Except, unlike in JK Rowling’s Harry Potter, there will be a round two. You can read all about it in the book of Revelation! Jesus will return someday to fight the final battle with Satan. He will win and our new earth will have peace.

So for now we work and toil here, but one day Jesus will come back and all will be well.

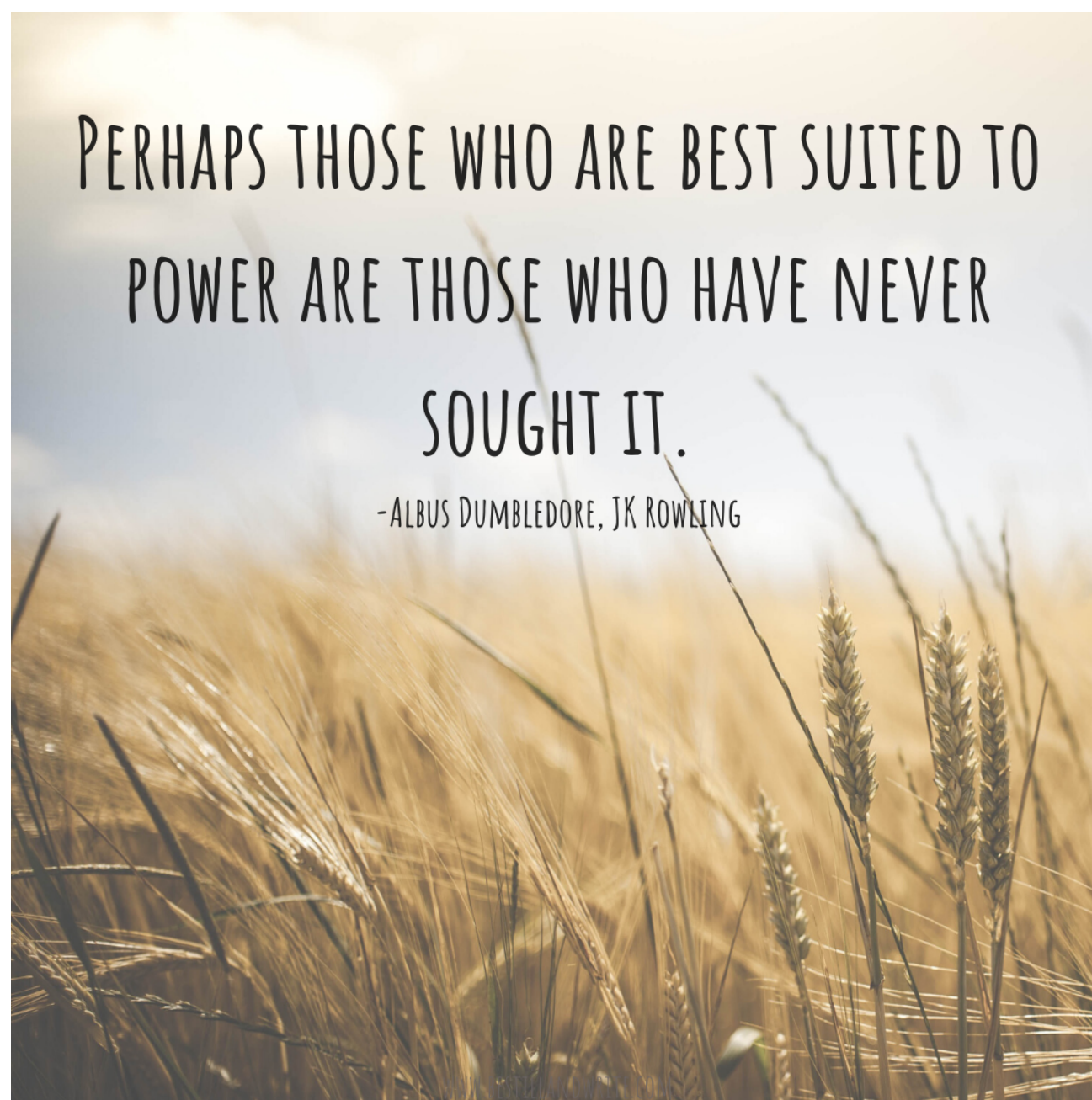
Amen!

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What significance do you find in the last sentence of the Harry Potter series?

And the last sentence in Scripture?

How do you want people to remember you in the future? Choose one word you hope they'll associate with your character.



## Day 14

“Perhaps those who are best suited to power are those who have never sought it.” – Albus Dumbledore

Before David was a king, he was a shepherd. He was the youngest of his brothers, and basically the least impressive. Yet, when Samuel came to anoint the next king of Israel, David was the one that stood out to God.

He probably smelled like sheep and looked a mess, but when David walked in the room God said, “Arise, *anoint him, for this is he* (1 Samuel 16:12).” Can you imagine? I mean, fresh in from tending the sheep and he is about to be anointed king. I bet David looked around at the people behind him and pointed at himself in disbelief. Me? Are you sure you mean me?

Now, David wasn’t king right then and there. It took years and many dangerous encounters with Saul before David became the official King over all of Israel. He was patient and waited on God’s timing.

God favors humility.

Matthew 23:12 says, “*For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.*”

Humility is a modest view of your own importance. This doesn’t mean that you think of yourself as worthless. It means that you realize your position in relation to God. That’s an important distinction for me, as I sometimes get the definition skewed.

Dumbledore also struggled with humility, as we see in the quote above. It’s important to remember that when he says this sentence to Harry, he is explaining why he chose not to be Minister of Magic, though he was offered the job many times. Dumbledore knew himself too well. The limelight would not be good for him, as it would be for someone like Harry, who takes up the mantle because they must. King David is a similar figure.

As Psalm 149:4 says, “*For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.*”

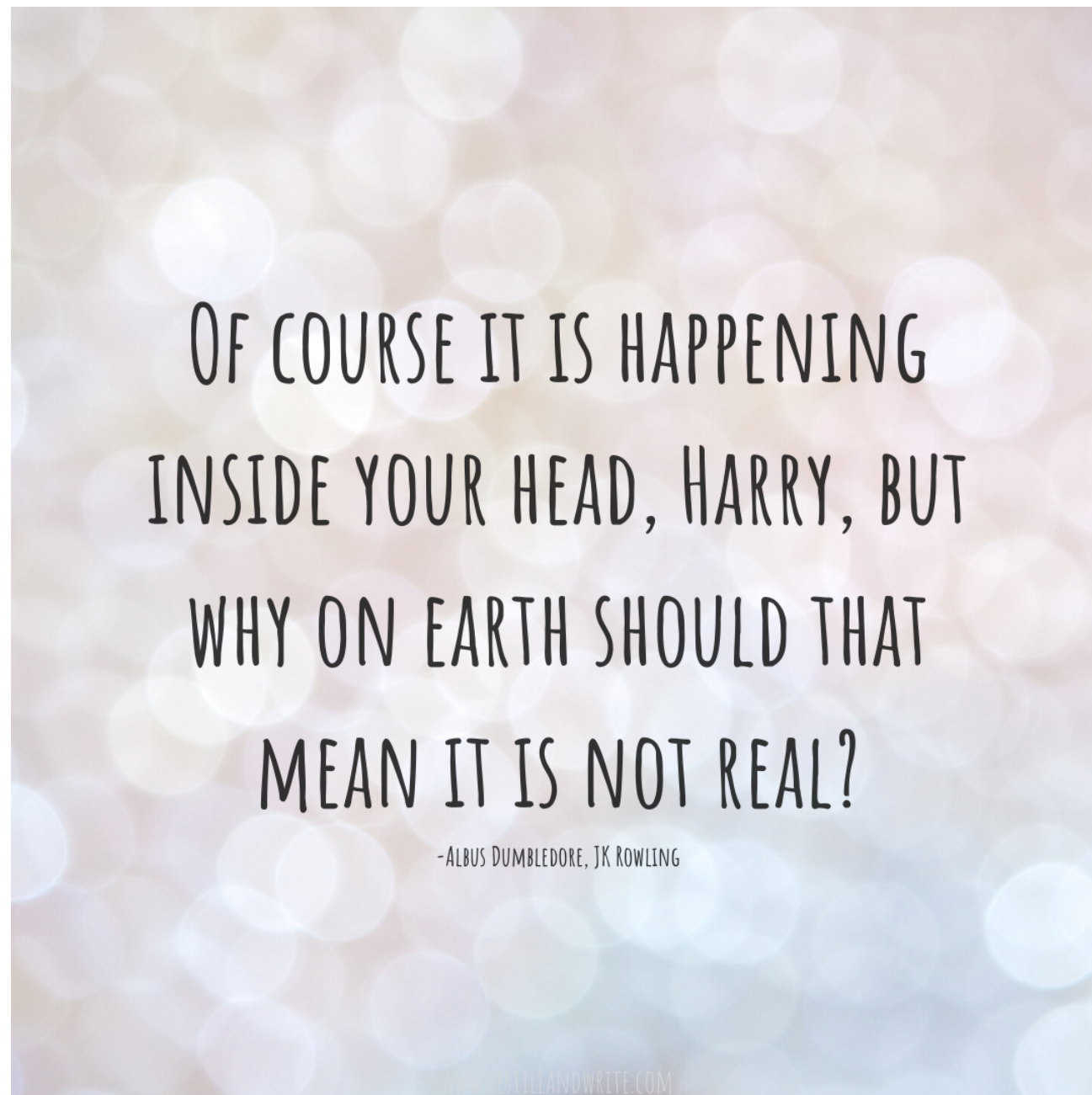
God has a plan for your life, and that may or may not include a stellar career and fame. It might mean a simple, small life that impacts few. No matter what, I encourage you to take a note from Harry and David and walk in humility with our God. In that there is victory. .

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Do you struggle being humble? If so, how and when?

What reminder can you place around you to always seek humility?

Has God every given you an opportunity to learn humility?



Day 15

A study at the University of Kentucky showed that exposure to consistent stress can lead to the breakdown of immunity, illness, depression and anxiety. The study concluded that long-term stress ravages the body.

I've experienced this type of consistent and unrelenting stress. It's extraordinary the impact our minds have on our bodies. During that season I found it difficult to sort my thoughts and maintain my schedule. The smallest addition could overwhelm me and lead to a panic attack. I found I was coaching myself inside my head, "You got this. You are okay. It's just grocery shopping. You will be done soon and on your way home. Keep it together.."

Since leaving that pressure cooker, I have even noticed my hair and nails growing stronger. I'm sleeping more soundly. I'm less of a grouch. My mind doesn't feel so muddled.

2 Corinthians 10:5-6 says we are to "take captive" of our thoughts, and for good reason!

Have you ever watched a murder documentary or scary movie and the rest of the night you felt dark and brooding? Or maybe you sat with a group of negative people complaining at dinner, and afterwards you just felt angry at the world. Have you spent extended periods of time in an overwhelming environment and coached yourself inside your head?

Harry had an entire very important conversation with Dumbledore in his own mind, but that did not make it less real. It was real to Harry.

Your anxiety is real. Your hurt is real. Your stress is very real. However, today I encourage you to take your thoughts captive. Don't allow negativity or stress rule your mind.

As Romans 12:2 says, "*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*"

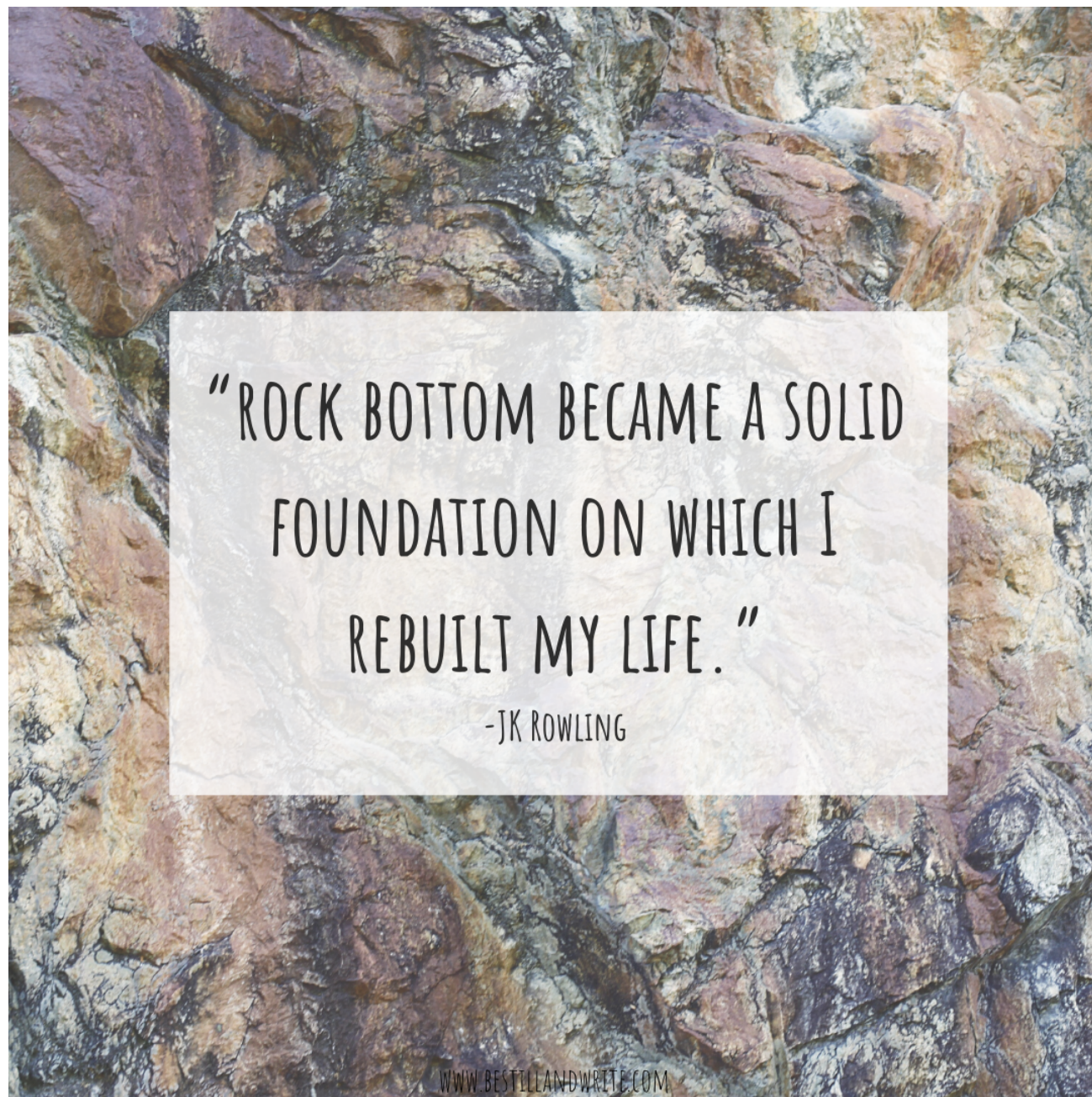
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Have you ever struggled with anxiety? What helped you during that season?

What affects has stress had on your physical body?

What can you do today to relax and recenter on Christ?





## Day 16

"I was set free because my greatest fear had been realized, and I still had a daughter who I adored, and I had an old typewriter and a big idea. And so rock bottom became a solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life." – JK Rowling

Before Rowling's masterpiece, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" was accepted by publishers, she was unemployed and living on state benefits. Her life was truly at rock bottom. In fact, the creation of the dementors came from her personal experience with clinical depression.

Miraculously, in a mere five years Rowling went from living on state benefits to becoming a multi-millionaire. Her rock bottom became a solid foundation.

Before I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I grazed the bottom of the pit. I'd lost friends, distanced from family, my grades suffered along with my health, and I felt hopeless. God used this time of my stubborn rebellion to show me His endless grace and mercy.

Rock bottom led me to a solid foundation in Jesus.

1 Corinthians 3:10-11 says, "According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

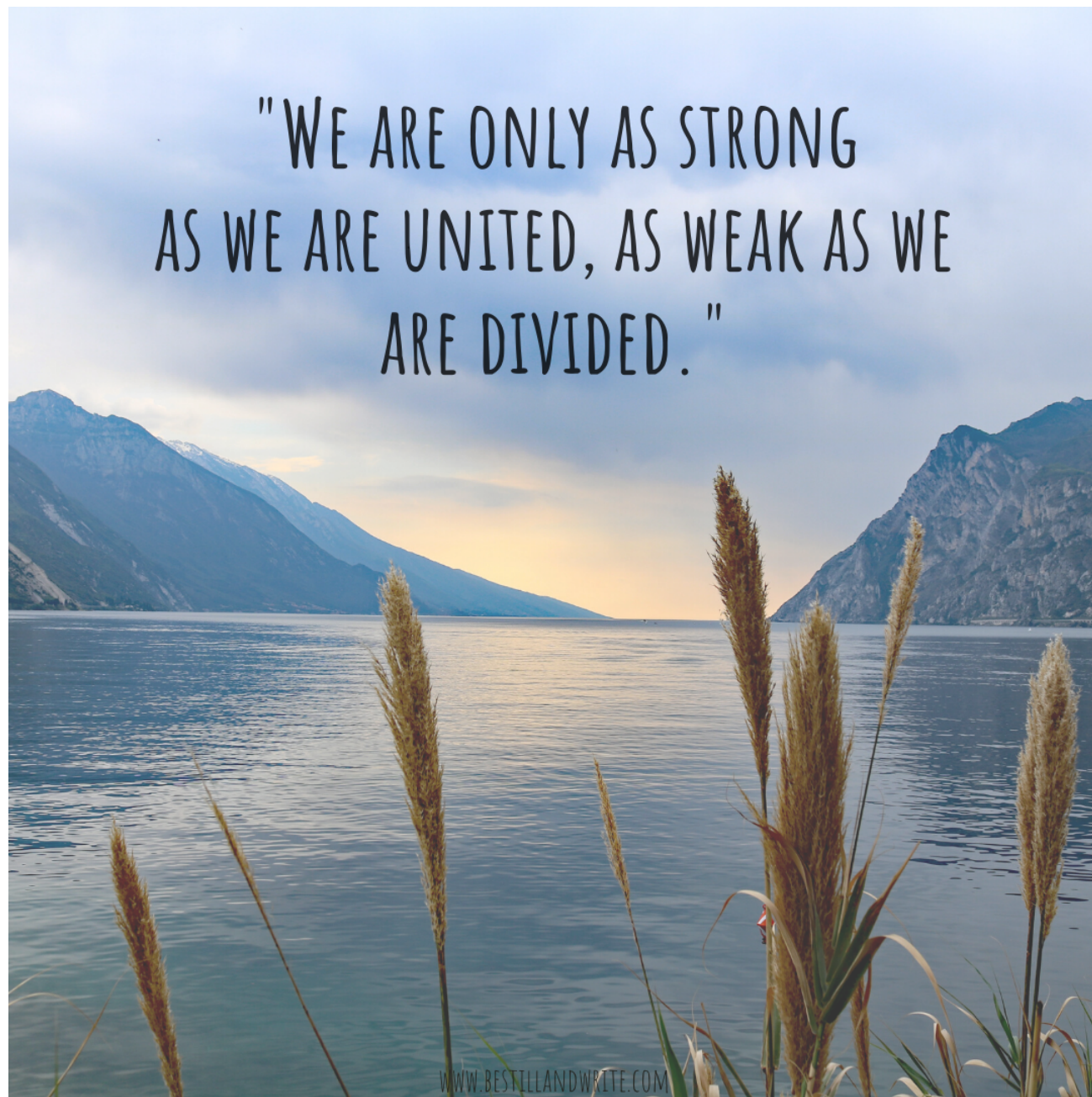
Today you might be lying at the bottom of a deep pit you dug yourself. Or perhaps you are desperately trying to claw your way out. Either way, Jesus is standing beside you. Allow Him to be your new, immovable firm foundation.

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Have you made Jesus your firm foundation?

Have you spent time at the bottom of the pit? How did you make it out?

Are you currently sitting in the pit? Pray today that God would lead you out of it. I'll be praying for you, too!



Day 17

"... we are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided. Lord Voldemort's gift for spreading discord and enmity is very great. We can fight it only by showing an equally strong bond of friendship and trust. Differences of habit and language are nothing at all if our aims are identical and our hearts are open." –
Dumbledore

Much like Lord Voldemort, division is Satan's bread and butter. His nature is to steal, kill and destroy. He and his demons will wedge their way into families, friendships, and congregations to widen the chasm of discord until they achieve that final goal: destruction.

One of the many reasons I find the Harry Potter series so compelling is the depiction of the struggle between good and evil. The truth is spiritual warfare is happening right now all around us, unseen.

It is visibly evident now and it was in Biblical times as well.

Paul appealed to the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 1:10, urging them not to allow division. "*I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.*"

He did the same in Colossians, Ephesians, and Galatians. Why this emphasis on unity? As Christians, we are called to be a reflection of Christ to the world. We echo the wondrous beauty of the Godhead's relational threeness and oneness. Though He is trinity (God, Son, and Holy Spirit), He is one.

May we stand in unity today against the one true enemy, the one who comes to steal, kill and destroy. We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided.

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Do you have a group of fellow believers to stand beside you in the fight? Who are those people for you?

How can we fight against discord and enmity?

How does the Trinity show us a perfect depiction of unity?



## Day 18

Now, I am not entirely sure if this quote is a part of the book, but it is in final film at the end of the Battle of Hogwarts. The castle was in ruins and everyone believed that Harry was dead.

Voldemort was gloating. He and his followers pranced about, thinking they had won. It was then the most unlikely boy stood strong. Neville hobbled toward his enemy and declared:

“I’d like to say something... Doesn’t matter that Harry’s gone... Yeah, we lost Harry tonight, but he is still with us. In here.”

It’s an epic speech from the Dealthy Hallows movie you can re-watch it on Youtube!

When Jesus died on the cross, his disciples went into hiding. They were devastated, lost, broken. How could it be that the Son of God is dead?

They were so lost they couldn’t believe Mary when on the third day Jesus had risen and she ran to tell them “*I have seen the Lord!*” (John 20:18).” But Mary knew what she had seen. She knew that not even death could contain the Lord God Almighty.

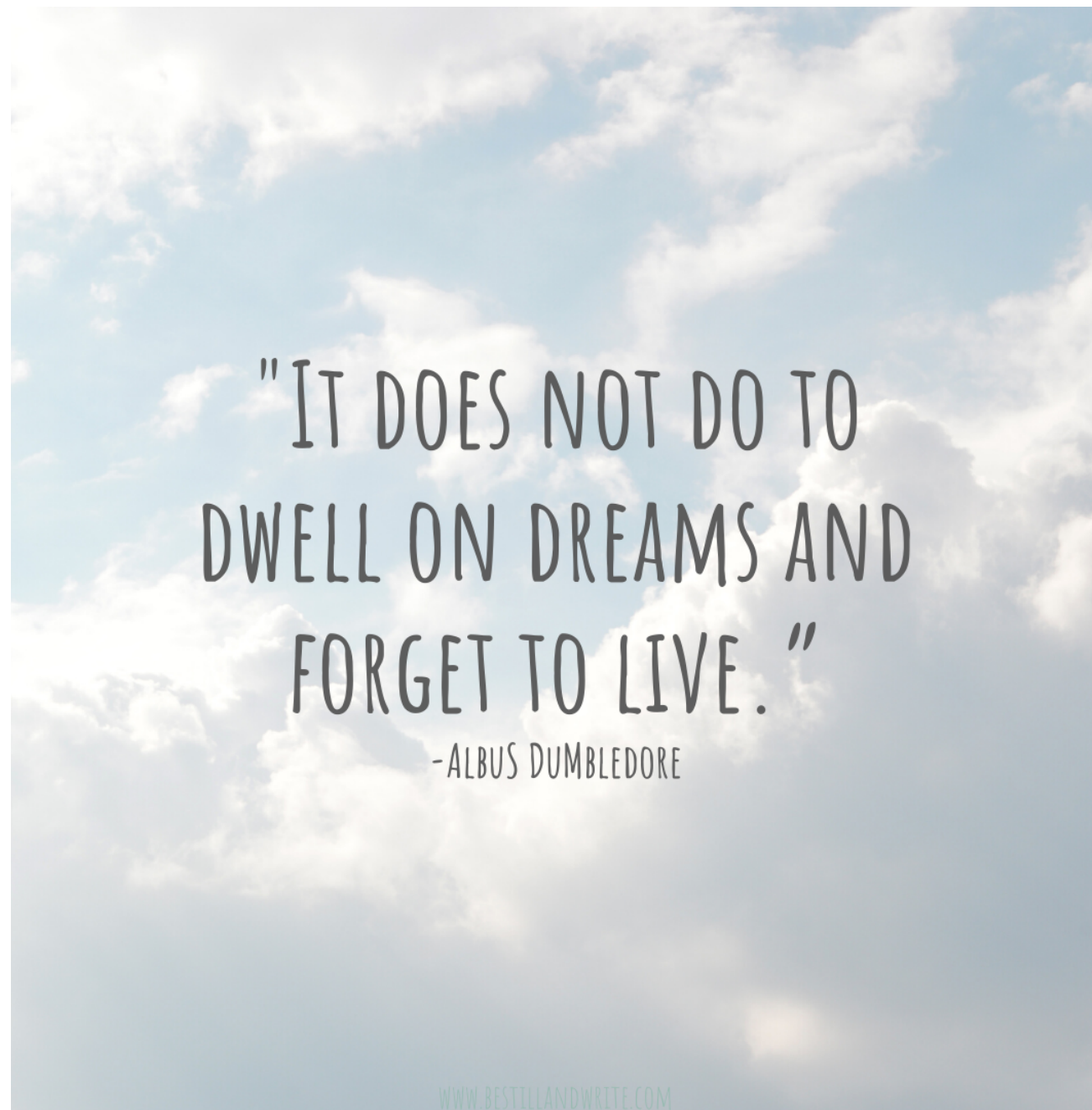
Jesus Christ no longer walks the earth, but he left something far more precious behind, the Holy Spirit.

It’s too long to copy and paste the scripture here, but today I encourage you to read John 14. It’s a short chapter filled with hope and an excellent reminder of the comforting and powerful God we serve. Remember, He is still with us.

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Have you ever known something to be true, but everyone doubted you? Describe that moment.

Spend time today reading through John 14 and highlight your favorite verse or verses from the chapter.



Day 19

I used to have nightmares. Terrible, awful, violent nightmares. Every night I would wake up in shock, covered in sweat and my heart racing.

In high school the dreams got so bad that I refused to go to sleep and suffered from insomnia as a result. Sleep meant nightmares, and I was so very tired of having nightmares.

The dreams reared their ugly heads in college and again in my early years of marriage. I began to expect them, as did my husband who so lovingly comforted me each time I woke.

Then one night, a miracle.

The dream began as it always did. I turned to face my own personal demon and braced myself for his words. Except, this time I heard a new voice. It was pure and deep, full of comfort and authority.

“Enough,” He said.

My dream was filled with light as my accuser cowered in the corner. God had spoken. Enough was enough. I woke the next morning with a more profound sense of peace than I had ever experienced before, or have yet to experience again.

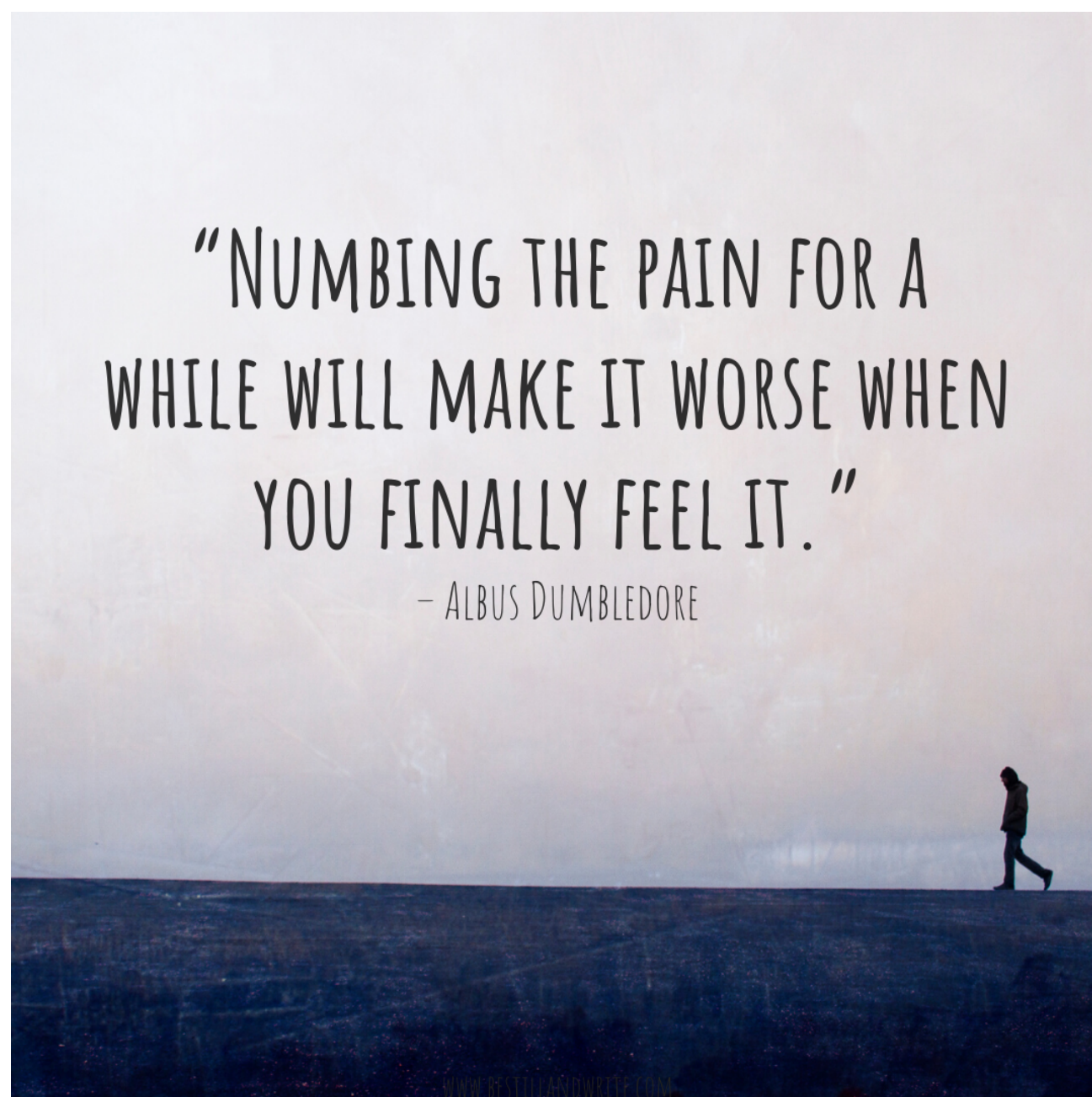
Nightmares plagued me for far too long, and God knew my time dwelling on the past was done. With one word he silenced those demons.

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
– Philippians 4:7

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Read Philippians 4:7 and rewrite it in your own words below.

God is in control of even our dreams. If you are suffering with nightmares as I have, know that I am praying for your release from those dreams. May God give you peace and deep rest in Him.



## Day 20

Numbing yourself is a way to deal with pain. We all have a vice. Maybe it's chocolate or an unhealthy relationship. You binge watch Netflix or shop on Amazon, take a few pills or drink yourself to sleep.

No matter the tool, numbing ourselves to pain is never the answer.

In Jeremiah 6 Israel's false prophets helped the Hebrews numb themselves, and God was not happy about it. He told Jeremiah they had *"healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace."* (Jer. 6:14) Instead of helping the people deal with their pain, the false prophets pretended it didn't exist.

The truth is, a numbing agent is only a temporary solution. Eventually, the pain returns worse than ever. Scripture says there a better way to address our struggle.

*"But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed."* - Isaiah 53:5

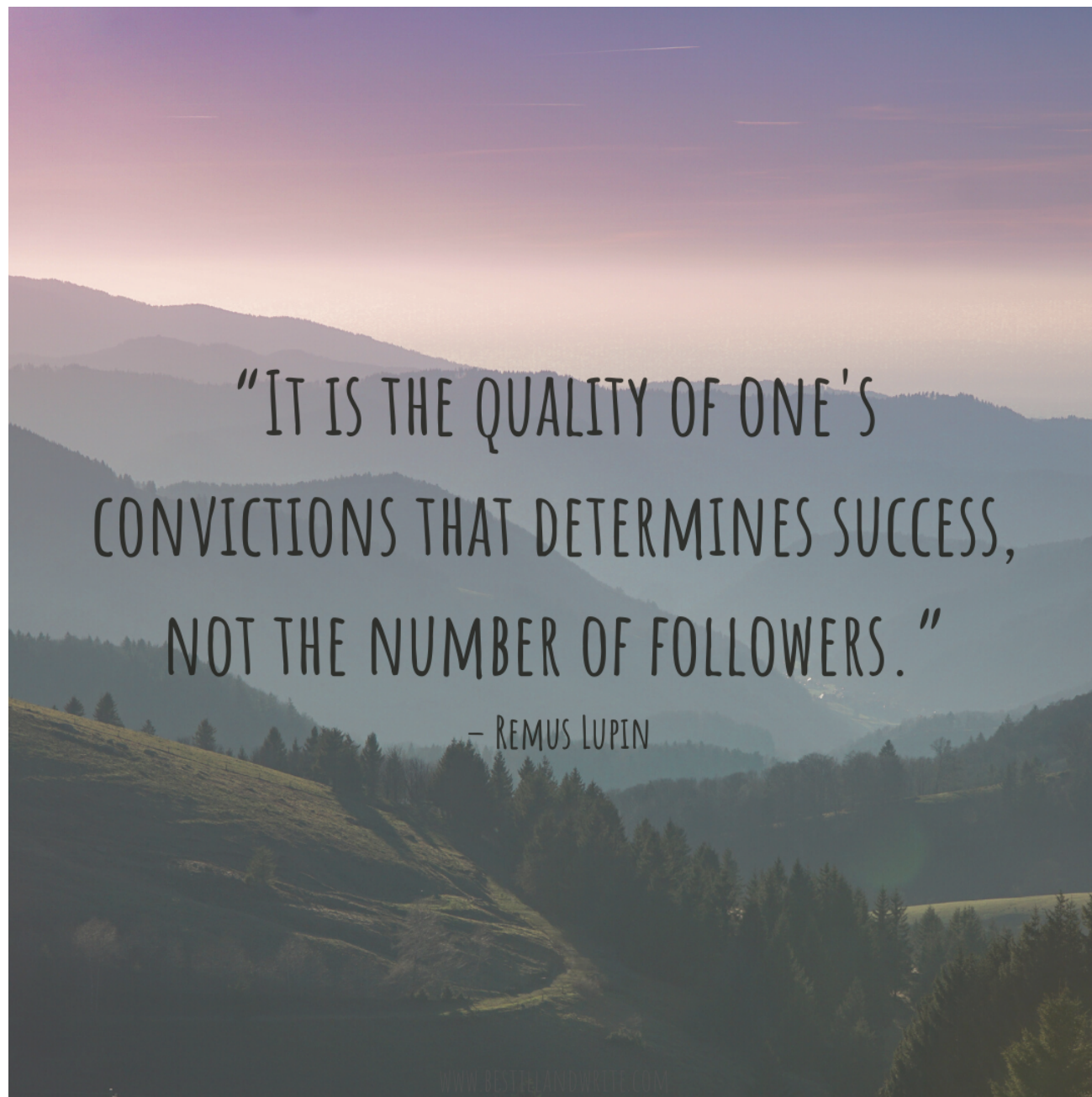
The next time you are tempted to turn on the TV or pick up the bottle to numb yourself to reality, choose turn to the one who felt pain for you instead. Ask God to do what only he can do, give you peace.

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What do you use to escape reality?

What steps can you take today to deal with whatever or whomever you are trying to avoid?

Find an accountability partner who can help you to resist those vices with which you struggle.



Day 21

My husband's choice to follow Jesus with his whole heart was met with resistance. Friends he had known his whole life questioned the change in his heart and in his life. They revolted, because they could not understand.

He lost people, people he'd known his entire life.

I was proud of him, when despite the challenges and opposition, he chose to stand firm in his faith.

In the Battle of Hogwarts the power of the enemy looked insurmountable. Numbers wise, it appeared as though Voldemort would win, but as Lupin said "it is the quality of one's convictions that determines success, not the number of followers."

As a Christian, there are days, weeks, months and even long drawn out seasons when it feels as though the odds are stacked against you. This is especially true when you are perhaps the only one in your family who believes in Jesus. Christ himself said,

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves....you will be hated by all for my name's sake." – Matthew 10:16,22

He warned that we would be hated. Why? Because Satan doesn't want God to win. Spoiler alert, He does. Just like Harry and all his friends defeated Voldemort, God wins. God always wins.

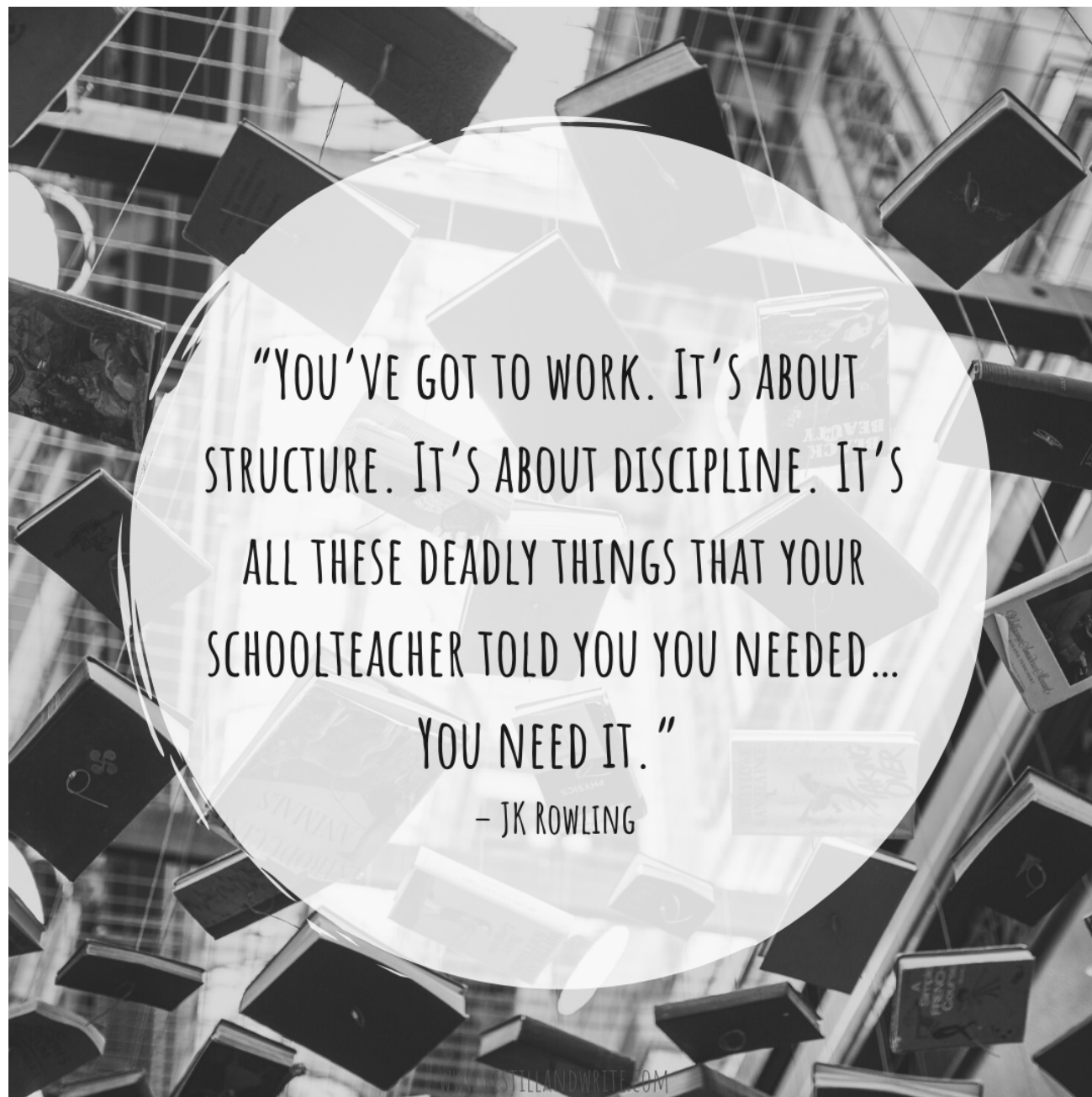
Stand firm in your faith today, no matter the opposition. The quality of your conviction determines success.

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Has your faith in Jesus led to resistance by the people you love?

How can we show love to those who do not support or respect our faith?

How might we be empowered by Matthew 10:16-22?



## Day 22

"You've got to work. It's about structure. It's about discipline. It's all these deadly things that your schoolteacher told you you needed... You need it." – JK Rowling

Discipline.

That's my word of the year for 2019. I am the most stubborn and undisciplined person I know. To be utterly transparent, it is a daily fight with my own flesh to do the things I need to do.

Workouts, eating right, obligations, responsibility.... my body rebels against them. Naturally. Always been that way. I was born a stubborn child, and my mother could regale you with horror stories of my rebellious ways.

We are nearly in the year 2020, and I wonder if I have made any progress in my pursuit of the practice of discipline in these last 12 months. It's not been easy.

Hebrews 12:11 says: "*No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*"

As JK Rowling said, you've got to work. The art of discipline does not come easy, but the reward is great. I am still working on it, so I will have to keep you all updated. From what I've experienced this year, discipline may not be easy, but it is definitely worth it in the end.

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What areas of discipline do you struggle with most?

How can you choose to be disciplined today? This week? This year?

What goals could you accomplish with consistent discipline?



Day 23

“Dobby is free.” - Dobby, JK Rowling

Not a word of a lie, Dobby might very well be my favorite character in all the Harry Potter books. That sweet little mischievous house elf has my heart for sure. Maybe it's his determination to save Harry, his quirky personality or those crazy ears, but I love that little guy.

In my personal opinion, the free the house elf movement was something I missed in the movies. Hermione's bravery in championing for the abused elves was iconic.

Dobby's relief and pure joy when he was presented with a sock and freed is a very small example of how I'm sure we all felt when we were freed from the bondage of sin.

Peace.

That's the only word I can think to describe it. Accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior brought me such peace. It felt like coming home. You know? I finally had a place, and I knew I was exactly where I was meant to be.

Chelsea is free.

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” - John 8:36

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Take a sticky note or journal and write those words with your own name. \_\_\_\_\_ is free. Claim that truth today.

What word would you choose to describe the moment of your salvation? Why that word?

How can you show the miraculous truth of salvation in Christ to others?





## Day 24

'No, Harry, you listen,' said Hermione. 'We're coming with you. That was decided months ago – years, really.'

Ron and Hermione are some of the most loyal friends in literature, save perhaps Samwise Gamgee in the Lord of the Rings series. You really can't find a better friend than Sam, but that's for another devotional series. Ron and Hermione stand with Harry, but more than that they stand up for what is right.

I've been thinking a lot recently about the idea of showing up, because honestly that's a lot of what loyalty and friendship is. You show up for people, even when you don't know what to say or do. You are there, and that's what counts.

Proverbs 17:17 says *"A friend loves at all times."*

I acknowledge the fact that some relationships are toxic and should not be fought for, but rather ended. If you are being hurt physically or emotionally, if you or anyone else in a relationship is in danger, please seek the help of a counselor or pastor.

With that being said, a friend loves at all times. Relationships are work. They are a choice. Society says we should be selfish, but God's Word says *"greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."* – John 15:13

This is what I ask of you today. Lay down your life, your pride. Choose to fight for your friendships, for your family, or for your marriage. Decide today, right now, to show up. Be there with them, because that is what counts.

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How can you show up for your family today?

How does the picture of Christ's love for us change how we love others?

Who is that loyal friend to you? Send them a letter, email, or even a text to thank them today.



FAITH, FAMILY AND FRIENDSHIP
ARE WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

Day 25

“Even though we got a fight ahead of us, we’ve got one thing that Voldemort doesn’t have. Something worth fighting for.” – Harry Potter, JK Rowling

Today we are continuing the importance of friendship, loyalty and choosing to show up. It’s something I can’t get out of my head, and haven’t been able to for many months.

Faith, family and friendship are worth the fight. Always. Now, if that is true for me and they are honestly worth the effort, how should I live? How might my life reflect this essential truth?

Scripture give us a few hints:

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” – 1 Thess. 5:11

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” – Heb. 10:24-25

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” – 1 Peter 4:10

In response to this Word, my goal in this new year is to be a better friend. I am deciding right now to show up as an encouraging, loving, selfless force for the people I love. It’s worth fighting for.

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What makes a goof friend? Family member?

How can you be a better friend today?

What is worth fighting for?



## Day 26

Harry Potter and the Sorcerers Stone was released in 2001. My mom bought a copy and we read it together each night before bedtime. From that year forward with each new book release my family was there at midnight, anxious to know what would become of Harry and his friends.

The Harry Potter books are cherished because they are brilliant pieces of literature. It astounds me that JK Rowling could create an entire fictional universe in her own mind. However, Harry Potter is more than just a terrific read.

As JK Rowling once said, “the stories we love best do live in us forever.” The Potterverse has become a part of my family.

Now, as much as I love JK Rowling and the HP series, there is something (or rather someone) I love more.

Jesus.

It might seem simple, but the Word of God is, and should be, far more cherished than the word of Rowling. As Isaiah 40:8 says, “*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.*”

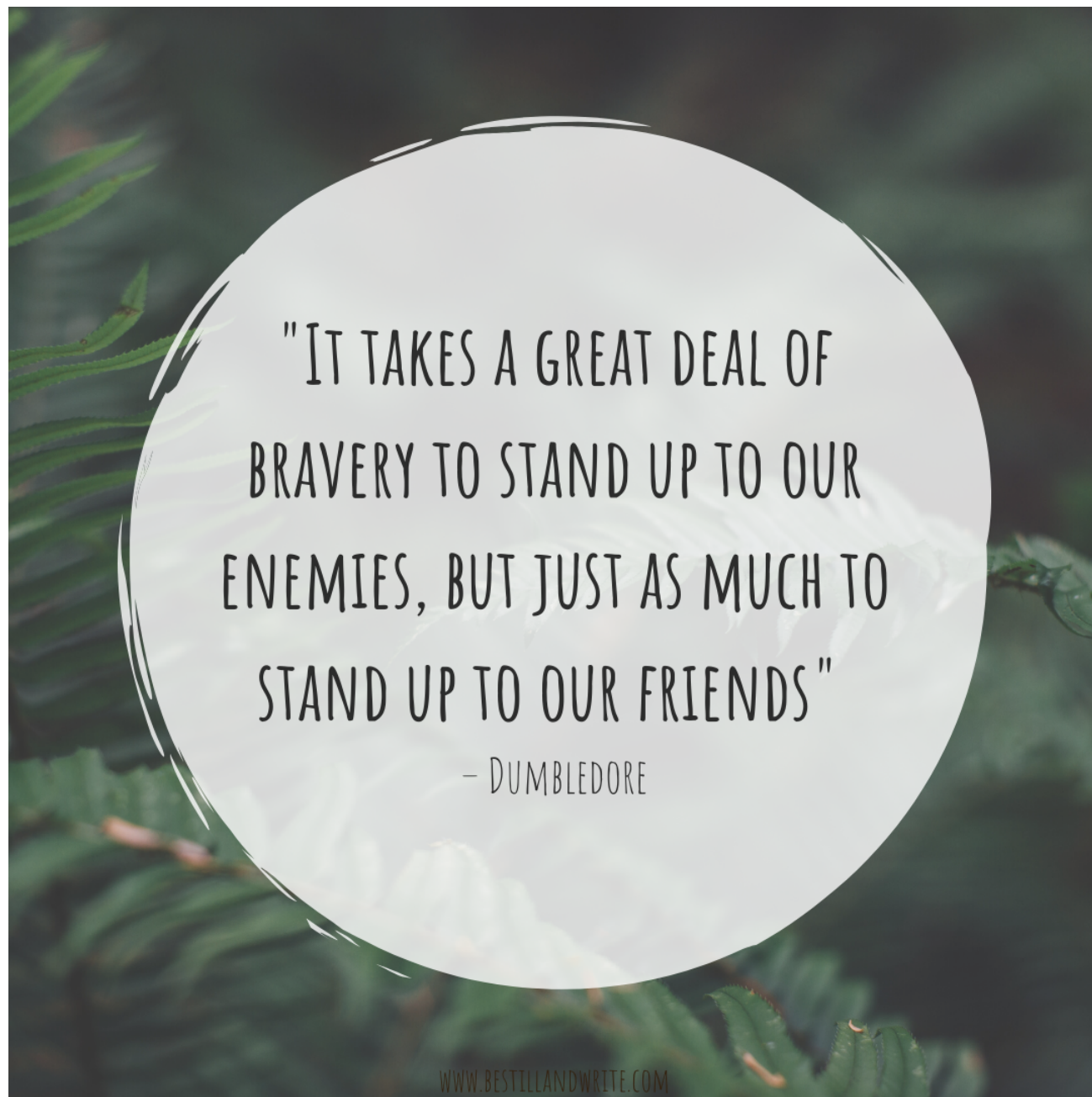
The love of literature is not a sin, but is vital we remember that only Scripture stands forever.

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So, since we are talking about our favorite books. What is your favorite of the Harry Potter series?

What is your favorite book in the Bible?

What stories have you heard that have stayed with you?



Day 27

"It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends"
– Dumbledore

I do not like confrontation. Never have, probably never will. Watching others in the middle of a confrontation makes me uncomfortable. Unfortunately, there are times when conflict cannot be avoided.

For example, Neville was forced to stand against his friends in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone in order to save the loss of the house cup. He may not have won the confrontation (Hermione stunned him), but Neville had made a brave decision to stand up for what he knew to be right.

It's sometimes easier to stand up to someone when you don't know who they are. I mean, there's a chance you won't see that person ever again. That's why road rage exists, right? But Neville knew Harry, Ron and Hermione and still he stood his ground.

There's a delicacy in confronting those you love, especially fellow believers. Scripture gives us plenty of instruction on how to deal with confrontation, but for the sake of this short devotion I want to focus on one verse.

"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." – Philippians 2:3-4

There are times when speaking to someone about sin is necessary, but my advice to you is this: check yourself first.

Are you suffering from the same sinful behavior? What is your motive in approaching them? Are you the best person for the job?

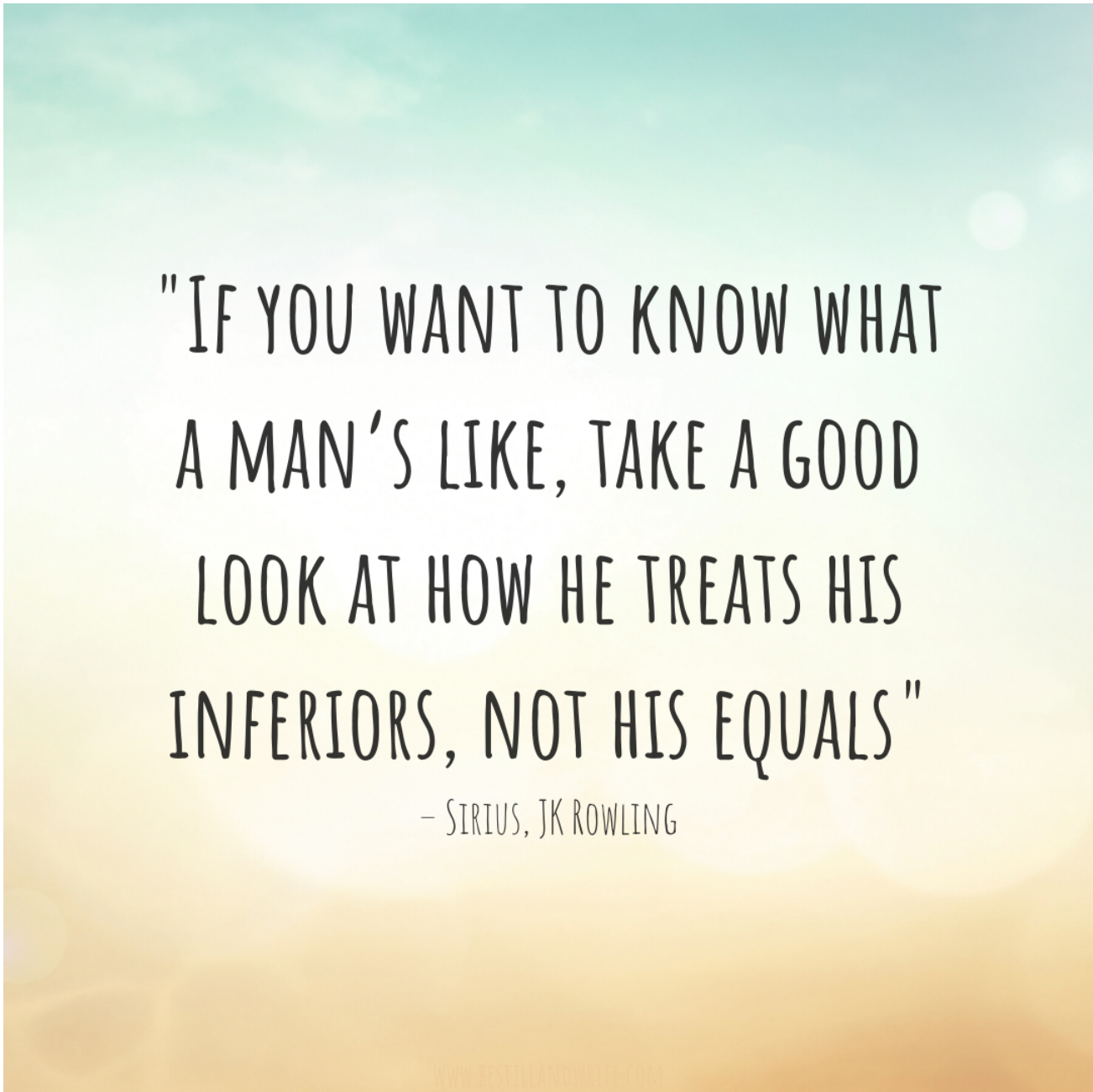
Do nothing of your own ambition and tread lightly. It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our friends, but also a great deal of wisdom. Tread carefully.

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Can you think of someone you may need to confront?

Think through those three questions above. Are you still the one to approach them and for the right reasons?

How can you approach your friend or family member in love?



"IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT  
A MAN'S LIKE, TAKE A GOOD  
LOOK AT HOW HE TREATS HIS  
INFERIORS, NOT HIS EQUALS"

– SIRIUS, JK ROWLING

## Day 28

"If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals" – Sirius

Everyone is to treat everyone as a child of God. No one has the right to treat anyone else as if they do not matter. Did anyone else attend LOGOS? It might be a Lutheran thing, but every Wednesday night as a kid my family would attend LOGOS, a weekly intergenerational experience modeled after the early church.

We'd have dinner, study time and attend clubs like choir, drama, or art. LOGOS was all about family.

At the beginning of each gathering, we would all stand up and recite our golden rule: Everyone is to treat everyone as a child of God. No one has the right to treat anyone else as if they do not matter."

That mantra has stuck with me over the years. I find how you treat others, especially children and the elderly, is a direct depiction of your character.

Sirius knew this to be true as well when talking about Bartemius Crouch and his treatment of a house elf. The truth of someone's character is displayed in their treatment of others.

The Bible says "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23). We have all sinned. Therefore, we have all fallen short. Scripture also says in Ephesians 4:32 to "*be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*"

God forgave us for our sin, however insurmountable, therefore we should forgive and be kind to others no matter what their sin might be. Everyone is to treat everyone as a child of God. No one has the right to treat anyone else as if they do not matter.

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Did you attend LOGOS or something like it when you were a child?

How does our treatment of others reflect our true character?

We are to forgive others as God has forgiven us. Do you find that commandment difficult or easy? Why?



Day 29

“Happee Birthdae, Harry!” -Hagrid

This is a simple quote from a cake given to Harry by Hagrid. In the movie it is spelled as the quote above, but did you know that in the books it is spelled correctly? Another fun fact, Harry didn't have an actual birthday party until he was 16 years old when everyone gathered at the Burrow. Talk about a sweet 16!

My husband, Colton's favorite birthday of all time was one he spent playing video games with his older brother all night. Mine is when my family came to surprise me for lunch. There is something special about gathering together with the people you love most.

Matthew 18:20 says, *"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."*

There is power in gathering together. God's presence makes it powerful. That's why we have church every week, sometimes multiple times a week! Living as a Christian can be an alienating life, especially in a world that seems to grow darker each day.

As we talked about on Day 17 of this study, "we are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided." I love this scripture in Hebrews 10:25 that says, we should "not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

The words "giving up" in this scripture translated means to "abandon" or "leave helpless." Let's not leave each other helpless. May we strive to gather together, encourage one another and strengthen ourselves in the power of Christ.

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What is your favorite birthday so far?

Where or with whom can you gather together in faith this week?

What keeps you from gathering together with fellow believers?



## Day 30

“Albus Severus Potter, you were named for two headmasters of Hogwarts. One of them was a Slytherin and he was probably the bravest man I ever knew.” - Harry Potter

Harry's son, Albus Severus Potter was named after two incredible wizards, Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape. Severus spent a large majority of his life with people who thought he was evil. Even after his sacrifice is revealed, many remain unaware of his true bravery and loyalty.

If anyone is misunderstood, it is Severus Snape..... or the Apostle Paul.

Paul calls himself the foremost of sinners in 1 Timothy. Before accepting Christ as his Savior he was a Pharisee who persecuted the Church.

And yet...

*"Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. **But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.**"*

- 1 Timothy 1:15-16

Paul chose to live differently than those he surrounded himself with, just like Snape. He chose Jesus. Snape choose light over dark. Both men had a sorted past, but at the end of their lives none of that mattered.

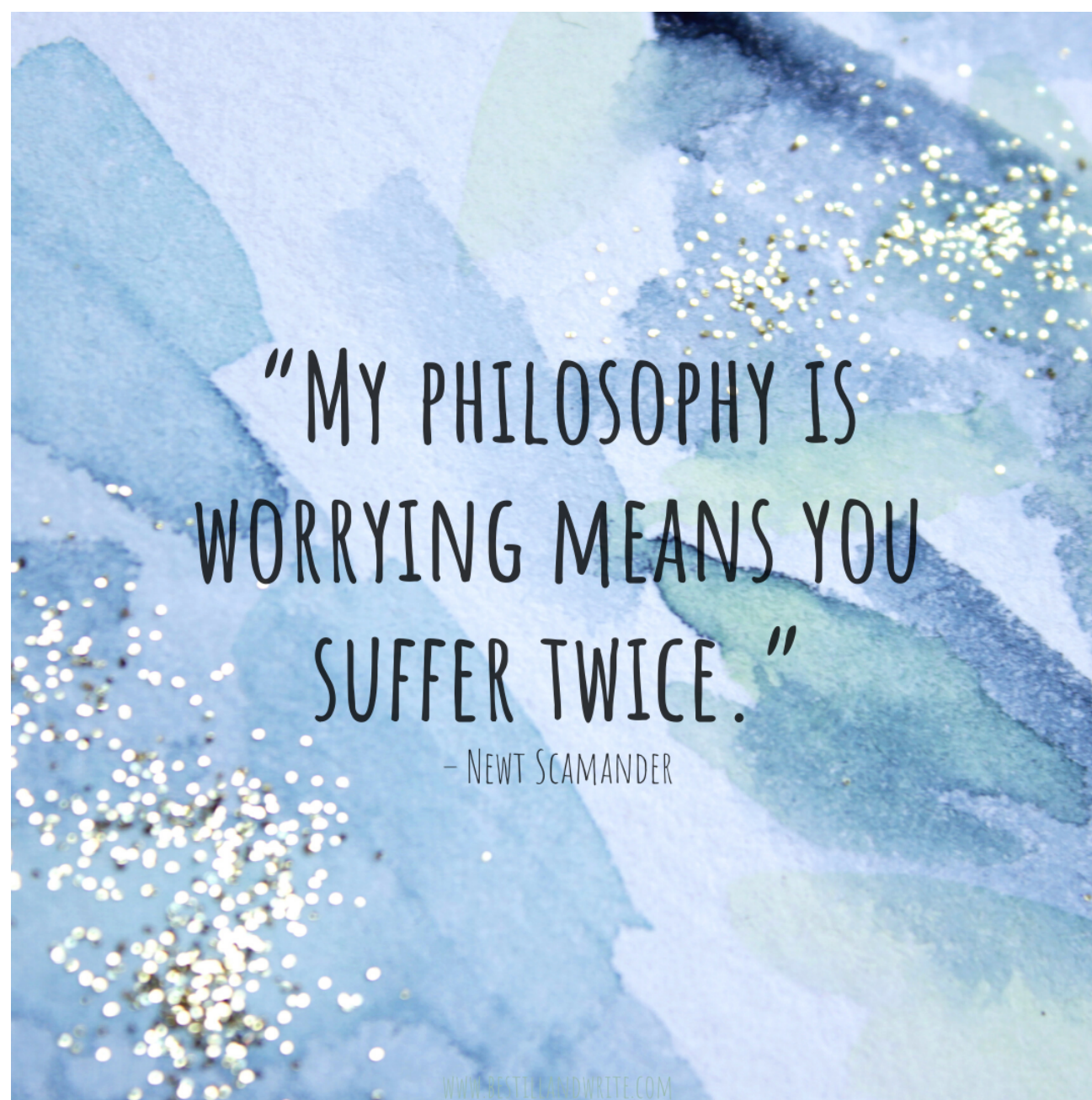
Snape may have been a member of Slytherin house, but that didn't mean he carried the dark stigma. He rose above it. Paul rose above his upbringing and allowed God to transform him into an entirely new creation.

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Where you are from does not define who you are. How have you allowed your past to define you?

What is your name, and what is it's significance? Its interesting to look that up!

How have you become a new creation since giving your life to Christ?



Day 31

First, I need to know, what is your honest opinion about the new Fantastic Beasts movies? Really, I am a little bit on the fence about the whole thing. I think it's because we didn't really get the books to create a backstory for the characters before the release of the films... but I digress.

I think we can all agree Eddie Redmayne is a tremendous actor. (Les Miserables? Swoon.) Newt Scamander is a quirky yet lovable character I didn't know I needed from the Potterverse, and I am looking forward to the next installment.

In honor of these new movies I thought we'd talk about Newt's philosophy, "worrying means you suffer twice."

We've talked about worry earlier on in the study, but I could use a second reminder. As the chief of worriers I can tell you Newt's statement is very true. Proverbs 12:25 says "*Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.*"

Worrying makes my heart, mind and body heavy. Does it every help the situation? Nope. It just gives me more frown lines, a sick feeling in my stomach and a bad attitude.

So what should we do instead of worry? Well, one solution can be found in Proverbs 12:25, our verse from above. If a good word makes you glad, then scripture is an excellent remedy. Hebrews 4:12 says, "*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*"

Scripture is able to pierce through the very marrow of our bones. A good word from our good God is an excellent remedy for a worried heart.

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Choose a few key verses that speak to you. Memorize them and repeat them to yourself whenever you sink into the pits of anxiety. Save yourself from suffering twice. These verses below are an excellent start!

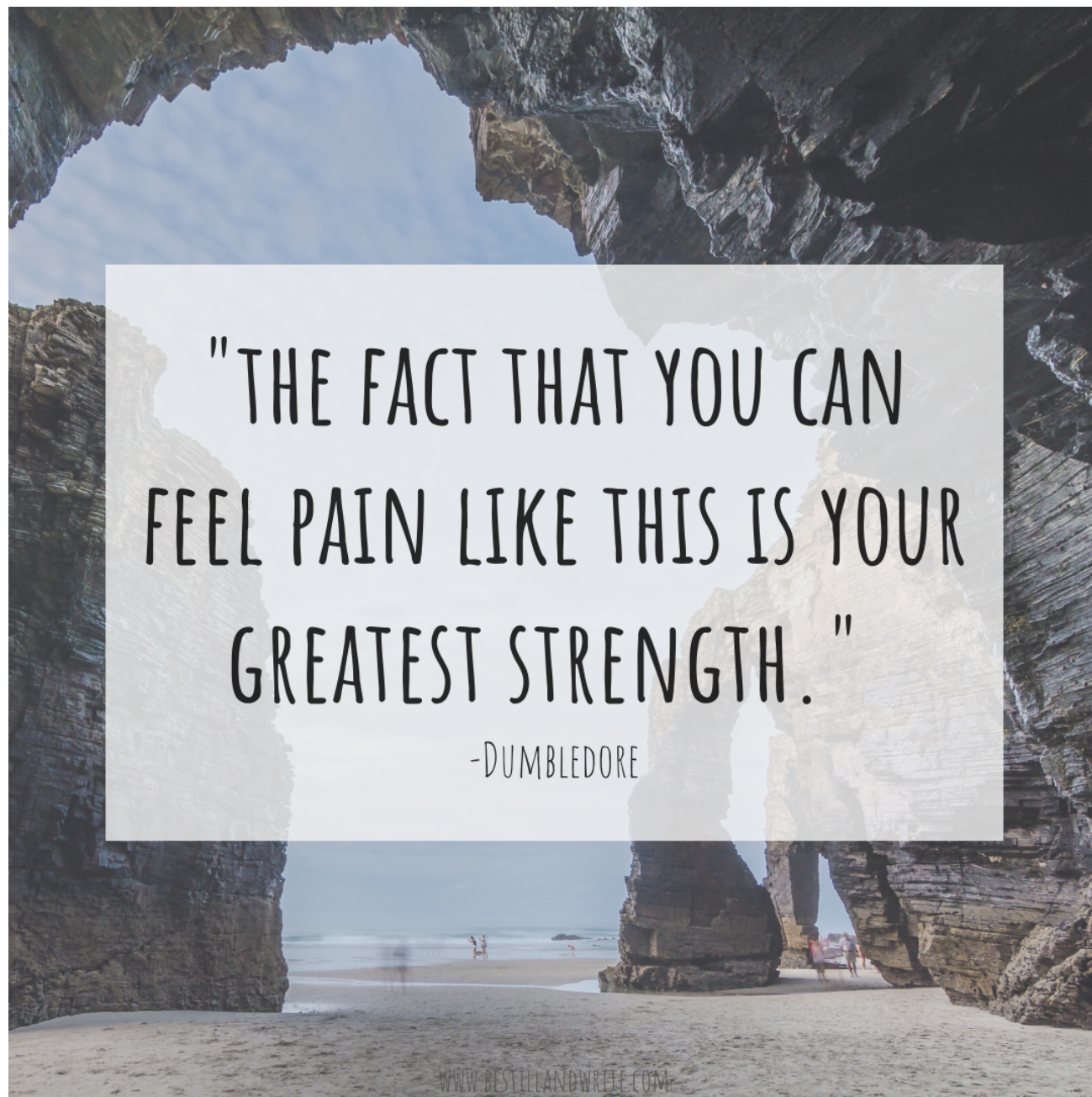
Philippians 4:6-7

Isaiah 41:10

Psalms 94:19

Ecclesiastes 11:10





## Day 32

"Harry, suffering like this proves you are still a man! This pain is part of being human ... the fact that you can feel pain like this is your greatest strength." -Dumbledore

My husband teases me about my tissue paper thin skin nearly every day. In his defense I do have some of the thinnest skin, literally and figuratively. I bruise like a peach. I cry at commercials and kids movies. It's one of his favorite and least favorite things about me.

I feel so deeply for other people. I hurt easy.

For years I thought of empathy as a curse. I wished I could walk away from people who hurt me and feel nothing, but as I near my 28th birthday I've decided to reconsider. I now think of my ability to feel such profound empathy as a blessing.

In John 11 when Jesus heard about the death of Lazarus, what did he do? "Jesus wept." (John 11:45)

Hebrews 4:15 says "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

Jesus experienced all of humanity. He knows loss, weakness, and understands what it is like when we are tempted. Our Savior is empathetic.

If you are like me, with skin like tissue paper and a heart of gold, know that "the fact that you can feel pain is your biggest strength." It is important to remember that when Dumbledore said this to Harry, he was in the pits of deep despair. He had lost Sirius. He wanted to give up not just on the task at hand, but on life entirely. Being human and feeling so deeply was just too much.

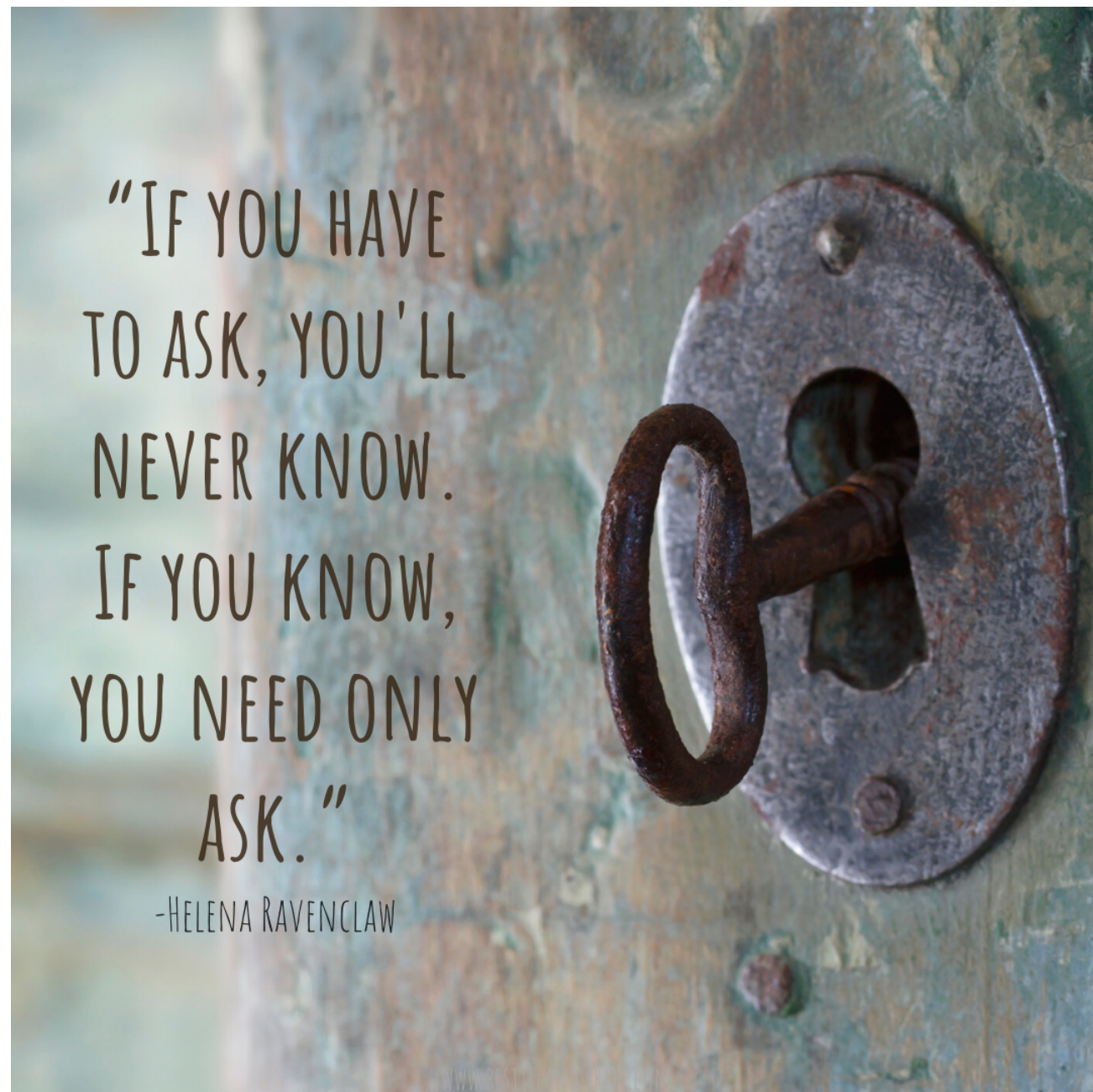
But Dumbledore would not allow Harry concede. He stood beside him in love and understanding. Harry screamed and cried and destroyed the Headmaster's office, but Dumbledore loved him through it.

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Dumbledore displayed the love of Christ to Harry in this moment in Order of the Phoenix. How so?

Jesus knew loss and pain. How does this truth speak to you?

Do you think of empathy as a gift or a curse? Why?



Day 33

One thing missing from the book to movie interpretation of Harry Potter are the ghosts. The story line of the headless horsemen alone would have been exceptional to watch. I am glad, however, that in the final movie we get to see Helena Ravenclaw.

Helena is hesitant to help Harry find her mother's diadem, and for good reason. She can sense the connection between Harry and Lord Voldemort. She feels the darkness that lies within him. So rather than outright telling him where the diadem is hidden, she gives the Boy Who Lived a riddle.

"If you have to ask, you'll never know. If you know, you need only ask."

This quote reminded me of a passage in the book of Matthew.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." – Matthew 7:7-8

The answer to the riddle given by Helena requires a specific knowledge of Hogwarts. Harry knows about the Room of Requirement. He has spent time there, extended and intentional time.

When we spend intentional and extended time with our Heavenly Father, we align ourselves with the will of God. Our prayers are then aligned as well. We know Him. Therefore, we pray as He would have us pray, and the door is opened for us in response.

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How can we become more like Christ each day?

Spending daily time with God is a vital necessity for all believers. How can you make that time a priority?

What do you know to be true about God?



## Day 34

“To the well-organized mind, death is but the next great adventure.” - Dumbledore

The day my grandmother passed away, I was supposed to be home with her. I was on my way, but I didn't make it in time. I didn't get a chance to tell her goodbye.

My loving husband was on the phone with me when I found out. He told me what I already knew to be true in my heart. She was gone... but she wasn't missing. I knew exactly where my grandmother was, and where she will always be.

I have been blessed to be the granddaughter of John and Patricia Anderson, two people who love the Lord God with all their hearts. They've always served in the church. They've always loved Jesus.

Even in the midst of a great sorrow, my soul was comforted in knowing for certain my grandma was no longer in any pain. She was with her Heavenly Father. She ran the race well, and someday I will see her again.

As Christians, we can find great peace in knowing death is not the end, it is only the beginning of the next great adventure.

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” – John 3:16*

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Does the idea of heaven excite you or leave you with a sense of dread. Why might that be?

If you are filled with dread, spend some time in prayer asking God to bring peace to your heart or maybe meet with your pastor to discuss.

How can you display your faith in simple ways to those around you?



Day 35

“Yes, Harry, you can love,” said Dumbledore, who looked as though he knew perfectly well what Harry had just refrained from saying. “Which, given everything that has happened to you, is a great and remarkable thing.”
– Dumbledore

On more than one occasion I have thought to myself... how am I still standing? How is it even possible that I've made it this long through so much garbage? I'm sure Harry thought this as well. Given everything that happened to him, he should be calloused and bitter. He should be dark.

Despite his horrifying past, Harry still has the ability to love.

The thing is, God never gives us a mountain we can't climb. That's my dad's favorite quote.

As 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

Knowing my history, it is a wonder that I am who I am. The only possible explanation is that God provided a way of escape. He held my hand and walked me through it. He gave me wisdom and strength to help me endure it.

God's grace is why I am still standing, and that is a remarkable thing.

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Are you currently climbing a mountain? Are you trying to climb alone or with God's help?

Who do you know that might be climbing their own mountain? How can you support them?

Take time today in prayer thanking God for guiding you through all the ups and downs.



## Day 36

“He felt that he was still groping in the dark; he had chosen his path but kept looking back, wondering whether he had misread the signs, whether he should not have taken the other way.”  
– JK Rowling

In our quote for today, Harry is experiencing doubt. Doubt plagues us all at one time or another. There are dozens of cautionary verses in the Bible urging us to ask in faith, never doubting. Easier said than done in my experience.

That is why I am so fond of the story of Gideon. Gideon asked God to confirm his anointing by a miracle involving fleece and dew. (Read the full story in Judges 6). God obliged, but one miracle was not enough for Gideon. He needed a second confirmation.

*“Please let me test just once more with the fleece.” (Judges 6:39)*

We are kindred spirits, he and I. You see, it’s not that I don’t trust in God’s plan. Like Gideon I know and believe in God’s power, but I fear myself.

What if I act too quickly and make the wrong decision?  
What if I heard incorrectly?  
What if I am listening to my own desires and not God’s?

I get tangled in the “what ifs” of it all. Thankfully, we serve a patient God who loves us enough to answer when we lay a second fleece, or a third or fourth.

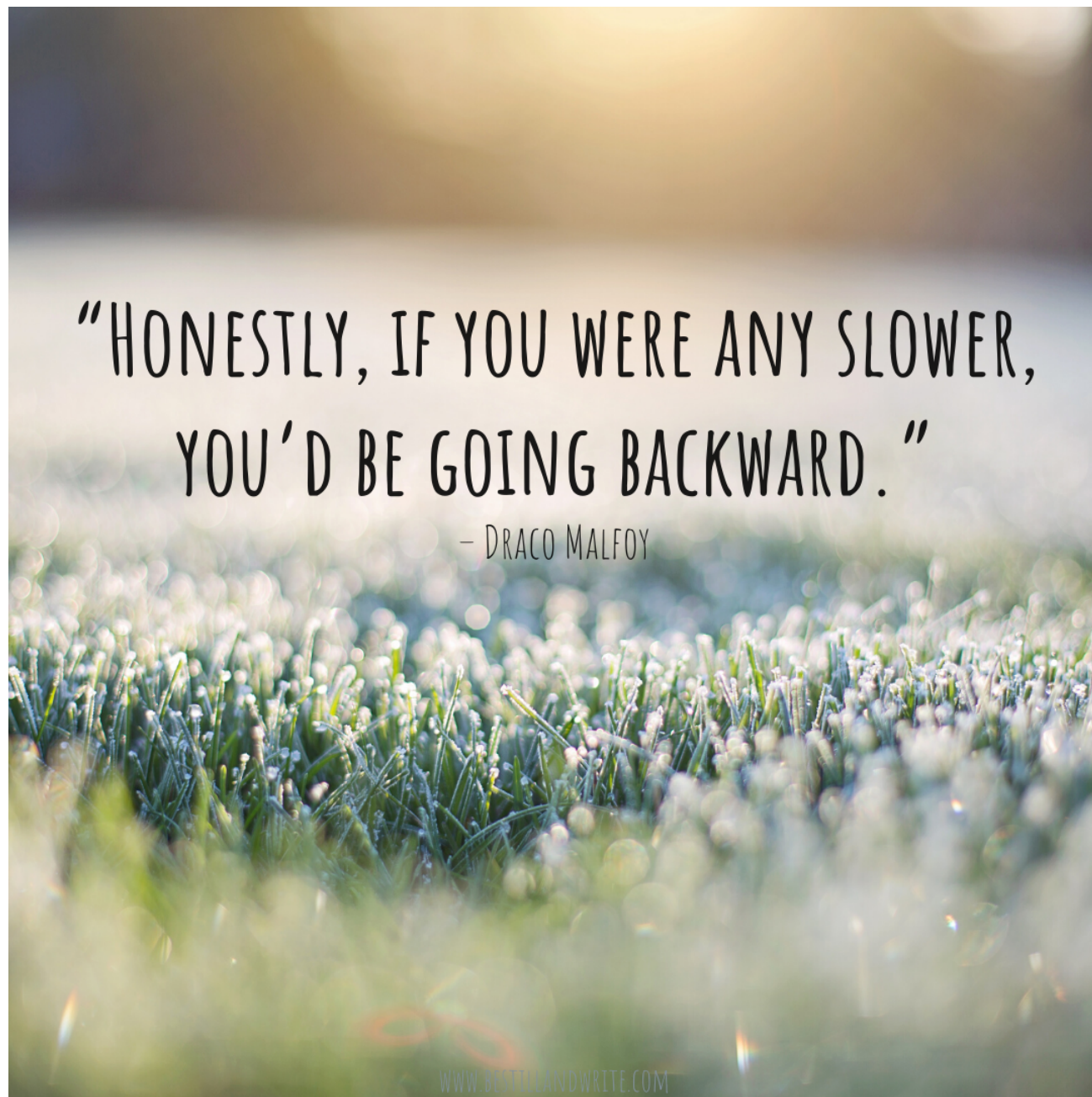
If you are currently groping in the dark, wondering if you misread the signs like Harry or like Gideon, know that God is not angry with you for thinking twice, or more than twice. Lift your concerns up to God. He will understand.

~~~~~

Spend time in prayer today lifting up your concerns to God.

Have you ever experienced doubt with a decision? How did you work through that doubt?

Read through Judges 6.



Day 37

Honestly, if you were any slower, you'd be going backward." – Draco Malfoy

You guys I have been looking for the perfect Draco Malfoy quote, and when I came across this one I had to laugh. I swear God says this to me sometimes.

I'm a professional worrier, as you know. As I have said a dozen times this study. Therefore, I am extremely cautious. It's difficult for me to decide where to eat for dinner let alone what I should do with the rest of my life.

God called me to write in college, but it took me five years to be obedient to that calling. "Honestly, if you were any slower, you'd be going backward." I can hear Him say it now, ha!

Now, being cautious is not a sin. Ephesians 5:15-17 says "*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*"

Like we talked about yesterday, caution can be a good thing. It can also become a hindrance. In my humble opinion, sometimes we have to take a chance a leap. It will be abruptly obvious if we have made the wrong decision.

Don't move so slow you come to a standstill or, God forbid, move backward. Take care and have courage.

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Are you currently standing still in a decision, or moving backward?

What had God been asking you to do that you have avoided?

How can you move forward in obedience today?



“YOUTH CANNOT KNOW HOW AGE THINKS AND FEELS, BUT OLD MEN ARE GUILTY IF THEY FORGET WHAT IT IS TO BE YOUNG.”  
- DUMBLEDORE



## Day 38

“Youth cannot know how age thinks and feels, but old men are guilty if they forget what it is to be young.”  
- Dumbledore

Three years ago I was blessed to become an aunt to not one, but four babies within the span of two months. Both of my sisters-in-law had twins, two girls and two boys.

It has been the greatest joy of my life to watch them learn and grow in these past three years. Children look at the world from a different perspective. They have no schedule, no to-do list. They play and wonder and create. The love of a toddler is so pure.

Luke 18:16 says “*But Jesus called for them, saying, “Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”*”

Jesus said this to his disciples to display the importance of child-like faith. It is time and experience that makes us skeptical. It’s easy to forget what it was to be young, filled with hope and trust and love for everyone.

My nieces and nephews are a beautiful reminder that our love of God does not have to be complex. It’s very simple. Jesus loves me. That’s all I need to know.

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Are you an aunt, a mother or godmother? What are your favorite moments living that role?

How can you have a more child-like faith?



Day 39

"Dark and difficult times lie ahead. Soon we must all face the choice between what is right and what is easy."
- Dumbledore

Dumbledore always seemed to know what was about to happen long before it happened. Perhaps it was his 150 years of experience and expertise. Regardless, it was clear that Dumbledore knew at least vaguely what was to happen if Voldemort returned.

He warned the students in his own mysterious way by telling them dark and difficult times lie ahead. A similar warning came from Jesus while he was with the disciples.

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves... and you will be hated by all for my name's sake."
- Matthew 10:16, 22

Jesus knows the persecution that He will go through, and that His disciples will go through after He ascends to Heaven. He knows they will be given many opportunities to face the choice between what is right and what is easy. So what does Jesus say next?

"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."
- Matthew 10:39

In other words, choose what is easy and you will be lost, but taking the narrow path to what is right and you will find life. We all have had an opportunity to choose what is right, and sometimes doing the right thing is simply not easy.

But it's always worth it.

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What makes choosing the right thing so difficult?

Are you currently struggling with a choice between right and easy?

How does Christ's life here on earth show us how to make the right decision, no matter what is at stake?





## Day 40

“It’s not much, but it’s home.” – Ron Weasley

Whether it be at the end of a long work day or a weekend vacation there is something about coming home. The word home itself is soothing to the soul. There is a particular scripture in Isaiah 32:17-18 that always reminds me of the comfort of home.

*“And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”*

Rest. Quiet. Peaceful. Secure...It’s exactly what home is meant to be.

I’ve been thinking a lot recently about home and comfort and the Scandinavian practice of Hygge (pronounced like Hue-Gah). It’s a word that encompasses a feeling of coziness, contentment and well-being by enjoying the simple things in life.

Home is meant to be Hygge. It doesn’t have to be filled with a lot of things. The Weasley home certainly wasn’t filled with nice things. It was a shack of a place, but it was filled with love and comfort and family.

The truth is no matter how comforting our earthly homes might feel, they are nothing compared to our heavenly dwelling. 2 Corinthians 5:1 says, *“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.”*

As much as I love my home here on earth, I cannot wait to see the home awaiting me in heaven. That’s our true home.

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What makes a house a home?

What made your house more like home, filled with comfort and security?

How can you incorporate the presence of God into your home?

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO STUDY
THESE 40 DAYS OF HARRY POTTER -
THEMED DEVOTIONS. I HOPE YOU WERE
ABLE TO GLEAN FROM THE VARIOUS
SCRIPTURES AND QUOTES. ALL CREDIT FOR
THE HARRY POTTER QUOTES TO JK
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ESV. FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME WITH ANY
QUESTIONS OR FEEDBACK, AS I WELCOME
BOTH!

GOD BLESS!
Chelsea



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