

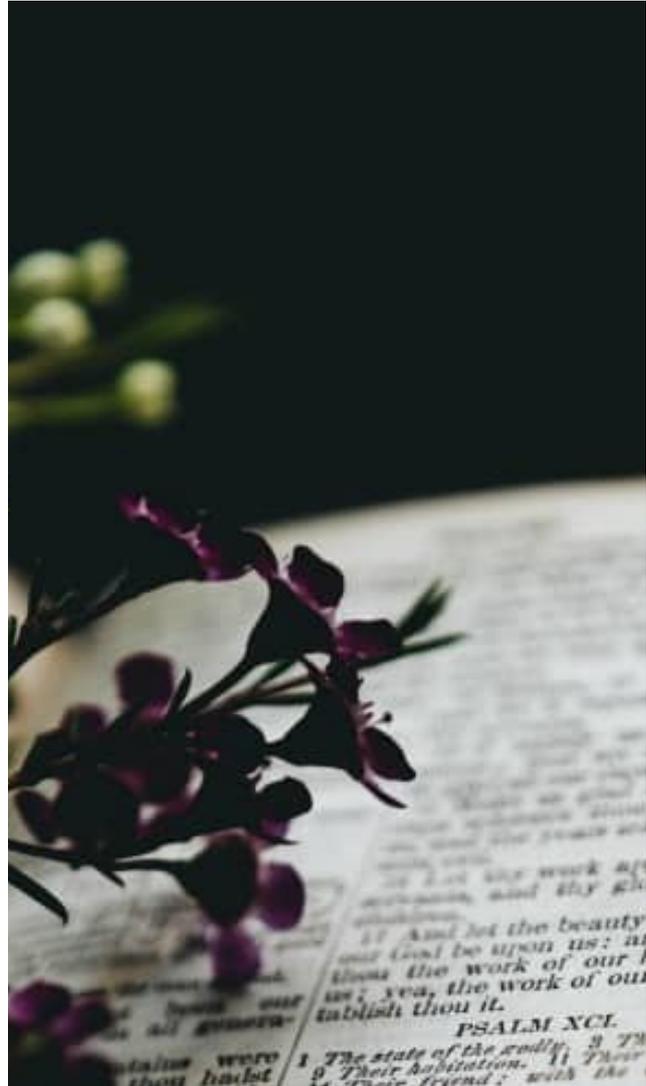
Day 9

Homemaking when Life is Hard

If you've lived long enough, you understand that life can be very hard. Homemaking, when life is hard, is no small feat. It's those times of stress, grief, and uncertainty that we need God more than ever. But depending on God when life is hard isn't always easy. Today I'm talking about **how to depend on God when life is hard.**

For a number of years, I was a homemaker faced with the increasing demands of caring for elderly family members – four of them at once – and then three, then just two, and then finally none. Being a caregiver while also trying to raise a family can be really hard. And if you are in the midst of that kind of situation and have been there – you know what I'm talking about.

I went from having a pretty predictable routine to every day



seeming to be a crazy mix of frustration, obligations, and stress with very little downtime.

I've also had years when my chronic illness kept me bedridden for months at a time – and *it was hard*. Especially since during those years, I had five young children to care for.

I also have a daughter with Crohn's Disease {Sarah} and for two years before she got married, she was extremely ill, had to have a colon resection, and needed constant care. After the surgery, she had complications and ended up with a very large abscess in her abdomen that could have killed her. It took months for her to regain her strength.

Life is hard. It can be a bitter pill to swallow.

Sometimes there are circumstances that are beyond your control. It's hard to accept. Because as humans, I think we naturally just really want to be in control of everything all the time. At least, that's how I feel. I like feeling like I'm in control.

And when we feel like life is a chaotic mess and we're out of control it's frightening.

I am no stranger to difficult circumstances. And there have been years when I wasn't sure I could go on. I don't always talk about it – and I've been writing here at A Virtuous Woman since 2001.

These last two decades have had a lot of heartaches.

But lots of joy too.

In all honesty, there have been times when I questioned God's plan – why he would allow me to go through so much for so many years. And yet, I know some people have it much worse than I ever had.

I have been very, very blessed over the years and I'm so thankful that my children are well and that my family is still together.

Depending on God when life is hard will help you press on in the midst of trials and will bring you comfort when your heart is grieving – whether that grief is the loss of a loved one, the loss of a dream you had, or the loss of the life you thought you'd live.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers the way we want Him to. I know this from experience. I don't always understand why He allows us to walk through the valley of the shadow of death for long periods of time. But, often it's through these trials and valleys that we learn to depend fully on Him.

The truth is, I'm not in control. No matter how much I want to be in control, ultimately, I am at the mercy of things that are beyond my control.

Yes, I can make plans. I can try to see those plans come to fruition. I can work hard and sometimes those plans will pan out. Other times, nothing I do seems to work.

And that's okay. Because God is still in control.

There is no easy button for homemaking when life is hard. I wish there was! Sometimes we just have to do the best we can and accept that some things will just not get done on our schedule.

That's why we need to be willing to accept God's *grace for the moment*. Putting systems and routines in place will help make things a little easier and we'll be talking about all of those things soon!

My living room is pretty messy right now. But I know that this afternoon, part of our routine is to straighten things up and get it back in shape. It will only take a few minutes of combined effort.

Because I have a basic routine and tasks that I do on the same days each week {when I'm able} I know that even when life is hard and things are stressful, I can still create an atmosphere of love, peace, and comfort in my home.



And I can trust that God is in control even when it seems like my life is crazy and out of control. There is grace for this moment – even when life is hard.

5 Ways To Depend On God When Life Is Hard

#1 Be Thankful

Being thankful for the blessings you do have is an important part of emotionally and spiritually getting through a rough time in your life.

Having a grateful heart can really help you keep things in focus on not feel like God has abandoned you. You might want to keep a gratitude journal.

#2 Spend time in Prayer

Pray and cry out to God every day. You don't have to only

pray at any set time. You can talk to God – really converse with Him all day long! Begin your day with prayer and reading His Word and then continue those thoughts and prayers all day.

You'll find comfort and peace you haven't experienced before. Give Jesus all of your hurt and worry. The Bible tells us that He will carry all of it for us!

If you are going through a difficult trial, you might want to read through the Psalms. I know my husband began reading through the Psalms again when he became sick and it's brought him a lot of courage and comfort.

The Psalms have so many beautiful and hopeful verses that are perfect for the hurting soul. You may want to read through the Psalm during your morning devotions. Just read a chapter a day.

#4 Replace the Worry

I'm terrible about overthinking my problems. If I'm not distracted, I can worry for hours on end. A good friend of mine told me to practice replacing all of those negative thoughts with positive ones.

So when I catch myself dwelling on everything that has gone wrong or could go wrong, I try to remind myself to think good thoughts and replace those negative ones with positive ones.

#5 Memorize Scripture

Memorizing Scriptures that bring you comfort and peace is a great way to dwell on the promises of God and depend on him with life is hard. Some great verses to get you started are:

- Exodus 14:14
- Joshua 1:9
- John 14:26, 27
- Psalm 34:17, 18
- 2 Corinthians 9:10

Depending on God when life is hard means that you learn to trust Him even when the outcome is uncertain. You claim His promises to give you an abundant life even in the midst of pain and sorrow. It's about trusting Him no matter what.

Though He slay me, yet will I trust him. Job 13:15

He is faithful and just and His mercies are new every morning. If you are going through a difficult time or life has been hard for a long time, I want you to know you are not alone. God loves you very much. Feel free to shoot me an email and share your story with me.

I had to learn the hard way how to say no with grace ... so I had room in my life to say yes to the best!

Intentional Homemaking isn't just about cleaning your house – although a clean house is nice!

Rather, Intentional Homemaking is about creating a life that you love and creating a space that feels like home. Because home is where real life happens.

- home is where the people you love gather to encourage each other and grow together
- home is where your friends come to bond over cookies and milk
- home is where your children learn what it means to be an honorable human being
- home is where you nurse your sick loved ones and care for their hurting hearts
- home should be a respite from this harsh world and a haven for the wounded spirit

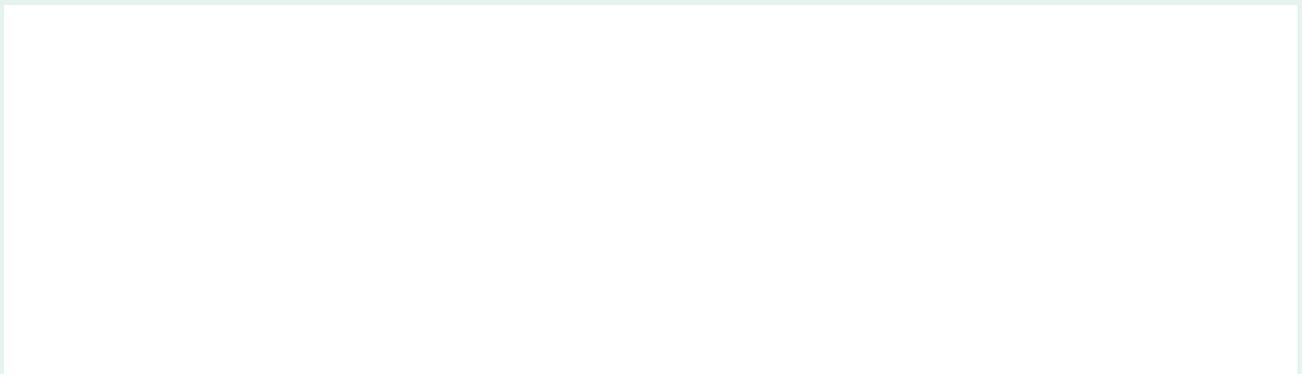
Home is...

Use the space below to write your own hopes and dreams for your home.

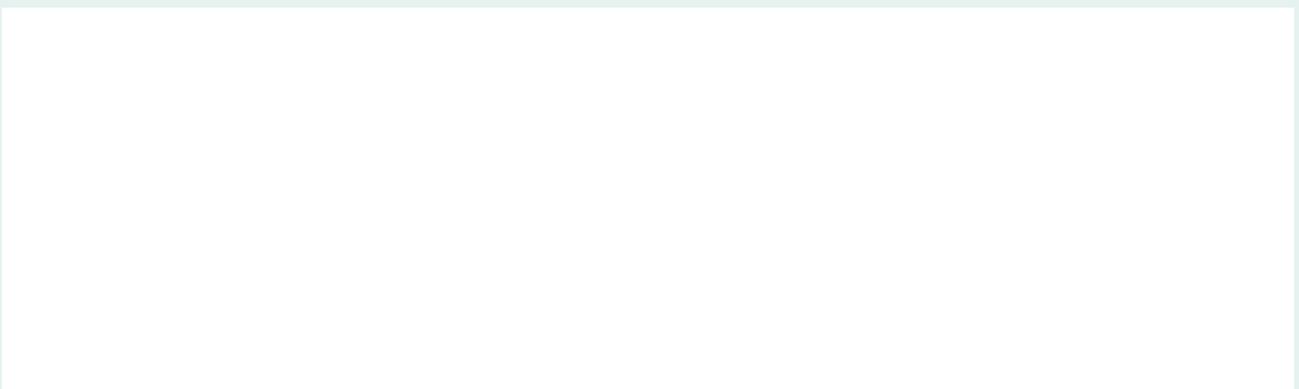
Home is where the people I love gather to...



Home is where my children learn what it means to be...



My home is a respite from this harsh world and a haven for...





A GRATEFUL HEART

Date:

I am grateful for

Date:

I am grateful for

Date:

I am grateful for
