

HOPE

a practical
guide to
praying for
healing

REBECCA RIBNICK

HOPE: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PRAYING FOR HEALING

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*To Mom and Dad.
Your tenacity kept me alive.
Your encouragement kept me going.
And your support means health and
freedom for countless others.
It was worth it.
It was all worth it.*

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FOREWORD

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The young woman stood smiling at the front of the crowded room. “All right,” she said. “Now that we’ve learned, we’re going to do.”

A stranger to me previously, Rebecca had just spent an hour explaining the New Testament’s teaching on the subject of divine healing. As a biblical scholar, I found nothing objectionable; her explanation was concise and accurate. I believed that our God does heal. I just had never seen it happen personally. That’s why I had come.

“God particularly wants to heal backs, knees, and other joints tonight,” she continued. “Are there people here who would like healing in those areas?”

Although I had intended just to observe at this meeting, at this point I thought, *Why not?* A group of seven or eight of us somewhat hesitantly got to our feet. My right knee, which for some years doctors had told me required surgical replacement (a “total knee,” as they called it), objected to my change of position, as always. I first injured the knee in a judo match in college, then absentmindedly slammed a car door on it some years later, then had it give way entirely while I pumped my bike up a precipitous incline. When we approached such tests of our conditioning, my brother always sang out, “Hills are our friends!” Well, not for me, not that day. Afterward I made things work the best I could, but lately even standing to teach my classes had become dauntingly painful. Constricted by the knee’s growing limitations, my life was shrinking more and more. The time for the surgery could not be far off.

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“Okay, look around,” Rebecca continued. “Do you see those who are standing? You who are still sitting are going to be the ones doing the praying. Don’t worry; I’ll be here if you need me. Please gather around those who are already standing. Distribute yourselves so that several people can pray for each one who is expressing a need.”

Next to me, my wife, Cathy, arose and moved away to join a group surrounding a woman ten feet away. For the next few minutes, the room filled with the sounds of shuffling feet and chairs being shoved aside to facilitate movement. Clusters of people were now scattered around the room’s perimeter and crisscrossing the interior. No one was near me, however, except for the young man I had noticed earlier in the row ahead of me. He was unknown to me, although I had been attending this church for more than ten years. I later learned that he was a friend of Rebecca’s, already familiar with the practice of healing prayer.

“Go ahead. You know what to do. I’ve explained everything you need to know. Please interview the person you are praying for, learn about their situation, and go to prayer. I will be moving around the room to answer any questions.” Rebecca edged to the far side of the room.

The young man in the row in front of me had stood waiting. Now as Rebecca began to move about and as a murmur of low conversation and prayer formed a backdrop, he turned to face me with a friendly smile. Contrary to Rebecca’s instructions, however, he didn’t begin to interview me, nor did he pray. He simply stated, “God has healed your knee.”

What? I hadn’t told anyone anything about the knee. How did he know? Then I became aware of an electric tingling extending a few inches north and south of my kneecap on the bad leg. As a scholar, I try to cultivate a practiced objectivity, and at this point it kicked in. I observed with no particular emotion that my right knee area continued to feel this tingling for ten minutes. While noting this alien

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sensation, I also watched and listened as people around the room rejoiced and exclaimed, "I don't hurt now! I can move without pain. Oh, praise God!" Others remained in quiet prayer. A few were like me, just watching, observers wondering what God was doing.

At length Rebecca ended the night with prayer and the group began to break up. Only a few people remained behind when Cathy and I left. Walking to the car, my knee felt somehow different, but the precise difference eluded me. I didn't say much but told Cathy that I thought something had happened during prayer. Arriving home, I descended from the entry level to the bedroom via the stairs, closely checking the knee's response. For some time, stairs had been especially painful, but that night I felt nothing. For the next several days, I continued to check the knee. More and more, my confidence grew that God had healed me. Because my knee had not felt normal for twenty years, it took some time to assess. As the realization settled upon me that I was no longer disabled, I could think of nothing else. I went about my routine in a kind of daze. God had touched me—me! Personally. Physically. Immediately.

This was the most profound spiritual experience of my life since my initial conversion to Christ as a high school senior. One thing was sure, I thought. I didn't need the various arguments for the existence of God anymore. Let the philosophers have them! Virtually all my knee's cartilage between the tibia and the femur had abraded through injury and wear. That was a physical fact. Now that cartilage seemed to be back, equally a fact. The utter reality of the supernatural repeatedly struck my awareness like a splash of cold water. It was literally something I could touch. God changed my life that night in Rebecca's hands-on seminar.

Soon I began myself to pray regularly for others to be healed, and God did amazing things. I am still seeing miracles as Cathy and I teach and minister healing and deliverance. I have seen cancer healed numerous times; I have seen backs and shoulders restored,

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ulcerative colitis disappear but for a small scar or two, diseased eyes healed, ears returned to full function after doctors have given up. Through me God has healed other people's knees. I have seen drug-resistant pneumonia clear in response to prayer. A young woman's damaged rib cage, the left side "permanently" twisted by a terrible accident that left her in continual agony, returned to its normal position under my hands in the name of Jesus. Healing: Again and again, I have seen it. I expect, by God's infinite mercy and grace, to keep seeing it.

As I have prayed and learned, I have also come to be great friends with Rebecca, the person who first showed me that healing is real and that God does it as we come to him in faith and expectation. As brother and sister in Christ, we continue to seek more from God. And naturally, as a professor, my reaction to something this big has been to read everything I could lay my hands on about divine healing. I have collected and absorbed many helpful books. You would likely recognize a number of the authors, because they are famous. But I can tell you that none of these books is better than the one you hold in your hand, and most are not as good. Don't believe me? Then try this: Begin to read the first chapter. I guarantee you will not put this book down until you look up, surprised, and realize you are in the third or fourth chapter. It reads well, and it reads true, because it was born in experience, and born in God.

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INTRODUCTION

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“You’re so brave, baby girl.”

I nod slowly, reassured by my mother’s voice, even though I can’t quite see her face. The pain does that; it makes everything else a blur.

Beads of sweat break out on my forehead as another wave of intense pain racks my body. I squeeze my eyes shut and tightly grasp my mom’s hand. *Jesus, I think, I can’t do this. It hurts too much. Just take me home.*

When the pain subsides, I open my eyes to see my mom’s face. Comforting. Loving. Scared.

Okay, Jesus, I pray again. Don’t take me but help me. This pain is too much. This cross is too much for me to bear.

• • •

I wish that were the only time this scene played out. It wasn’t. Unfortunately for all of us, we relived this scene day after day, month after month. For sixteen years, I battled an incredibly painful and often debilitating disease. I believed God made me sick for some purpose I didn’t or couldn’t understand, so I suffered as nobly as I could, attempting to carry what I thought was my divinely assigned burden.

However, contrary to my own theological understanding of healing, miracles, and God’s working today, Jesus radically healed me and rewrote my future. In a moment, he freed me from years of pain and illness.

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This book is not about suffering, nor is it about surviving. This book is about healing. In all of the painful, soul-searching, question-asking, heart-wrenching messiness associated with sickness and disease, this book is about how God already chose to heal two thousand years ago and how we can apprehend that healing and see it here and now in our lives.

Jesus said that we would know a tree by its fruit (Matt. 7:17-20). For me, that looks like twelve years and counting of health. It also means witnessing countless miracles firsthand as I've learned more about healing. Through a stint on the mission field, three years of ministry school, and traveling around the world studying and teaching about healing, I've learned that Scripture instead of experience must set my expectation for how God will move in my life. I've learned that he's better than we think he is, and if it's not too good to be true, it's not the end of the story. Above all, I've learned that there is hope for things to change.

I can't promise healing, but I can promise hope. Not the kind of hope that is synonymous with "One day I wish . . ." No, I mean the confident expectation of coming good to your life.

What I didn't know lying in that bed all those years ago is now the drumbeat of my life: Jesus still heals.



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THE QUESTION OF BEGINNINGS

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This story begins not in far-off India or the remote African jungle but in a typical midwestern suburb, in a typical midwestern family. The protagonist is towheaded and shy, and as most children would, she tags along with her big sister, acting as both accomplice and accidental foil in their plans to antagonize their brother. Her daddy calls her his “sweet little girl,” and in his warm embrace, she knows she is.

It isn’t until this little girl is four or five years old that her parents begin to notice a problem. If their happy-natured child catches a cold, it quickly turns into bronchitis or pneumonia, and a day in bed becomes several in the hospital. The cycle repeats itself over and over, baffling doctors and leaving the girl in chronic pain.

The family is a kind, loving, Bible-believing Christian family. The parents regularly pray for a medical breakthrough and wisdom for the doctors. But nothing changes. Their little girl is often bedridden and continues to grow worse. Finally, a nurse at the children’s hospital pulls the mother aside and bluntly tells her, “Your daughter

isn't improving with our care," and suggests they consider alternative medicine. Willing to try anything, the parents pursue the nurse's recommendation.

Now thirteen and too weak to take even the few steps from the car to the doctor's office, the girl lies in her father's arms as he carries her into the building. To their great joy, inside they receive the first step in the breakthrough they so desperately seek: a diagnosis. The new doctor recognizes the autoimmune disease wreaking havoc on the girl's body and knows it is the underlying cause of numerous secondary illnesses. He prescribes a regimen of twice-weekly IVs consisting of a potent cocktail of vitamins and minerals to boost her weakened immune system, as well as a strict diet and closely guarded sleep schedule and exercise program. The rigorous course of treatment and highly disciplined lifestyle create a fragile balance within the girl's body that opens a whole new life to her. It isn't perfect—this life still consists of IVs that sting and cause her arm to ache, regular injections, countless pills, and only enough energy to be involved in school, church, and sports on a part-time basis, but this new balance is a measurable upgrade from the previous years spent in the tiny world that existed between her bed and the couch.

Though occasionally disheartened by her inability to join her friends in eating pizza, attending sleepovers, or playing a full game of basketball, the girl is pleased. This new life is far better than the years she was too sick to attend school or see her friends. A deep-seated conviction that her sickness somehow brings a unique glory to God helps her accept her circumstances. She believes her illness is her cross to bear, and so she bears it daily with little complaint. Friends, family, and other well-meaning Christians praise her resolve and hold her up as a model of faith in the midst of suffering.

The girl's positive attitude and strict life perimeters keep everything in balance throughout high school. When it comes time to discuss colleges, she chooses a school in southern Florida so she can

spread her wings—and live in a climate that eases the dull ache that haunts her waking hours. Nervous about how her body will respond to the new routine, the girl is happily surprised when she makes it through her first year of college, followed by a second. God provides for her through caring friends, helpful professors, and school breaks at home consisting of IVs and sleep.

Yet she can't shake a sense of foreboding as she struggles to complete her sophomore year. She knows her reserve is empty, and there is no strength remaining to continue for another semester.

The summer between her sophomore and junior years of college, roughly sixteen years after this torment began, the girl shares her fears with a dear friend. This friend is the daughter of missionaries and grew up outside of Western culture. More important, she grew up outside of Western mindsets surrounding healing. The friend suggests the girl's physical illness could be spiritually related.

At first, the girl is offended. Instead of hearing a helpful suggestion, she hears the same accusation that was frequently brought against her throughout her lengthy diagnostic process—she's making it all up. Defensive and hurt, she tries to listen as her friend explains that things can be both physical and spiritual. The friend suggests they meet with her missionary mother, who regularly prays for inner healing with different individuals.

The girl goes home and thinks about the conversation. That night, trying unsuccessfully to sleep, she has a bad feeling so intense that it seems almost physical, as if something is sitting on her chest through the night. Realizing how desperate she is, she decides to schedule a time to pray with her friend's mother. She feels trapped in her own body, frustrated and afraid. She is certain that without a drastic change, she'll be forced to withdraw from college and return to her old routine of IVs and bed rest.

At the friend's house a few days later, the mother explains this strange new concept of inner healing and tells the girl what to

expect. Skeptical but willing to try anything, the girl agrees and quietly bows her head and folds her hands, hoping against hope. Over the next several hours, her perseverance is rewarded in incredible ways. The great Counselor meets with her, bringing freedom and clarity to difficult areas of her life. Her anxiety dissipates as God gently replaces different hurts, painful memories, and heart wounds with his loving truth. She is amazed—she didn't know prayer could do this.

"I just don't feel like we're finished praying," the woman says when they stop for lunch. "Can you come back later today?"

The girl agrees and they set a time to continue where they left off. But to her surprise, the woman adds, "Don't let Satan stop you from coming back this evening."

The words startle the girl; she knows the devil is real and involved in the world, but she assumes it is only in the lives of those involved with the occult, or maybe it is something missionaries run into—but it definitely is not to be expected in suburban Midwest America.

Walking the girl to her car, the woman says again, "Don't let the devil stop you from returning tonight."

That statement, along with her sense of new and profound freedom, stick with the girl throughout the day. With a mixture of fear and anticipation, she returns to the friend's house that evening. During this second time of prayer, something wondrous happens. Jesus radically encounters her. To her complete surprise—and contrary to her understanding of how God interacts with people—Jesus shows her how he fights for her. It blows her mind. He reveals the source of her sickness and destroys it as she watches, removing the pain, the exhaustion, and all the endless hours of doctors' visits. It is a true miracle—the girl is fully healed.

Though the retelling of this story reads like a black-and-white encounter with God, it doesn't feel that way to the girl. At times, she is afraid she imagined it. She assumes visions or encounters with God

are like those in the Bible—dramatic and involving something like writing on a wall or a blinding light from heaven that knocks you off your donkey. Only later does she learn that the majority of encounters with God are so small that they can be missed or mistaken for one’s imagination. Also, even though she hated being sick, her understanding of how to live—her very identity—involved the illness. Without it, she doesn’t know who she is.

Fortunately, Jesus heals the whole person. That night he healed her body and gave her a brand-new identity—she knows she is no longer the sick girl but is free to walk in the health, dreams, and abundant life he created for her. She remembers the advice she received from her friend’s mother: Let time substantiate her healing before she talks about it with others, particularly those who are likely to question the validity of her encounter. Even though Jesus healed her in an instant, the process of learning what “healthy” looks and feels like in her everyday life ends up taking her years.

The morning after this encounter with Jesus, the girl still goes in for her scheduled IV, but as she watches the liquid steadily drip into her vein, she realizes it feels different. She knows this will be her final treatment. A smile spreads across her face as she catches the first glimpse of the full, healthy life ahead of her.

I can’t help but smile and shake my head in amazement every time I tell this story. It’s been twelve years since that wonderful day when Jesus dramatically and radically transformed my life. In a single moment, God removed something that had plagued me for over sixteen years, and he sparked a passion for healing within me that set in motion a wild, decade-long ride that sent me around the world and eventually back to school on the West Coast. Even more than a physical change, my healing was a direct encounter with the incredibly intimate and specific love God had for *me*, an encounter that forever marked me and recalibrated my understanding of just how good and personal my heavenly Father is.

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I don't claim to have all the answers—far from it. What follows is intended only as an introduction to biblical healing (also called divine or miraculous healing). There's much more to experience, learn, and grow into on the subject. But what I can do is offer my own experience as someone who was surprised by God's healing power and—now—has lived twelve years and counting of a profoundly transformed life. As we go, you'll hear more of my adventures and what's kept me burning to see the full manifestation of God's kingdom here on earth.

STARTING OUT

Many people are surprised when they learn that my years of illness didn't lead me to pray for my own healing—not directly, anyway. There were moments when I cried out for relief or secretly wished for a miracle, but in many ways, my sickness and theology pacified my resistance to illness. I was resigned to my fate and lacked the physical and emotional energy necessary to do anything more than survive the day at hand. Sickness didn't spark my pursuit of biblical healing—my own miracle did.

Miraculous healings and the idea that something spiritual could affect me physically were entirely foreign to me before I was healed. In fact, I was ignorant of any relationship between the spiritual and physical that could influence my daily life and found the idea offensive. Nor had I ever personally witnessed God's miraculous power. After months of walking in my new health, I struggled to understand this concept and my own experience until one day, it felt like a certain passage of Scripture stood up and hit me on the head: "Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified" (Gal. 3:1). Suddenly I saw that it was not a strange thing for the spiritual and physical worlds to be intertwined, but it was a normal part of our existence. The Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see that the very

cornerstone of my faith, Christ crucified, is based on the fact that God did something physically that affected me spiritually. We are spirit, soul, and body, and each part of our triune nature impacts the others.

Being healed upended my theology of healing, but what took my body seconds to receive took my mind much, much longer. Reconciling my understanding of God with what happened that evening required wading through old mindsets and, to put it bluntly, some bad theology that kept me from seeing the truth about healing revealed in Scripture. It is my deep desire to see God's healing power on full display within the church. In this book, I want to remove some of the stumbling blocks and hurdles of offense that exist in the place between our experience and our understanding of biblical healing.

Wisdom dictates that we build a house upon a solid foundation, lest it be shaken and destroyed when the rain and floods come (see Matt. 7:24–27). And the rain and flood will come when we pursue healing, for the subject is irrevocably linked to the hardest moments and questions we face as humans. The Bible is always the first stop when studying doctrine or determining God's will for a given situation. So instead of jumping straight into a healing model that teaches us *how* to pray for healing, it's important that we lay a solid, scriptural foundation that teaches us *why* we pray and—even more important—who God is in light of the subject. To that end, this book is divided into three sections:

1. **The Basics:** And I mean the very basics. Not about healing, but about who God is and who we are in light of that revelation. It is essential that we get this down first, or we will approach God with uncertainty, and healing will become another way we try to earn our heavenly Father's affection.

2. **Healing Theology:** This is the largest section in the book and where we will dig into the heart of the matter: investigating the difficult topics and questions surrounding healing.

These include:

- Does God still heal miraculously?
- Is it always God's will to heal?
- Does God make us sick to teach us a lesson?
- What is the origin of illness?
- What is our role in healing?
- What if someone isn't healed?

3. **Healing Prayer Model:** There are many ways to pray for healing (Jesus himself demonstrated several different methods), but in this book, we will walk through a simple prayer model that will get you started. This book also provides a few keys to hold on to before, during, and after you pray.

SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS HIGH

Have you ever gone to see a wildly popular movie, one everybody was raving about, but it ended up being a letdown because your expectations were too high? Improperly set expectations have the power to greatly impact our emotions and enjoyment. Expectations are tricky things; unmet expectations can be a considerable source of pain that leads us away from hope and toward the apparent safety of self-protection as we attempt to insulate our hearts from further pain. The result of unprocessed disappointment and unmet expectations is a life lived less bravely than our dreams require. Remembering our past pain, we limit what we dare hope for. We hedge our bets against future shortcomings instead of relying on our "God

of hope” who desires to fill us with “all joy and peace” as we trust him, so we “may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13). Hope, the confident expectation of coming good, is a necessary ingredient for a healthy spiritual life.

In the same way that we tend to find whatever we’re looking for and can’t find what we don’t look for, when we live with biblically sound expectations for God to work in and through our lives, we create the space for him to act. God wants to work through you more than you want him to work through you. In fact, God wants to encounter you more than you want to be encountered, and he wants to see you living in your amazing, uniquely designed destiny even more than you want to live in that destiny. His hope level for your life is off the charts. His expectations for your life are ridiculously high, and you do not disappoint him.

I want to live with the same level of hope that God has in every situation, regardless of what I’m facing. With that said, here are a few things I am fully expecting to occur as you read this book:

1. **God will encounter you.** God loves to encounter us with more of himself. Everyone who asks receives; those who seek find; and knocking garners an open door (Matt. 7:8). He’s promised to be found by all who look for him (Jer. 29:13). In fact, it’s impossible to ask for more of God and not receive more of him. He always responds to our call.
2. **You will get hungrier for more of God.** In the physical world, eating fills you up, but a funny thing happens in the realm of God’s kingdom—the more we eat, the hungrier we get.¹ Each chapter and every testimony you’ll read in this book are a fresh

1. I first heard this description of “kingdom appetite” explained by pastor and author Bill Johnson.

invitation into the limitless realm of intimately knowing our kind and loving God. The more we experience him and his goodness, the greater our desire will be to see his kingdom realities manifest in our lives. In the same way, doing the works of our heavenly Father only makes us hungrier to see more. The more spiritual “eating” we do, the hungrier for God we will become.

- 3. Your heart will be set on fire.** There’s a remarkable scene after the resurrection when Jesus joined a couple of his followers who were walking to Emmaus. For whatever reason, the men were kept from recognizing his identity. As they discussed their confusion regarding Jesus’ crucifixion and inexplicably empty tomb, the still-unrecognized Jesus gave one of history’s greatest Bible lessons, explaining the recent events in light of the Scriptures. Later that evening, after Jesus departed and they realized his true identity, the men made a profound statement in Luke 24:32: “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” When biblical truth and the presence of God touch our lives, our hearts are set on fire.

I can’t anticipate every question, nor will this book answer all the critics’ queries, but I believe that God’s holy, empowering, igniting fire will fall on hungry hearts as they read this book. I pray this book will give you permission to pursue healing and that it will act as a match to hearts longing to be set on fire—it is fiery hearts that will set the world ablaze.

- 4. People will be healed.** This may seem like a bold statement, but the longer I’ve studied divine healing, the more I am convinced of God’s nature and desire to heal and the more confident I am of what he will do. God always backs up the teaching of his Word with a demonstration of his love and

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power. That is how Jesus did things (see Matt. 4:23, 9:35). I'm not promising that everyone who reads this will be healed (though that's my prayer), but I do know that the keys presented here can lead to a lifestyle of expectancy and boldness that will see many people healed when you pray.

HOW TO WIN WITHOUT A FIGHT

Before we begin our investigation of God and healing, there's one last thing to mention: We are not transformed by trying harder. Isn't that wonderful, liberating news? Instead, we are transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2).² Nowhere does Scripture suggest that transformation comes through doing more or working harder, though that's often what we try. The Holy Spirit is at work leading us into all truth and teaching us to believe like Jesus does (John 16:13). Therefore, the question that leads to changed lives is not "How can I do that better?" but "What is a better belief?"

An apple tree naturally bears apples; it doesn't have to concentrate to avoid an orange or two appearing on its branches. Likewise, a lemon tree produces lemons. The very nature of the tree determines the fruit the tree will bear. Similarly, our root systems determine the fruit we will bear. As Christians, we are called to live lives that look like Jesus', who promised, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit" (John 15:5). If our lives don't match Jesus' in a given area—including healing—it signals an opportunity to upgrade our root systems (our beliefs). I pray that as you read this, your mind is continually renewed with scripturally sound beliefs that match those of Jesus, complete with similar fruit.

2. Pastor and author Steve Backlund was the first person I heard explain this concept. I highly recommend his great resources on the subject of renewing the mind.

CHAPTER KEYS

When I began my study of divine healing, my initial response was a painful mix of regret and sorrow over what I didn't know—how was it possible that I grew up in church, frequented Bible studies, and even attended a Christian university, yet I spent years suffering without anyone telling me about God's desire to heal or teaching me how to pursue healing? My initial sadness quickly melted into anger and offense. It was easier to be angry and offended over what I didn't know, sweeping it under a rug labeled "Doctrine I Don't Believe," than it was to embrace the reality of my own ignorance and the humility necessary to learn and grow.

You can't know what you've never been taught. Repositioning my own heart from offense to humility was an extremely important and often-repeated act that enabled me to see what I had missed for many years. If you are anything like me, it is possible offense may mark a few places of great opportunity for you as well. As you read this book, notice if and when offense creeps into your thoughts. Before we discuss healing, it is vital we recognize offense for what it is: a signal of where God wants to work in our lives. Otherwise, every time we are offended by what we don't know; what hasn't happened; or the physical, emotional, and mental pain surrounding the subject, we will shut down and miss the opportunity to step further into God's destiny for us—the lives we were created for. Our loving heavenly Father has incredible plans for you that include your walking in freedom and abundant life.

Americans have a strong cultural value for independence and making a way for oneself. We believe that through hard work and a little ingenuity, we can accomplish great things. This can-do spirit has led to many great innovations and ideas over the course of the last several centuries, while simultaneously placing great importance on doing things alone. My desire for this book is the exact

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opposite of this go-it-alone American individualism; I envision this book as part of a relay, not an individual race. Instead of running the same lap I have run—experiencing the trying, failing, questioning, frustration, and pain I experienced—I hope you can take the baton of my experience and keep going. Start a new lap.

MINISTRY

There's always more of God to know and experience. Few things make him happier than a desire to learn and grow in our knowledge, revelation, and relationship with him. He will transform our lives through the renewing of our minds until we naturally bear the good fruit he promised. And he will move mightily in and through us.

Father, thank you that you're continually revealing more of yourself to me and transforming me into the person you created me to be. Empower me by your Holy Spirit to grasp the depth, breadth, height, and length of your incredible love for me. Encounter me. Make me hungrier for you. Set me on fire. Enable me to learn humbly. Renew my mind with your truth until I hope, believe, and bear fruit like Jesus. May the sick be healed through my hands. In Jesus' mighty name I pray. Amen.