



We Are Not Alone

We are not alone—it is God’s design for us to be in relationship. And our relationships with others are constantly changing. New relationships regularly come into our lives (marriage, family, childbirth, friendship), while others are taken from us or fail to materialize (miscarriages, infertility, divorce, widowhood, illness). As we walk through these seasons of life, God is very clear that he is Emmanuel, or “God with us,” and that we are to be there for one another.

But what happens to you when your pain is unknown to others? When you find yourself in that all-too-common group of parents who have rejoiced in getting pregnant only to lose their babies through miscarriage or stillbirth? Although miscarriage happens in 10% to 20% of pregnancies, its frequency does nothing to quiet the loneliness, confusion, shame, guilt and depression that are common to grieving parents.

So how do you deal with the pain and numbness that come with the loss of your baby? Everyone grieves differently, but you need to take the time to grieve well. Your spouse may grieve in a different way than you do; keep the communication open and honestly share your feelings without judging his grief style. Together find a way to acknowledge the significance of your baby’s life – a way to honour and remember this child.

You were not meant to walk this road alone. Call out to God and reach out to others. Join a church grief-support group or connect with an online bereavement-support community or pregnancy-loss ministry. Many episodes of Women of Hope discuss miscarriage and infertility, helping to walk families through this difficult time. God sees your pain and “is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Ps. 34:18).

As the body of Christ, we need to come alongside those who grieve, validating their loss, attending to both the mother and father and giving them permission to grieve well and express their honest emotions. Pray with them, showing both compassion and hope. Rally support around them even as time goes by.

God can comfort us through the example of Jesus’ suffering. He was denied and abandoned – and then went to the cross alone to die. Jesus understands our pain and wilderness experiences. We are not praying to a dead Saviour, but to one who lives and intercedes for us on high!

April 2020

**Pray for Health & Wellness
of Young Girls**

1. Lord, thank you for the ministry of physical, social and spiritual healing provided by fistula hospitals, churches and the Healing Voice program to women recovering from fistulas.
2. God, we pray for Vietnamese Christian girls to be taught and to live by your biblical moral standards. May they resist the cultural temptation to participate in premarital sex and cohabitation.
3. Father, we praise you that in France the pregnancy rate for teenagers has dropped by 60 percent over the past 25 years due to higher education for girls.
4. Lord, we pray for an end to the custom of child brides among the Roma living in Serbia and Albania. These early marriages impede education, leaving these girls without an ability to earn a living wage.
5. Father, we pray for an end to forced abortions of North Korean pregnant women who are recaptured after fleeing the country. The government does not want mixed blood in their race.
6. Give strength to the girls of Denmark to stand strong in you, Father, as they struggle with the stress of school grades and face great social pressure.
7. We praise you, Lord, that the Tanzanian government passed a judgment that girls under 18 will no longer be eligible to get married.
8. Would you open the eyes of young women in Central Asia to your truth, Father, so that they would follow you rather than joining the region's predominant religion?
9. Father, we pray for loving compassionate support for teenagers in Portugal who have given birth at such a young age.

10. We thank you, Lord, that children's radio programs in Malawi are changing the minds and hearts of parents, causing them to cancel arranged marriages for their young girls.

11. Father, help teenagers in Romania to look to Christian models in life and reject premarital sex. May young mothers turn to you for help in the complicated mission of parenthood.

12. Protect young girls from child marriage in India, Father, knowing that it often deprives girls of their education, health and safety.

13. Father, inform and raise up German Christians to fight against the practice of early marriage among immigrants in their country and defend the helpless girls being given as child brides.

14. Lord, we long for teenage girls across Canada to find their worth and identity in you and not in their social relationships.

15. God, we ask for the protection of young girls against cultural practices resulting in physical harm to their immature bodies as well as in emotional and mental consequences.

16. Our hearts break when hearing that 95 percent of Korean teen pregnancies end in abortion. Father, may churches and parents teach their children the value of life.

17. Lord, please change hearts and minds in the culture and government of Nepal to discontinue child marriages and instead offer free education and protection for their children.

18. We pray that families in Côte d'Ivoire would renounce female genital mutilation, early marriage and childbirth at home, all of which increase the occurrence of fistulas in pregnant women.

19. Father, may Finnish girls find positive self-esteem and value in how you view them as your daughters. Protect them from unhealthy cultural influences and expectations.

20. We pray for your protection and provision for young brides and mothers. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13).

21. In Indonesia 1 in 6 girls marries before the age of 18, which increases the likelihood of maternal death, divorce, domestic violence and child labour. Encourage parents to allow their daughters both a childhood and an education.

22. Father, we pray for Bulgarian teens to choose your biblical truths rather than the culture of sexual indulgence, which may lead to unwanted pregnancies; 75 percent of abortions occur in teens under age 16.

23. Lord, we pray for community and assistance for the young single mothers in Japan who are struggling to earn a living for their families.

24. We rejoice that in Côte d'Ivoire the age for marriage has been raised to 20 for men and 18 for women.

25. God, we cry out for freedom for women escaping North Korea. May they not be deceived by brokers and sold to brothels. Lead them to places of safety.

26. Give wisdom to leaders who need to address the problems of early marriage and pregnancy in China. Of 75 million youths 15 to 19 years old, 1.2 million are married.

27. Father, we pray for increased opportunities for education, human rights and health care for women in Central Asia.

28. Thank you, Lord, for the ministry to pregnant teen mothers at the Uruguay Women's Hospital. May these girls be given love and compassion in their homes and the ability to finish their education.

29. Lord, may you comfort the abandoned young mother who suffers with the complications of a fistula. Connect her with those who can provide medical help and restore her in soul and body.

30. Father, we pray that Dr Peggy Banks would completely surrender her own will to your will for her life and ministry each day.

