

BASED ON THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY

# I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2

Some stories deserve an encore.



## 7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Grief & Gratitude: Finding God in Seasons That Won't Seem to End



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**S**ome seasons last longer than we ever imagined. Grief hangs on. Healing feels slow. The night doesn't break as quickly as we hoped. And yet—even in these long, heavy seasons—God is present, faithful, and near.

This 7-day devotional invites you to walk honestly through the tension of holding both grief and gratitude. You'll learn what it means to trust God when the season won't end, to breathe again when hope feels thin, and to anchor your heart in the One who promises to finish what He started.

Inspired by themes from **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2** and the heart behind “Even If” by MercyMe, this devotional helps people reconnect with hope, rediscover God's nearness, and remember that His goodness holds steady—even in the middle of a story that hasn't resolved yet.

This plan opens the door for honest conversation, deep reflection, authentic community, and powerful spiritual growth—perfect for churches, small groups, care teams, grief ministries, and anyone walking alongside someone through a difficult season.





# DAY 1: THIS NEVER GOES AWAY

## SCRIPTURE:

**Psalm 139:1–12; Exodus 3:7; Hebrews 4:15–16**

## DEVOTIONAL

We all face seasons in life that stretch us emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Sometimes you can't even put words to what you're feeling. It's the heaviness that lingers. The ache that doesn't lift. The fear that maybe this time...the season won't end.

Both Bart and Tim walked through seasons like this in **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2**.

For Bart, life felt darker than ever—hit after hit, layer after layer. Even while experiencing the success of “I Can Only Imagine,” he was facing deep family pain that shook his identity, especially his fear of what kind of father he would be. In his journal, he wrote, “It never ends.” That single line captures the exhaustion and uncertainty so many of us have felt.

Tim faced a different battle. Everything he had hoped for seemed to be slipping away. The road ahead looked painful, uncertain, and long. Yet God never walked away from him. Amid all the difficulties, Tim became an encouragement to everyone he met. He faced a long season with hope and gratitude.

God didn't walk away from Bart or Tim. And He won't walk away from you—no matter how long the season has lasted or what lies ahead. God will be right beside you through all of it.

Here's the hope Scripture gives us:

- **Psalm 139** — God sees you fully and knows you completely.
- **Exodus 3** — God hears your cries.
- **Hebrews 4** — Jesus understands your struggle firsthand.

God doesn't wait for the night to lift before He draws near. He steps into the darkness with you. He meets you right where you are—tired, hurting, overwhelmed, or unsure.

You are not unseen.

You are not forgotten.

You are deeply known and deeply loved.

And this truth will carry us through the rest of this devotional:

**Every long season has an end, and God is working even when you can't see the shift yet.**

## REFLECTION

- Where do you feel the most unseen or misunderstood right now?
- If you were fully honest with God today, what would you tell Him about this season?
- What part of Psalm 139 brings you the most comfort? Why?
- When have you realized—after the fact—that God was with you even when you felt alone?
- How would your daily life look different if you believed God notices every tear, fear, and thought?

## PRAYER

Lord, thank You for seeing me—even the parts I don't know how to express. Stay close and steady my heart in this season.

## DAY 2: GOD, WHERE ARE YOU IN ALL OF THIS?

### SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 43:2; Psalm 147:3

### DEVOTIONAL

When life grows dark, our hearts often whisper the same question: “God, where are You?”

Bart asked it. Tim felt it. Every believer walks through seasons where heaven feels silent.

For Bart, the question sounded like, “Why does life have to be so hard? Why don’t You show up face-to-face when everything goes dark?”

For us, it may sound like:

- “Why didn’t You stop this?”
- “Why haven’t You healed this yet?”
- “Why does this keep happening?”

God is not intimidated by our questions. He never shames us for asking. But sometimes, instead of asking, “Why is this happening?” the better question becomes, “Lord, what do You want to do in me through this?”

Healing is not predictable. It doesn’t follow a timeline. It rarely moves in a straight line. And when you feel like you’ve reached the end of your rope, God is still there—holding you, steadying you, carrying you.

Psalm 34:18 reminds us that He is close to the brokenhearted. Isaiah 43 tells us He walks *through* the waters with us—not around them.

Healing is a journey, not an event. You are not behind. You are not failing.

God is with you. And He is patient with your process.

### REFLECTION

- Where do you feel like you should be further along? Who set that expectation?
- How have you seen God show up in your pain—even if the situation hasn’t changed yet?
- What emotion rises when you read, “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted”?
- What might healing look like if you trusted God’s pace instead of your own timeline?
- Who has supported you in this season that you can thank God for today?

### PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for staying close. Help me trust Your timing and Your healing process. Strengthen me for every step ahead. Amen.

# DAY 3: GOD IS IN THE FIRE AND THE STORM

## SCRIPTURE:

Daniel 3:18; Daniel 3:24–25; Mark 4:35–41; Psalm 46:1–3

## DEVOTIONAL

One of the truths Tim held onto was this: God is in the fire and in the storm. No matter how intense the fire or how out of control the storm feels, God is right there—and He will carry you through whatever you're facing.

The song “Even If” by MercyMe and Tim Timmons is rooted in the Old Testament story found in Daniel 3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden idol, even when threatened with death in a fiery furnace. God met them in the fire, and they emerged unharmed—revealing His power and faithfulness.

In Daniel 3:18, they declare an “even if” faith: even if God does not rescue them, they will still not bow. It's unwavering trust and obedience—regardless of the outcome.

Some seasons feel like the heat has been turned up higher than you ever imagined. Some storms hit harder than you ever thought you could withstand. And in those moments, the most human question rises: “God... are You here?”

Scripture gives us a better picture.

God doesn't stand outside the fire shouting instructions—He steps into the furnace. He doesn't watch your storm from the shoreline—He climbs into the boat with you.

His presence is the miracle.

The fire becomes refining.

The storm becomes revealing.

The breaking point becomes the place God builds you.

Just like we see in **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2**, the hardest moments often become the most sacred places—where God's nearness becomes undeniable.

## REFLECTION

- What fire or storm are you walking through right now?
- Where can you see God's presence in past storms?
- What would shift if you believed God is with you right now—not later?
- How have past difficulties deepened your faith?
- What part of your storm do you need to surrender today?

## PRAYER

Jesus, step into my fire and into my storm. Let Your presence become more real than the heat and stronger than the waves. Strengthen and steady me today. Amen.

## DAY 4: EVEN IF

### SCRIPTURE:

Daniel 3:16–18; Habakkuk 3:17–19; Psalm 119:68; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

### DEVOTIONAL

Some of the most beautiful worship we offer God is born out of the words: “Even if...”

In Daniel 3:18, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego declare an “even if” faith, saying that even if God does not rescue them from the fire, they will still not bow to the idol. It is a powerful statement of trust and obedience regardless of the outcome.

For Bart and Tim, they came to a point where they said, “Even if” nothing changes in the situations they are facing, they are trusting God to get them through. The song “Even If” captures this well in the line, “I know You’re able...but even if You don’t, my hope is You alone.”

That’s the faith of the three Hebrew boys in Daniel 3.

That’s the heart of MercyMe’s song.

That’s the posture God invites us to embrace.

“Even if” faith is not fragile—it’s forged. It’s the kind of faith that bows to God even when the answer hasn’t come yet. It trusts God’s goodness even when the outcomes don’t make sense. God is good because of who He is—not because of what He does for us.

Even if He doesn’t fix it yet...

Even if you’re still waiting...

Even if the grief lingers...

He is still faithful.

He is still near.

He is still good.

And your “even if” worship moves heaven.

### REFLECTION

- What situation are you waiting for God to change?
- Where do you need to say, “I know You’re able”?
- How do the words, “even if You don’t, my hope is You,” challenge or free you?
- When has God answered differently than you wanted but proved faithful anyway?
- What step of surrender can you take today?

### PRAYER

Lord, I know You can move. But even if You don’t, I choose to trust You. Strengthen me with “even if” faith.

# DAY 5: YOUR DREAMS CAN RISE FROM THE ASHES

## SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 61:1–3; Genesis 50:20; 1 Peter 5:10

## DEVOTIONAL

Everyone carries ashes—broken dreams, painful losses, seasons that didn’t go the way we prayed. But Isaiah 61 promises that God exchanges ashes for beauty.

In **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2**, both Bart and Tim wrestled with this truth. Could their dreams still rise through everything that had burned down? Could God redeem the pain?

The answer—yes.

Their dreams weren’t canceled by hardship. Their calling wasn’t erased by disappointment. Their future wasn’t destroyed by the ashes. And neither is yours.

God never asks you to pretend the ashes aren’t real. He simply asks you to hand them to Him. In His hands, ashes become the soil for strength, compassion, faith, and spiritual depth.

God never wastes what wounded you—and He is still able to redeem what feels lost.

## REFLECTION

- What ashes are you holding—grief, disappointment, loss, shattered dreams?
- Is it hard to believe God can bring beauty from this place? Why?
- When has God redeemed a painful season in your past?
- What would it look like to place your ashes in Jesus’ hands today?
- Where do you already see signs of beauty emerging?

## PRAYER

Jesus, here are my ashes. Redeem them. Bring beauty from the places that feel broken.





## DAY 6: HOLDING GRATITUDE AND GRIEF

### SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 30:5; Psalm 42:5–8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

### DEVOTIONAL

Grief and gratitude are not enemies—they can live in the same heart. You don't have to silence one to honor the other. Tim Timmons reminds us of this truth every day with the “X” he draws on his arm: a reminder to hold both grief and gratitude with an “unflinching” trust in God.

The grief didn't disappear for Tim. The challenges didn't vanish for Bart. But their focus shifted. Gratitude didn't erase their pain—it steadied them beneath it.

Grief says, “This hurts.”

Gratitude says, “But God is still here.”

Some of your deepest worship will rise out of this tension. Gratitude becomes an anchor while grief becomes a teacher. Both shape you. Both matter. Both lead you back to Jesus.

### REFLECTION

- What grief are you carrying that you haven't fully named yet?
- Have you felt guilty for being sad while believing God is good?
- What is one thing you're genuinely grateful for in this season?
- How might your walk with Jesus change if you made room for both emotions?
- What would an honest “tears and thanks” prayer sound like today?

### PRAYER

Jesus, help me hold my tears and my gratitude together. Meet me in both.





## DAY 7: IT IS WELL

### SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 1:6; Psalm 138:8; Romans 8:18

### DEVOTIONAL

When you're walking through a long, heavy season, it's easy to feel stuck. But the truth of Scripture is this: God has not stopped writing your story.

The hymn "It Is Well" was written out of unimaginable grief—financial loss, the death of four children, overwhelming sorrow. Yet in the middle of that heartbreak, Horatio Spafford wrote, "Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, it is well with my soul."

This hymn became an anchor for generations—including Bart and Tim. We see Bart move from the words "This never goes away" to a quiet, surrendered "It is well."

That shift didn't come because everything was fixed. It came because Jesus was present.

Philippians 1:6 assures you that the God who began a good work in you will finish it.  
You are not behind.  
You are not forgotten.  
You are not done.

This season is not the end of your story. It is the middle of God's work. And in His presence, your heart can honestly say, "It is well with my soul."

### REFLECTION

- What part of your life feels stuck or hopeless right now?
- How does Philippians 1:6 challenge that feeling?
- If God is the Author of your story, what might He be writing in this chapter?
- What past seasons did you survive only by God's grace?
- What keeps you from saying, "It is well," today?
- If you lived like your story wasn't over, what step of faith would you take?

### PRAYER

Lord, thank You that You're not done with me. Write what only You can write. I trust You with every chapter ahead.

