



JESUS, MY ANCHOR

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:1b-3

All my life I have struggled with mental illness. In recent years, especially so. It's Jesus who keeps me going. And I want to tell you how that is so.

Thirty years ago, when I was beginning to make Jesus central to my life, I found out that by fixing my eyes on him, I was not distracted so much by things that hurt me or brought anxiety.

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Nor by things that might be considered the “devil’s schemes.”

When we focus our eyes on something, we’re bound to be less distracted by things that are out of our line of vision. And so, when we fix our eyes on Jesus, our sight will be securely anchored to him. Hebrews 6:19 says that *“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”* Jesus is our anchor, our hope and refuge from storms.

A ship needs an anchor to keep it from drifting. In my day to day life, I’ve learned that when I stay close to Jesus (by journaling letters to him, for example), the confusion that sometimes happens disappears. Disorganization is no longer an issue because my mind is securely anchored. Safe with Jesus. With his help I’m able to focus on my work.

I’ve gone through hard times, as most of us have. We all have a cross to bear, not unlike Jesus did. But Jesus endured the cross, though the pain was excruciating. The Bible says that he endured the cross, “for the joy set before him.” Why joy? Because he knew that his suffering would save mankind from sin. Giving his life would mean that many would be reconciled with God.

The suffering I’ve gone through was not dissimilar to Christ’s in that I too was persecuted and abandoned. During those painful times I stayed close to him—often by writing about him for others.

When hurting, I turned to Jesus, remembering that he too suffered. I entered into his suffering, as I knew he was entering into mine. And when I stayed close like this, close and secure, I was able to join with him in fellowship. With him by my side I became stronger, more confident, more courageous. More like him.

Today when things get tough, it’s Jesus who keeps me going.

Jesus, my anchor.

marja