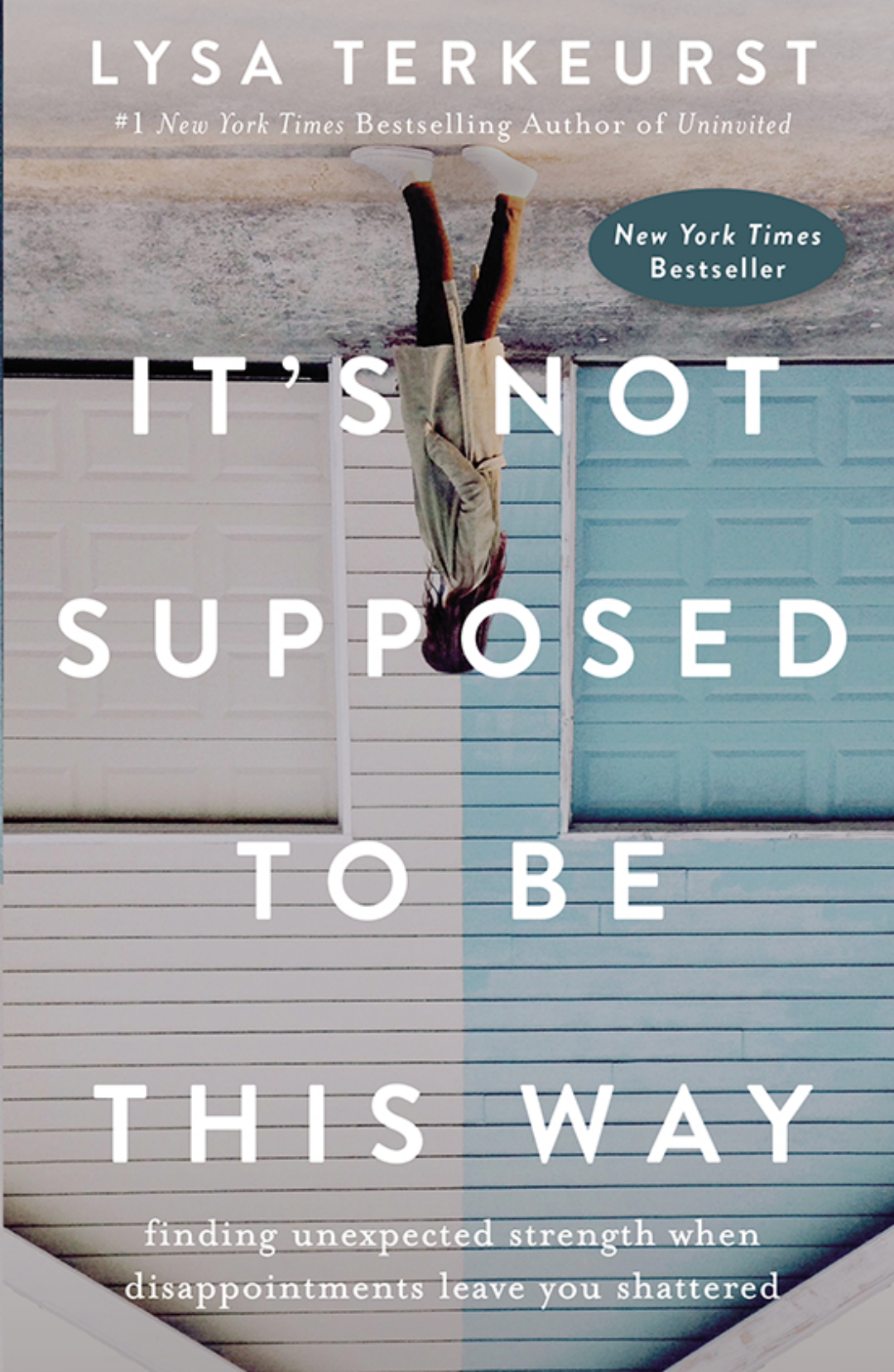
LYSA TERKEURST

#1 *New York Times* Bestselling Author of *Uninvited*



New York Times Bestseller

IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY

finding unexpected strength when disappointments leave you shattered

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT *IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY*

"There are few people brave enough to share their truth authentically and candidly. My longtime friend Lysa TerKeurst is one of those people. In *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*, she gives us permission to acknowledge our own pain and disappointment by courageously exposing her own. Then she points us squarely to the sovereignty and faithfulness of God. This is a powerful book not only because each chapter oozes compassion and grace but because I've personally witnessed the tears, the pain, and the prayers that produced it. And therein lies its strength. It will be impossible to read this and not be tremendously encouraged."

—Priscilla Shirer, Bible teacher and author

"My dear friend Lysa TerKeurst knows firsthand what it's like to have her faith tested to the breaking point and somehow draw closer to the Lord. I'm so grateful for her willingness to share her journey with us in *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*. With a Job-like faith, Lysa vulnerably reveals the raw pain of enduring the unimaginable and seeking God in the midst of her struggles. This book is an instant classic on the relationship between suffering and knowing God. Not to be missed!"

—Chris Hodges, Senior Pastor, Church of the Highlands; author of *Fresh Air* and *The Daniel Dilemma*

"In *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*, Lysa confronts the often brutal differences between the life we have and the life we expected to have with stunning vulnerability. She helps us recognize that the deep well of hurt, frustration, and discouragement cannot compare to the depth of the well of hope, joy, and restoration that God has for us. If you feel debilitated by the shackles of disappointment, then let this book point you to God's plan for a whole new way to be human. You won't get your old life back—it's much better than that."

—Levi Lusko, Pastor, Fresh Life Church; bestselling author of *Swipe Right* and *Through the Eyes of a Lion*

"Lysa encourages us that our disappointments, failures, and the unexpected can actually serve in helping us grow closer to Jesus. I would recommend anyone and everyone to pick up a copy of *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*!"

—Chad Veach, Lead Pastor, ZOE Church LA

"This book is for every believer who has ever asked the question, 'Why, Lord?'"

—Elizabeth E.

"Lysa shares her journey through the hardest season of her life with pure honesty and a holy perspective that's relatable, tear-provoking, and life-changing."

—Ashley S.

"If you have suffered disappointment, or are currently walking through disappointment, this book is for you. It's relatable and rich with helpful Scripture. It's as if the story was my own."

—Tammy M.

"I have not read a more raw and honest book that ultimately points to God's sovereignty in the midst of life's hard. Lysa not only teaches us how to be better equipped for the fires and battles of this life, but her life illustrates how to wrestle well in the most difficult seasons. Her beautiful example of standing firm on the goodness of God—even when our flesh desperately wants to doubt and question—has been a life-changing gift to me!"

—Katie G.

"Lysa takes her own life circumstances and the Word of God and combines them into an easy-to-read and very practically applicable book! I would highly recommend this to anyone who is disappointed and struggling!"

—Erin S.

"Sometimes disappointments and hurts are so deep that a person is left feeling hopeless in the fallout of their circumstances. This book takes you on a journey of healing from that hopelessness."

—Rachel R.

IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY

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It Will Be Okay
Win or Lose, I Love You!

IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY

Finding Unexpected Strength When Disappointments Leave You Shattered

LYSA TERKEURST

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To my executive team at Proverbs 31 Ministries, Meredith Brock, Lisa Allen, Barb Spencer, Glynnis Whitwer, and Danya Jordan . . . you have walked beside me every step of this journey. Words will never be able to express how grateful I am for your unconditional love, tremendous support, and fervent prayers. I love you.

And to you who hold this book right now—the hurting heart, the disappointed soul, the devastated dreamer—I know your pain. I really do. But I also know that God sees. God hears. And God loves you deeply. My prayer is that the heaviness will be lifted off of your soul as you embrace the truths through the pages of this book.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a favorite story I like to tell myself. It's the one about how my life should turn out. Though it's riddled with missing everyday details, it's full of a general sense of okayness. No, actually more than okayness. It's the story where my toes can dig deeply into the sands of a glorious land called *normal.* A land I didn't design but one where I'm allowed to nod in agreement before any changes occur. And I can veto all circumstances that don't look right, feel right, or smell right. My lungs inhale fresh gusts of predictability and the wind is always a gentle breeze. Never unstable or stormy and certainly not brutal or destructive.

This place is neither glamorous nor glitzy. It's casual and comfortable with a boho chic eclectic style and a pace all my own. Things don't wear out and I don't get worn down. People are kind. They do what they say they are going to do and are only grumpy enough to keep things interesting. Goodness dots the landscape like trees in bloom. Peace hovers like the best poofy clouds. And the soundtrack is simple and sweet, crescendoing with lingering laughter over all the inside jokes that a big family with so many big personalities effortlessly produces.

I like this place.

I don't want to just vacation here. I want to live here.

And I suspect you have a version of this kind of story you like to tell yourself as well.

We don't just want to read the end of our story and feel good about it. We want to take the pen and write it ourselves. We feel very certain how things should turn out. But we live in the uncertainty of neither being able to predict nor control the outcome.

Humans are very attached to outcomes. We say we trust God but behind the scenes we work our fingers to the bone and our emotions into a tangled fray trying to control our outcomes. We praise God when our normal looks like what we thought it would. We question God when it doesn't. And walk away from Him when we have a sinking suspicion that God is the one who set fire to the hope that was holding us together.

Even the most grounded people can feel hijacked by the winds of unpredictable change. We feel weighed down by grief while at the same time unable to get our bearings as the weightless ashes of all we thought would be fly away.

I've never seen ashes able to control where the winds of change take them.

At least these tissue-thin pieces of debris don't expect to be able to control where they go and how they land.

I've yet to meet a human who can remain so unattached to outcomes.

We motivate ourselves to get through the bad of today by playing a mental movie of the good that will surely come tomorrow. And if not tomorrow, soon. Very soon.

And this good that comes will be such a glorious outcome that we will exhale all the anxiety and finally say, "Whew, I can honestly say it was worth it." Cue the redemption song and a small ticker tape parade.

The good outcome will look like we dreamed. It will come as

fast as we hoped it would. And it will make all the wrongs right, right, right. Those who walked faithfully with us during this hard season will feel their investment of time with us and casseroles made for us was a good one. They fulfilled yet another kingdom assignment. Check the list. And now let's all be happy.

Those who shunned you or judged you or, worst of all, somehow used your season of pain against you will see how wrong they were. They will apologize. And they will promise they learned their lesson to never ever treat anyone like that again.

This is the acceptable outcome.

This is how the formula should calculate: hard time plus healing time plus staying faithful to God should equal the exact good outcome we were counting on.

But if you are a human who has been doing the adult thing for more than twenty-four hours, you've probably come to the same stunning revelation as I have. We cannot control our outcomes. We cannot formulate how the promises of God will actually take shape. And we will never be able to demand any of the healing from all the hurt to hurry up.

I ride this struggle bus. But I'm never comfortable with the fact that I can't grab the wheel and drive it back to Normal.

I make such big assumptions of what a good God should do and then find myself epically disappointed when the winds change, the struggle bus takes a sharp turn left, and nothing at all feels right.

This isn't how I pictured my life right now.

And this probably isn't exactly how you thought things would look in your life right now either.

I'm not telling you anything new. I'm just giving voice to thoughts you've already had but maybe didn't know how to verbalize.

But, here's the hope.

Though we can't predict or control or demand the outcome of our circumstances, we can know with great certainty we will be okay. Better than okay. Better than normal. We will be victorious because Jesus is victorious (1 Corinthians 15:57). And victorious people were never meant to settle for normal.

Through these pages I'm going to help you find a soft place to land in the story God Himself is perfectly orchestrating with our good in mind. Some will live their whole lives missing the chance to see all the good God has placed around them just for them. Partly because the hard stuff has demanded so much of their attention. And the seeming permanence of some of the heartbreak has stolen their affection for life.

But what if the victory is only in part how things turn out? What if a bigger part of being victorious is how well we live today? This hour. This minute.

You are about to have a completely different experience with this thing called life. Together we will find a way to tie our hope not to the specific outcomes we thought were the only way back to normal, but rather to the very heart of God. The Author of the story your heart could never conceive but begs to live with every thumping beat. There is more to all of this than you know.

And I can't wait to watch it unfold in your life and mine.

GOING *to the* WELL

To help us on this journey as we empty ourselves of the misconceptions we have of the way life should be, I've written a section called "Going to the Well" at the end of each chapter. It's a recap of all we are learning, so we don't forget the good stuff along the way. When we empty ourselves of our misplaced hopes and limited perspectives, we have to fill ourselves up with something. So we will learn to identify our empty spaces, our thirst, and fill that void with the living water of God's truth. His Word is tailor-made to transform the hurting human heart.

Each "Going to the Well" will include statements to cling to, scriptures to soak in, questions to think on, and a prayer.

GOING *to the* WELL

Though we can't predict or control or demand the outcome of our circumstances, we can know with great certainty we will be okay.

REMEMBER (STATEMENTS TO CLING TO):

- We live in the uncertainty of neither being able to predict nor control the outcome.
- Even the most grounded people can feel hijacked by the winds of unpredictable change.
- We will be victorious because Jesus is victorious. And victorious people were never meant to settle for normal.
- What if the victory is only in part how things turn out? What if a bigger part of being victorious is how well we live today?

RECEIVE (SCRIPTURES TO SOAK IN):

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57)

REFLECT (QUESTIONS TO THINK ON):

- What plans or thoughts have you had about how your life should turn out?
- How do you handle not being able to control the outcome?
- In what ways do you feel you're attached to the outcome more than trusting God in the process?

Father,

I admit that so often I have held tightly to my own plans and to the outcomes that I think should come to pass. But I know the story You're writing for me is so much better than any story I could ever write for myself. Help me to cling to this truth when my circumstances are uncertain and unpredictable. I declare my trust in You above it all.

In Jesus' name, amen.

BETWEE

GARDE

EN TWO
NS

Chapter 1

BETWEEN TWO GARDENS

My hands were shaking as I dialed a number I'd called hundreds, if not thousands, of times before. It was 5:34 a.m. I knew the minute my friend picked up the call, the horror of what I'd just discovered would be real. I didn't want it to be real. And maybe if I kept it to myself, I could deny the hurt that was threatening to swallow me whole.

But pretending away reality never makes things better. It just causes you to implode on the inside while smiling on the outside. That's no way to live.

Sometimes to get your life back, you have to face the death of what you thought your life would look like.

I was staring that kind of death in the face when I heard my friend whisper a sleepy but slightly panicked, "Hello? Lysa? Are you okay?"

I most definitely was not.

And I wouldn't feel okay for a very long time. The feelings of safety and security in my marriage that I'd treasured for more than two decades were suddenly ripped away, leaving my heart raw and my soul trembling.

Even now, more than two years after the fact, I still struggle with the distance between what I thought would be and what is. I have days so far from okay I want to send a text message to that missing good feeling and demand its return.

Sometimes to get your life back, you have to face the death of what you thought your life would look like.

But this isn't something isolated to the white brick house that sits at the end of my driveway. This thought gets tangled around you too. It comes in like a whisper through the smaller disappointments. A bad haircut. An overflowing dishwasher. A burned dinner. A child who

won't listen today. A scale that keeps going up and a bank account that keeps going down.

Then the whisper graduates into a louder voice with the friend who goes silent for a while. The job you didn't get. The harsh words spoken to you by someone you're desperate to hear some encouragement from. That underlying sense that your marriage has grown cold while your conversations are constantly heated. The lonely feeling you didn't think you'd have at this stage of life.

Then the disappointment roars with earth-shattering thunder with a call from the doctor and a diagnosis that flips life upside down. The discovered affair. The hidden addictions. The child you don't even know anymore. The fire. The bankruptcy. The breakup. The death so unexpected you keep calling their number just hoping this is all a bad dream and surely they'll answer this time.

I don't know when these disappointments, big and small, are coming my way. They just show up. An unexpected guest that I don't know what to do with.

This guest of disappointment exhausts me.

But I don't have to tell you that.

It frustrates and exhausts you too.

Life isn't turning out the way we thought it would.

Disappointment. Whether you've used that word or not, it's there. And I want to wrap a little vocabulary around the feelings that are affecting us more than we realize or dare to verbalize.

It's that feeling things should be better than they are. People should be better than they are. Circumstances should be better than they are. Finances should be better than they are. Relationships should be better than they are.

And you know what? You're right. Everything should be better than it is. It's no wonder that I'm exhausted and that you are too.

Stay with me here, and let me unpack something that Satan has viciously fought to keep us from knowing.

The disappointment that is exhausting and frustrating you? It holds the potential for so much good. But we'll only see it as good if we trust the heart of the Giver.

You see, disappointment can be a gift from God that feels nothing like a gift at all. It's unexpectedly sharp, and the Giver can seem almost cruel as we watch someone unwrap it. Their fingers will bleed. They will feel tricked and so very tempted to stop trusting that anything good can be found within. They will most certainly question the One who allowed it to come their way.

I've done all those things. I certainly threw out many deep, sob-filled questions about how God could allow this when I called my friend at 5:34 a.m.

But disappointment isn't proof that God is withholding good things from us. Sometimes it's His way of leading us Home. But to see this and properly understand what's really going on, we must take a step back and view it in the context of God's epic love story. The one in which He rescues and reconciles humanity to Himself.

So, let's lay down our questions about why these things are happening for just a bit. We'll pick them back up after we are better equipped with truths through which we can process them. And let's open up God's answers, God's ways, God's Word. I promise you won't find flimsy bumper sticker quotes that never help and often hurt. Together we are going to find a real help and a true hope and a God who will hold us safe through it all. Let's start at the very beginning.

Genesis tells us that the human heart was created in the perfection of the garden of Eden.

Can you imagine what the world looked like when God first

Disappointment

isn't proof that God is withholding good things from us. Sometimes it's His way of leading us Home.

created it? When He said it was all good. Very good. And it was all perfect.

Perfection's symphony filled the atmosphere. Everything ebbed and flowed in complete harmony. It sang with the richest tones. And danced with ridiculous precision. There was nothing that didn't look right or feel right. It was beautiful and peaceful and fulfilling. There was perfect peace in relationships. Adam and Eve were so beautifully connected to each other, and they lived in the perfect presence of God. It was paradise with unique intimacy where God would interact in direct relationship with Adam and Eve. There was perfect provision and perfect fulfillment of their purpose. There was no sadness or confusion or injustice. There was no disease or divorce or depression or death. There were no misaligned motives, no manipulations, no malicious intentions.

It was everything you could ever dream up and then so much more than that.

So the human heart was created in the context of the perfection of the garden of Eden. But we don't live there now.

This is why our instincts keep firing off the lie that perfection is possible. We have pictures of perfection etched into the very DNA of our souls.

We chase it. We angle our cameras trying to catch it. We take twenty shots in hopes of finding it. And then even our good photos have to be color corrected, filtered, and cropped.

We do our very best to make others think this posted picture is the real deal. But we all know the truth. We all see the charade. We all know the emperor is naked. But there we are, clapping on the sidelines, following along, playing the game. Trying to believe that maybe, just maybe, if we get close to something that looks like perfection it will help us snag a little of its shine for ourselves.

But we know even the shiniest of things is headed in the direction of becoming dull. New will always eventually become old. Followers unfollow. People who lift us up will let us down. The most tightly knit aspects of life snag, unravel, and disintegrate before our very eyes.

And so we are epically disappointed.

But we aren't talking about it.

We don't even feel permission to do so or we just don't know how to process our disappointments. Especially not in Bible study or Sunday church. Because everyone says, "Be grateful and positive, and let your faith boss your feelings around."

And I do believe we need to be grateful and positive and let our faith boss our feelings around. But I also think there's a dangerous aspect to staying quiet and pretending we don't get exhausted by our disappointments.

In the quiet, unexpressed, unwrestled-through disappointments, Satan is handcrafting his most damning weapons against us and those we love. It's his subtle seduction to get us alone with our thoughts so he can slip in whispers that will develop our disappointments into destructive choices.

If the enemy can isolate us, he can influence us.

If the enemy can isolate us, he can influence us.

And his favorite entry point of all is through our disappointments. The enemy comes in as a whisper, lingers like a gentle breeze, and builds like a storm you don't even see coming. But eventually his insatiable appetite to destroy will unleash the tornado of destruction he planned all along. He doesn't whisper to our disappointed places to coddle us. He wants to crush us.

And counselors everywhere are telling brokenhearted people sitting on tear-soaked couches that one of the reasons their

relationships failed is because of conversations they needed to have but never did.

If we don't open up a way to process our disappointments, we'll be tempted to let Satan rewrite God's love story as a negative narrative, leaving us more than slightly suspicious of our Creator. Why would He create our hearts in the perfection of the garden of Eden knowing that, because of our eventual sin, we wouldn't live there?

I mean, once Adam and Eve sinned, couldn't God strip the awareness and craving for perfection out of their hearts before He banished them from the garden? Yes, He certainly could have done that. But to strip out the cause of our disappointment would also rob us of the glorious hope of where we are headed.

Remember, this is a love story. And we will never appreciate or even desire the hope of our True Love if lesser loves don't disappoint. The piercing angst of disappointment in everything on this side of eternity creates a discontent with this world and pushes us to long for God Himself—and for the place where we will finally walk in the garden with Him again. Where we will finally have peace and security and eyes that no longer leak tears . . . and hearts that are no longer broken.

The Bible begins with the book of Genesis, set in the first garden of Eden. But never forget, it ends with Eden restored in the last chapters of Revelation, the last book.

> "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" (Revelation 21:3–5)

Notice all the feeling words used to describe the world we currently inhabit: *mourning*, *crying*, and *pain*. Utter disappointment often taps the place of deep tears. As we talked about earlier, everything on this side of eternity is in a state of decay. This is simply the natural result of sin entering the equation. Bright days become dark nights. The laughter of living will be eclipsed by the tears of dying. The excitement of this moment is torn away by the disappointment of the next moment. This constant threat to our deep feelings ushers in depression, anxiety, callousness, and, quite honestly, a skepticism about the goodness of God.

Unless.

We see that all those harsh realities aren't the end, but rather a temporary middle space. Not the place where we are meant to wallow and dwell. Rather the place through which we will have to learn to wrestle well. I need this wrestling. I have honest feelings where I want to throw my hands up in utter frustration and yell about the unfairness of it all. To deny my feelings any voice is to rob me of being human. But to let my feelings be the only voice will rob my soul of healing perspectives with which God wants to comfort me and carry me forward. My feelings and my faith will almost certainly come into conflict with each other. My feelings see rotten situations as absolutely unnecessary hurt that stinks. My soul sees it as fertilizer for a better future. Both these perspectives are real. And they yank me in different directions with never-ending wrestling. To wrestle well means acknowledging my feelings but moving forward, letting my faith lead the way.

God knows before we eternally dwell we will have to learn how to wrestle well. Do you see the encouragement God is giving us in the passage from Revelation 21 to help us do this when our feelings beg us to doubt our faith? He will stop the continuum of decay and death and utter disappointment. He will make everything new!

In this restored garden of Eden the curse will be lifted and perfection will greet us like a long-lost friend. There will be no gap between our expectations and experiences. They will be one and the same. We won't be hurt. We won't live hurt. We won't be disappointed, and we won't live disappointed. Not in people. Not in ourselves. Not in God. Our feelings and faith will nod in agreement. We will return to a purity of emotion where we can experience the best of our hearts working in tandem with the absolutes of truth.

We won't need to wrestle well between our feelings and our faith in the new Eden, because there will be no competing narrative about God's nature. There will be no corruption of God's nurture. There will be no contrary notions about why God allows things to happen. And there will be no gnawing fear that things might not turn out okay.

We won't need to wrestle well, because we will *be* well. Whole. Complete. Assured. Secure. Certain. Victorious. And brought full circle in our understanding of truth.

But, as I said at the very beginning of our discussion here, we don't live in the perfection of Eden or the yet-to-come Eden restored. Therefore, today we must understand our need to wrestle well in this space between two gardens. And we must learn to live and love in the imperfect rhythms of our clunky humanity, trying to stay on beat within a symphony of divinity.

We will get the words to the song wrong sometimes.
We will go off-key and offbeat.
We will go sharp, and we will fall flat.

But if God's symphony continues to play loud and strong as the ultimate soundtrack of our lives, we will sense how to get back

on track. We will feel how to get back in rhythm. We will hear how to get back in tune.

It's just like when I sing along in my car with a well-produced song. With that soundtrack blaring along with me, I sound amazing. But it's not because I'm suddenly a master musician. It's because the master musician is louder than me, guiding me, holding me in key and on beat. I wrestle well with the song, because I'm not left on my own to hold it all together.

But heaven help us if I turn the radio down and pick up a microphone to sing it all by myself.

I won't wrestle well. I will wrangle what was beautiful music into an unrecognizable tangle of unpleasant sounds. I will add to the chaotic noise of this world, but I'll miss the glorious soundtrack meant to remind me of the epic love story I'm destined to live with the Great Lover of my soul.

So, that's the point of this book. Plain and simple. I want to learn to wrestle well in this life between two gardens. And I want to open the gift of disappointment and release the atmosphere of hope contained within. I'm so thankful we get to do this together.

GOING *to the* WELL

The human heart was created in the context of the perfection of the garden of Eden. But we don't live there now.

REMEMBER:

- Sometimes to get your life back, you have to face the death of what you thought your life would look like.
- Disappointment is that feeling things should be better than they are.
- Disappointment isn't proof that God is withholding good things from us. Sometimes it's His way of leading us Home.
- If the enemy can isolate us, he can influence us.
- We will never appreciate or even desire the hope of our True Love if lesser loves don't disappoint.
- God knows before we eternally dwell we will have to learn how to wrestle well.
- In the new Eden we won't need to wrestle well, because we will *be* well.

RECEIVE:

"Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" (Revelation 21:3–5)

REFLECT:

- What disappointments are you currently facing?
- Are there any long-standing untruths you've been believing about your disappointments?
- As you look back and consider the past, what gifts have come out of your disappointments?
- In what ways can you learn to wrestle well in the midst of your right-now life?
- How does this teaching on the garden of Eden help you have a better understanding of what you're going through?

Father,

Living in the messy middle between two gardens is so trying at times. Teach me to wrestle well between my faith and my feelings when life disappoints in ways I never imagined. My disappointments don't feel like a gift at all, but I'm going to trust You—the Giver of good gifts. Release an atmosphere of hope in my right-now life, I pray.

In Jesus' name, amen.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Riley Wobser

LYSA TERKEURST is the president of Proverbs 31 Ministries and the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Uninvited*, *The Best Yes*, and twenty other books. But to those who know her best she's just a simple girl with a well-worn Bible who proclaims hope in the midst of good times and heartbreaking realities.

Lysa lives with her family in Charlotte, North Carolina. Connect with her on a daily basis, see pictures of her family, and follow her speaking schedule:

Blog: www.LysaTerKeurst.com
(Click on "speaking" to inquire about having Lysa speak at your event.)
Facebook: www.Facebook.com/OfficialLysa
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If you enjoyed *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*, equip yourself with additional resources at www.ItsNotSupposedToBeThisWay.com, www.LysaTerKeurst.com, and www.Proverbs31.org.

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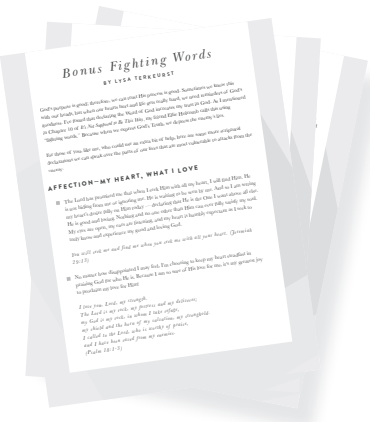
Are you looking for Truth to cling to when life seems impossibly hard and God feels far away?



Bonus Fighting Words

BY LYSA TERKEURST

God's purpose is good; therefore, we can trust His process is good. Sometimes we know the way, our friends, but when our hearts hurt and life gets really hard, we need reminders of God's promises. For Bread does Nourish the World of God nourishes my heart in God, I continued to Chapter 16 of 31, No Surprise to the Him, my friend Ellie Holbrook said this among "Believing words." Because, when we engrave God's Words, we deposit the returns. Gave.

But there of you like me, who could use an extra bit of help, here are some more short scriptural declarations we can speak over the parts of our lives that are most vulnerable to attacks from the enemy.

AFFECTION—MY HEART, WHAT I LOVE

- The Lord has promised me that when I seek Him with all my heart, I will find Him. He is not hiding from me or ignoring me. He is waiting for me, urging me, and calling me to be with Him today — declared that He is my One. I need stories of our my heart's desire daily on Him today — declared that He is my One. I need stories of our Him, so great and intimate. Nothing and no one enjoy that Him can ever fully satisfy my soul. My eyes are open, my ears are listening, and my heart is humbly expectant as I seek to truly know and experience my great and loving God.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:13)

- No matter how disappointed I may feel, I'm choosing to keep my heart steadfast in praising God for who He is. Because I am in heir of His love for me, it's my genuine joy to proclaim my love for Him!

I love you, Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.
(Psalm 18:1-3)

"Bonus Fighting Words"

Be equipped with even more declarations to speak over the parts of your life that are most vulnerable to attacks from the enemy with these BONUS Fighting Words!

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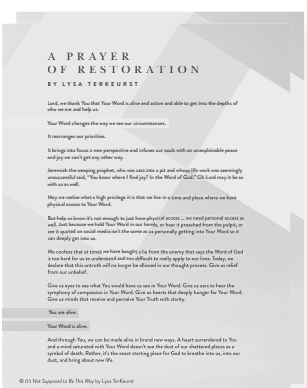

A PRAYER OF RESTORATION

BY LYSA TERKEURST

Lord, we thank You that Your Word is alive and active and able to get into the depths of who we are and help us.

Your Word changes the way we see our circumstances.

It rearranges our priorities.

It brings into focus a new perspective and infuses our souls with an unexplainable peace and joy we can't get any other way.

Jeremiah the weeping prophet, who was cast into a pit and where He work was seemingly unsuccessful said, "You know where I find joy? In the Word of God." Oh, Lord may it be so with us as well.

May we realize what a high privilege it is that we live in a time and place where we have physical access to Your Word.

But help us know it's not enough to just have physical access ... we need personal access as well. Just because we hold Your Word in our hands, or hear it preached from the pulpit, or see it quoted on social media isn't the same as personally getting into Your Word so it can deeply get into us.

We confess that at times we have bought a lie from the enemy that says the Word of God is too hard for us to understand and too difficult to really apply to our lives. Today, we declare that this untruth will no longer be allowed in our thought process. Give us relief from our unbelief.

Give us eyes to see what You would have us see in Your Word. Give us ears to have the sympathy of compassion in Your Word. Give us hearts that deeply hunger for Your Word. Give us minds that receive and perceive Your Truth with clarity.

You are alive.

Your Word is alive.

And through You, we can be made alive in brand new ways. A heart surrendered to You and a mind saturated with Your Word doesn't see the dust of our shattered pieces as a symbol of death. Rather, it's the exact starting place for God to breathe into us, into our dust, and bring about new life.

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"A Prayer of Restoration"

Continue to pray for healing over your deepest disappointments with Lysa's "Prayer of Restoration" that she has personally spoken over her own hard realities in need of being restored.

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About Proverbs 31 Ministries

Lysa TerKeurst is the president of Proverbs 31 Ministries, located in Charlotte, North Carolina.

If you were inspired by *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way* and desire to deepen your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we have just what you're looking for.

Proverbs 31 Ministries exists to be a trusted friend who will take you by the hand and walk by your side, leading you one step closer to the heart of God through:

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For more information about Proverbs 31 Ministries, visit www.Proverbs31.org.

To inquire about having Lysa speak at your event, visit www.LysaTerKeurst.com and click on "speaking."

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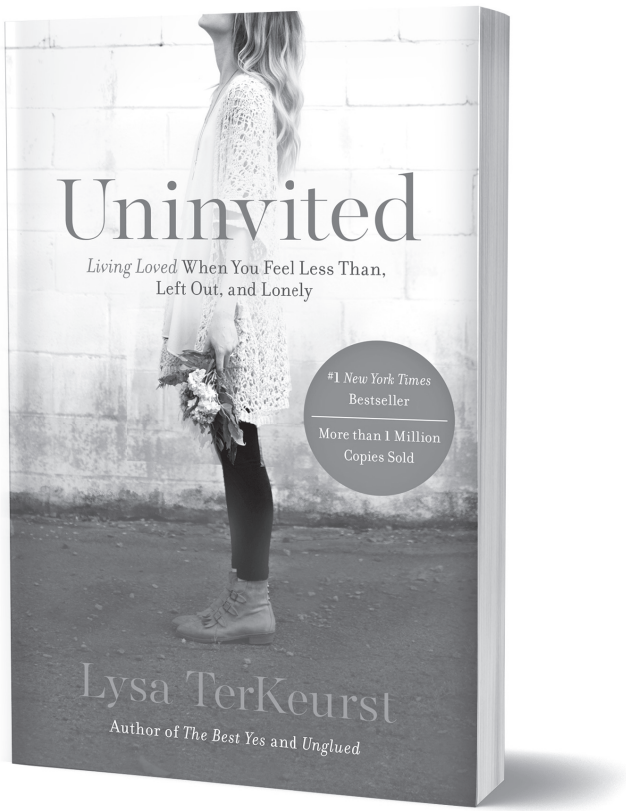

With biblical depth, gut-honest vulnerability, and refreshing wit, Lysa will help you stop feeling left out by believing that even when you are overlooked by others you are handpicked by God.

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