



"I'm Not Supposed to Feel like This"

By Eric L Campbell

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Copyright Page

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- Books copyright information, including ISBN #
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- Scripture Attribution (all version)

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Table of Contents

1. Chapter One: The Darkness
2. Chapter Two: The Big “What If”
3. Chapter Three: Fear Brings Torment
4. Chapter Four: Crying Out
5. Chapter Five: Exposing ~~The~~ the Monster
6. Chapter Six: Think On These Things
7. Chapter Seven: How I See God
8. Chapter Eight: How I See Me
9. Chapter Nine: Calling Anxiety’s Bluff
10. Chapter Ten: Come ~~baek~~ Back to the Land of the Living

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Preface

Hello! My name is Eric Lee Campbell and I am so glad to be able to meet with you here in the pages of this book. It has taken me many years to get to the place in my life where I felt like I could actually write it. But, regardless of how or why you are now reading this, I would like you to know that I consider it a great honor to be able to share my story with you. For most, if you have picked up a copy of this book, it is probably because you have suffered or you are presently suffering with anxiety or depression. Some of you reading this book might have a friend or loved one who is suffering suffering, and you desperately want to find something that can help them. Or, maybe Maybe you are a pastor, teacher, or counselor who doesn't understand these issues that the people you've been called to minister to are having have. For whatever reason, though, I count it a great privilege to be a part of your life right now, and I wish to say thank you.

This book is the story of my battle with anxiety, panic attacks, and depression, but mostly, it is the story of how God brought me out of it and how I now live each day in freedom from those issues. There are forty million Americans who are suffering suffer minute by minute with the same dark struggle that I went through day after day. I went through mine I struggled as a Born Again born-again Christian, and all of us know that Christians aren't supposed to feel like that, right?

While I was going through my "dark years," I couldn't find the help I needed. I needed someone to help me that who would recognize that these issues were spiritual, mental, and physical, and not just one or the other. In this book, I try to give you solutions that are not only Biblical biblical, but that deal with anxiety from all three of these aspects. I also approach these issues believing that God has a solution to every problem that man can come up with creates. So, come along with me on this journey and know that as we walk together through these pages together, I am praying for you. I may not know you personally, but God does and I am making it a habit to pray for all those who are reading this book on a daily basis.

I also want you to know that you are loved and cared for. I know the darkness and the pain that comes with these issues. I also know from experience that we have a God in Heaven who knows you and loves you and has paved the way out of this for you, if you will trust Him. So, open your heart and mind and just take a look at what He did for me. Know also that Trust in this... -what He's done for me, He can and will do for you.

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Special Thanks

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I wish to thank my Lord and ~~Saviour~~ Savior, Jesus Christ for His love and watch-care over me.

I also wish to thank my wife for enduring the struggles, ~~and for~~ caring for me and loving me all the way through the darkness.

My Dad, for starting me on the path of recovery by understanding and helping me face my fears.

My Mom, for the ~~her~~ love and ~~the~~ prayers.

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My good friend; Paul, ~~for~~ praying over me ~~-~~ sometimes all night.

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And last but not least, ~~there are~~ my friends and family in Christ, who prayed for me, loved me, talked me down off the ledges, ~~and~~ just stuck by me through it all. You all have truly blessed my life!

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This DARKNESS
Chapter 1

Like the last burning ember in the fireplace, I watched the last bit of orange give way to the darkness, as the sun lowered in the night sky over the Catalina Mountains in San Manuel, AZ. I remember thinking, "Man, this is medicine for the soul!" While God painted the sky that night in orange, purple, and turquoise, I remember having the feeling of perfect peace as I watched the Creator put on a light show that would dazzle even the greatest of artists. It's times like these when you know God is real, that He is close, and that everything is under His control. For me, these moments had been too few and far between.

Standing there in the peace of God as the night blanketed the Arizona dessert desert, I couldn't help but remember how my life had unfolded just a few years back. I had no peace at all through those years and it seemed the sun had set on my life for good. For me, I believed the night had come to stay. I lost who I was and I thought that I would never find peace again. I had become became someone whom I was not and I couldn't find my way back. Things for me had become were very dark and there was not even a hint of the peace that I could feel standing beneath the stars on this that night in Arizona. No, it It was a far different scenario that had unfolded in my life back then. It was as if I had left the Land of the Living and had entered a very dark cave, and just couldn't find my way out. I'd like for invite you to go back there and walk through it with me, and see my life as it unfolded during those dark years.

The Breaking of ME

As I laid lay on the couch that morning, I could hear my wife as she was getting ready for work. Just and just before she walked out of the house, I quietly said, "I just don't know what is wrong with me, Sam (*Samantha*). I feel dizzy and lightheaded. I didn't sleep last night, and I keep feeling tightness in my chest. I just don't want to be alone today."

So, she She came to my side where I was laying on the couch and said, "Eric, I have to go." and then She suggested that my daughter could come over and hang out with me, so that she could go on to work. If you had known me my whole life, you would know that this was just not me. You see, I had always been a strong person and didn't have too much fear of anything in my life (or so I thought), but now I found myself afraid of everything and completely falling apart. I couldn't believe what I had become.

That day, my wife and daughter didn't know what to do with me anymore either and none of us knew what was wrong with me or why I was having these awful symptoms and feelings. So, w When my daughter got to our house, my wife prayed with me and she went on to work. That day I remained there on the couch, taking my blood pressure and hoping and praying that I would not die of a heart attack or stroke. I had been going went through this for months and I had lost my appetite, along with about 15 pounds. I was constantly dizzy and lightheaded; my ears had this weird ringing sensation, I would be awakened almost every night by with palpitations in my chest, and after these spells I

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Watch the passive language.

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would be physically sick for two or three days at a time. I couldn't work, I was afraid to drive, I couldn't fulfill what God had called me to do and Basically, I felt like a failure as a man, a husband, a father, and a friend. But these physical symptoms were not the only things ~~that had~~ ~~which~~ ~~overtaken~~ ~~overtook~~ my life. My mind would go crazy with horrible thoughts of fear and worry. I began to question God and whether or not He would really come through for me if I were to die. I began to worry about how my wife would make it if I were no longer there. I began to worry that Satan had finally shown up and was there to take my mind. I thought I ~~was about to~~ ~~would~~ become a mental patient in a psycho ward. I thought my mind had finally cracked and ~~that I was never going to~~ ~~would never~~ ~~escape~~ ~~get out of~~ this - this "fog" - this "whatever this is!"

I became obsessed with my symptoms ~~at this point~~ and went to the E.R. many times, only to rack up more and more medical bills. One time, we drove two hours to the V.A. hospital, hoping and praying ~~that~~ they would find something and keep me there until I knew what was wrong with me. ~~;~~ ~~However~~ ~~however~~, I was sent home again with no answers. My whole life became a search to find out what each symptom ~~was about~~ ~~meant~~ and how I could make it stop. I would Google each symptom individually to try and figure these things out, but I never ~~could find~~ ~~found~~ any answers ~~that would tell~~ ~~telling~~ me for sure. I would pray and pray and pray, asking God to help me and ~~to~~ ease my suffering. ~~Each~~ ~~and each~~ time God would come and bring peace, but it would be short-lived, because I was obsessed with worrying about my condition. ~~Thus~~, I would spiral down to the bottom again and again. Basically, *I had become afraid to live my life*. I couldn't go anywhere without ~~finding out where~~ ~~locating~~ the nearest hospital ~~was~~. I took a bag of medicine and a blood pressure cuff with me everywhere I went.

I am a recording artist and an evangelist, so I travel ~~all over~~ ~~throughout~~ the nation. ~~Sometimes~~ ~~and sometimes~~ my ministry partner and I would be in places out in the middle of nowhere. In the middle of the night, I would awaken in a panic, checking my blood pressure, and fearing ~~that~~ I would die out there on the road away from my family.

My ministry partner, Paul, would ~~sometimes~~ ~~occasionally~~ kneel beside my bed in our motel room and pray over me for hours. All of us were baffled by these things. None of us could find answers, and I really gave up on life a couple of times. I mean, I had been a ~~Pastor~~ ~~pastor~~ and an ~~Evangelist~~ ~~evangelist~~ for 18 years, ~~;~~ a ~~Born Again~~ ~~born-again~~ Christian for 20 years, and I believed ~~that~~ things like this just didn't happen to God's Children. I ~~began to doubt~~ ~~doubted~~ my salvation and began to search the scriptures to see if I missed anything, or maybe had done something wrong when I had my salvation experience. ~~[This time of my life was the worst thing that I had ever gone through]~~. It took a severe toll on me, my family, my ministry, and my health. I was at a complete loss. I searched and searched my own life and ~~I~~ repented of every sin I could think of. In my mind, I thought ~~that~~ God was punishing me for some sin ~~that~~ I had forgotten to confess, or ~~that~~ He had just flat out forsaken me (neither ~~of these were~~ ~~was~~ true). I could barely sleep at night ~~due to~~, ~~because~~ my mind constantly ~~worrying~~ ~~worried~~ about all of these things. All my past failures, sins, and mistakes ~~would also find~~ ~~found~~ their way into the circle of thoughts going around and around in my head. I really thought my life was just about over. The *darkness* that ~~had~~ swept over my life *was very, very dark*.

Comment [CVS24]: LONG SENTENCE – consider revision...

I was constantly dizzy and lightheaded, my ears had a weird ringing sensation; and I would awaken almost every night with heart palpitations. After these spells, I was physically sick for two or three days at a time. I couldn't work and was afraid to drive. I couldn't fulfill God's calling upon my life. Basically, I felt like a failure as a man, husband, father and friend.

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So, what was the cause of all this? What was this monster ~~that had taken~~ **who overtook** ~~over~~ the man I used to be? I can tell you in just one simple word - **Anxiety**. That's right, anxiety ~~that~~ was out of control.

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What a word, right? This word can bring about so much controversy, especially in the religious community. It ~~also can turn~~ **turns** things upside down in the scientific and medical world as well. There are so many myths about anxiety, stress, and depression. There are many terms and disorders attached to this condition ~~as well~~. So, in all this confusion, how in the world could a person know what to do when it overtakes their life? When I went through this, I did not know what to do or who to believe. The doctors were saying I needed to be on medication. The religious folk were saying ~~that~~ medication for anxiety was of the devil and ~~that it would allow him to have a stronghold in my life if I took the meds~~. ~~In~~ ~~but in the~~ **mean time** **meantime**, I was suffering and I was suffering *severely*. I was not only suffering mentally, but I was suffering physically. Many people don't ~~seem to get the fact that~~ **understand this fact** - our mind *is connected* to our physical body. I became so overwhelmed with fear and worry, ~~that~~ my mind and my body just started breaking down.

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The scene ~~that~~ I described at the beginning of this chapter was just one day in several years of pain and misery ~~that was~~, mostly brought on by me and my lack of trust in the Lord. There is a really good reason why God says in His word **to not be afraid** or **not to fear** 365 times. It is because He knows what constant worry and fear can do to the mind and the body. However, I had no idea ~~that~~ anxiety could do what it does to us mentally and physically. There were many times during this period of my life when I ~~would~~ **become** **became** physically ill for days at a time. I couldn't sleep most of the time either. ~~My~~ ~~because my~~ body kept fighting to stay awake because I thought I was going to die. My body's survival and defense mode was engaged 24/7. I was alert to every pain, dizzy spell, and abnormal feelings in my body. I became obsessed with ~~"googling~~ **Googling**" the symptoms, but the worst was yet to come.

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I began thinking ~~that~~ I was losing my mind. I began to fear ~~that~~ the devil was about to possess me or ~~that~~ I would lose all control over my thinking and reasoning. These were horrible, horrible thoughts that ~~would~~ constantly **awaken** **wake** me, stun me, and literally scare me to death. I would wake up night after night in full blown panic, then just to turn around and go through the day in the same manner. I begged God to help me, I buried myself in the scriptures for hours at a time, and I listened to preaching sometimes all day long, because I was afraid ~~that~~ if I didn't do these things, God would not help me get back to normal. Even though studying scripture and listening to preaching is the right thing to do, I was doing it for the wrong reasons. You see, I had a much distorted view of my Heavenly Father. In essence, I ~~had~~ believed the lies of the enemy about God, rather than trusting what God ~~says~~ **said** in His Word.

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Comment [CVS27]: Don't change tense in the middle of the sentence.

Comment [CVS28]: Consider revision:

Another problem I faced was control. I have always been someone who like to be in control and I had NONE!

Also, another problem I had was the fact that I have always been someone who likes to be in control, and I had come to a place in my life where I had no control! None! For someone who ~~has~~ lived his whole life by the question, "What if?" this was the worst thing

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that could've happened to me. I could not figure it out or come up with an explanation for any of these things. I don't ever want to go back there again. I don't believe ~~that~~ I ever have to, and the good news is, neither do you!

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*“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”
Psalm 42:11*

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“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” Psalm 55:22

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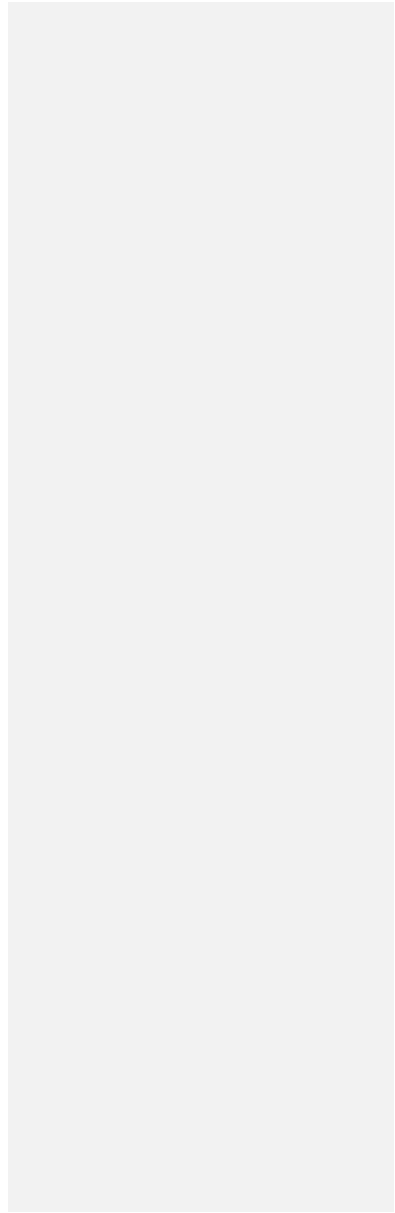
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I'm Not Supposed to Feel Like This

Eric Lee Campbell



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By Eric Lee Campbell

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SPECIAL THANKS

I wish to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ for His love and
watch-care over me.

I also wish to thank my wife for enduring the struggles, caring for me,
and loving me all the way through the darkness.

My Dad, for starting me on the path of recovery by understanding
and helping me face my fears.

My Mom, for the love and prayers.

My good friend Paul, for praying over me - sometimes all night.

And last but not least, my friends and family in Christ, who prayed for me,
loved me, talked me down off the ledges and just stuck by me through it all.
You all have truly blessed my life!

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	i
1 The Darkness	1
2 The Big “ <i>What If</i> ”	6
3 Fear Brings Torment	14
4 Crying Out	21
5 Exposing the Monster	27
6 Think On These Things	42
7 How I See God	51
8 How I See Me	57
9 Calling Anxiety’s Bluff	66
10 Come Back to the Land of the Living	74
<i>About the Author</i>	78

PREFACE

Hello! My name is Eric Lee Campbell and I am so glad to be able to meet with you here in the pages of this book. It has taken me many years to get to the place in my life where I felt like I could actually write it. But, regardless of how or why you are now reading this, I would like you to know I consider it a great honor to share my story with you. For most, if you are reading this book, you most likely suffer or have suffered with anxiety or depression. Some of you reading this book might have a friend or loved one suffering, and you desperately want to find something that can help. Maybe you are a pastor or counselor, who doesn't understand these issues the people you've been called to minister are having. Whatever reason, I count it a great privilege to be a part of your life right now, and I wish to say thank you.

Comment [CVS2]: This is passive language – I would change “are having” to: *experience*.

This book is the story of my battle with anxiety, panic attacks and depression; but mostly, it is the story of how God brought me out of it and how I now live each day in freedom. There are forty million Americans who suffer minute-by-minute with the same dark struggle I went through day after day. I struggled as a born-again Christian, and all of us know Christians aren't supposed to feel like that, right?

While I was going through my dark years, I couldn't find the help I needed. I needed someone who would recognize these issues were spiritual, mental and physical. Not just one or the other.

In this book, I want to give you solutions that are not only biblical, but deal with anxiety from all three aspects. I also approach these issues believing God has a solution to every problem man creates. So, come along with me on this journey and know as we walk through these pages together, I am praying for you. I may not know you personally, but God does and I am making it a habit to pray for all those who are reading this book on a daily basis.

Comment [CVS3]: I would consider revising this sentence as follows:

I may not know you personally, but God does! I commit to pray daily for you and others reading this book.

*If you still want it to be one sentence, just place and “and” after – God does; and I....

I also want you to know you are loved. I know the darkness and pain that comes with these issues. I also know from experience, we have a God in Heaven who knows and loves you and has paved the way out of this for you, if you will trust Him. So, open your heart and mind, and just take a look at what He did for me. Trust in this...*what He's done for me, He can and will do for you.*

Chapter One

THIS DARKNESS

Like the last burning ember in the fireplace, I watched the last bit of orange give way to the darkness as the sun lowered in the sky over the Catalina Mountains in San Manuel, Arizona. I remember thinking, “Man, this is medicine for the soul!” While God painted the sky that night in orange, purple and turquoise, I remember the feeling of perfect peace as I watched the Creator put on a light show that would dazzle even the greatest of artists. It’s times like these when you know God is real, He is close and everything is under His control. For me, these moments had been too few and far between.

Standing in the peace of God as the night blanketed the Arizona desert, I couldn’t help but remember how my life had unfolded just a few years back. I had no peace at all through those years and it seemed the sun had set on my life for good. I believed the night had come to stay. I lost who I was and thought I would never find peace again. I became someone whom I was not and I couldn’t find my way back. Things were very dark back then, and there was not even a hint of the peace I was now experiencing while standing beneath the stars that night in Arizona. It was a far different scenario that unfolded in my life back then. It was as if I left the Land of the Living and entered a very dark cave, and just couldn’t find my way out. I invite you to go back there and walk through it with me, and see my life as it unfolded during those dark years.

Eric Lee Campbell

The Breaking of ME

As I lay on the couch that morning, I could hear my wife as she was getting ready for work. Just before she walked out of the house, I quietly said, "I just don't know what is wrong with me, Sam (*Samantha*). I feel dizzy and lightheaded. I didn't sleep last night, and I keep feeling tightness in my chest. I just don't want to be alone today."

She came to my side where I was laying on the couch and said, "Eric, I have to go." She suggested my daughter could come over and hang out with me, so she could go on to work. If you had known me my whole life, you would know this was just not me. You see, I had always been a strong person and didn't have too much fear of anything in my life (or so I thought), but now I found myself afraid of everything and completely falling apart. I couldn't believe what *I had become*.

That day, my wife and daughter didn't know what to do with me. None of us knew what was wrong with me, or why I was having these awful symptoms and feelings. When my daughter got to our house, my wife prayed with me and went on to work. That day I remained on the couch, taking my blood pressure; hoping and praying I would not die of a heart attack or stroke. I went through this for months and I lost my appetite, along with about 15 pounds. I was constantly dizzy and lightheaded, my ears had this weird ringing sensation; and I would be awakened almost every night with heart palpitations. After these spells, I would be physically sick for two or three days at a time. I couldn't work and I was afraid to drive. I couldn't fulfill what God had called me to do. Basically, I felt like a failure as a man, a husband, a father and a friend. But, these physical symptoms were not the only things which overtook my life. My mind would go crazy with horrible thoughts of fear and worry. I began to question God and whether or not He would really come through for me if I were to die. I began to worry about how my wife would make it if I were no longer there. I began to worry Satan had finally shown up and was there to take my mind. I thought I would become a mental patient in a psycho ward. I thought my mind had finally cracked and I would never escape this - this *fog* - this ***whatever this was!***

Comment [CVS4]: Instead of "that", consider starting the sentence with: "*The entire day I remained...*"

I'm Not Supposed to Feel Like This

I became obsessed with my symptoms and went to the emergency room many times, only to rack up more and more medical bills. One time, we drove two hours to the V.A. hospital, hoping and praying they would find something and keep me there until I knew what was wrong with me. However, I was sent home again with no answers. My whole life became a search to find out what each symptom meant and how I could make it stop. I would Google each symptom individually to try and figure these things out, but I never found any answers telling me for sure. I would pray and pray and pray, asking God to help me and to ease my suffering. Each time God would come and bring peace, but it would be short-lived, because I was obsessed with worrying about my condition. I would spiral down to the bottom again and again. Basically, *I had become afraid to live my life*. I couldn't go anywhere without locating the nearest hospital. I took a bag of medicine and a blood pressure cuff with me everywhere I went.

I am a recording artist and an evangelist, so I travel throughout the nation. Sometimes my ministry partner and I would be in places out in the middle of nowhere. In the middle of the night, I would awaken in a panic, checking my blood pressure and fearing I would die out there on the road away from my family.

My ministry partner, Paul, would occasionally kneel beside my bed in our motel room and pray over me for hours. All of us were baffled by these things. None of us could find answers, and I really gave up on life a couple of times. I mean, I had been a pastor and an evangelist for 18 years; a born-again Christian for 20 years and I believed things like this just didn't happen to God's Children. I doubted my salvation and began to search the scriptures to see if I missed anything, or maybe had done something wrong when I had my salvation experience. This was the worst thing I had ever gone through in my life. It took a severe toll on me, my family, my ministry, and my health. I was at a complete loss. I searched and searched my own life and repented of every sin I could think of. In my mind, I thought God was punishing me for some sin I had forgotten to confess, or He had just flat out forsaken me (*neither was true*). I could barely sleep at night, because my mind constantly worried about all of these things. All my past failures, sins and mistakes found their way into the circle of thoughts going around and around in my head. I really thought my life was just about

Comment [CV55]: I would use the word – was – what you have is passive language.

Eric Lee Campbell

over. The *darkness* that swept over my life was very, very dark.

So, what was the cause of all this? What was this monster who overtook the man I used to be? I can tell you in just one simple word - **Anxiety**. That's right, anxiety that was out of control.

What a word, right? This word can bring about so much controversy, especially in the religious community. It turns things upside down in the scientific and medical world as well. There are so many myths about anxiety, stress and depression. There are many terms and disorders attached to this condition. So, in all this confusion, how in the world could a person know what to do when it overtakes their life? When I went through this, I did not know what to do or who to believe. The doctors were saying I needed to be on medication. The religious folk were saying medication for anxiety was of the devil and would allow him to have a stronghold in my life if I took the meds. In the meantime, I was suffering and I was suffering severely. I was not only suffering mentally, but I was suffering physically. Many people don't understand this fact - our mind is *connected* to our physical body. I became so overwhelmed with fear and worry, my mind and my body just started breaking down.

The scene I described at the beginning of this chapter was just one day in several years of pain and misery, mostly brought on by me and my lack of trust in the Lord. There is a really good reason why God says in His word **to not be afraid** or **not to fear** hundreds of times. It is because He knows what constant worry and fear can do to the mind and the body. However, I had no idea anxiety could do what it does to us mentally and physically. There were many times during this period of my life when I became physically ill for days at a time. I couldn't sleep most of the time either. My body kept fighting to stay awake, because I thought I was going to die. My body's survival and defense mode was engaged 24/7. I was alert to every pain, dizzy spell and abnormal feeling in my body. I became obsessed with googling the symptoms, but the worst was yet to come.

I began thinking I was losing my mind. I began to fear the devil was about to possess me or I would lose all control over my thinking and reasoning. These were horrible, horrible thoughts that would constantly wake me, stun

Comment [CVS6]: I would strike this and end the sentence at: *life*.

You begin the sentence talking about taking meds, so this is redundant.

I'm Not Supposed to Feel Like This

me and literally scare me to death. I would wake up night after night in full blown panic, then just to turn around and go through the day in the same manner. I begged God to help me. I buried myself in the scriptures for hours at a time, and I listened to preaching sometimes all day long, because I was afraid if I didn't do these things God would not help me get back to normal. Even though studying scripture and listening to preaching is the right thing to do, I was doing it for the wrong reasons. You see, I had a **much** distorted view of my Heavenly Father. In essence, I believed the lies of the enemy about God, rather than trusting what God says in His Word.

Also, another problem I faced was control. I have always been someone who likes to be in control, and I had NONE! For someone who lived his whole life by the question, "What if?" this was the worst thing that could've happened to me. I could not figure it out or come up with an explanation for any of these things. I don't ever want to go back there again. I don't believe I ever have to, and the good news is...neither do you!

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."
Psalm 42:11

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22

Comment [CVS7]: strike this – it doesn't add to the sentence. You had a distorted view. Or, if you want to emphasize it say something like:

You see, I had a severely distorted view of my Heavenly Father.

Comment [CVS8]: Just start sentence with:

Another problem I faced was control.

Chapter Two

THE BIG “WHAT IF”

Where it all began

I was raised in a Baptist preacher's home. Since I was four years old, I have many memories of church life and the ministry. I sat in big church, Jr. church, Sunday school, youth group, youth camps and conferences; and I even graduated from the private Christian school at the church where my dad pastored. I thought I knew about God and scripture. I became a Pastor in 1994, and pastored churches for the next 17 years. I counseled people, taught people, lived with people, loved them and sometimes was even at odds with them, but I never dreamed a Christian could go through what I went through with anxiety and depression. I had no idea those two things could play such havoc on my mind and body. I remember people suffering with these things would come to me for counseling, and in my heart I really didn't know what to tell them. I would ask them the standard questions: Have you prayed enough? Have you been reading your Bible? The truth was, I didn't know what to think about their condition. I didn't really know how to offer them any relief at all. I also didn't know where I stood on the issue of taking psychotropic drugs for their symptoms. I didn't feel adequate suggesting medical advice, because I am not a doctor. So, I just kind of floated along hoping their problems would just go away.

Until this happened to me, I never realized how much of my theology and