

HE IS RISEN!

Power in the Blood

by Mary Carver

I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13 CSB)

My oldest is ten years old, officially a “tween,” as she has informed me. One of my daughter’s favorite artists released a new song recently. She was excited to hear it come on the radio, but as I caught some of the lyrics coming out of our car’s speakers, I was relieved we were pulling into our garage. While I might be able to convince myself I am a cool mom who listens to cool music, all street cred flies out the window when I begin openly weeping at lines written by nineteen-year-old pop stars.

A few days later, I heard the entire song while alone in the car, and sure enough, I teared up. Amidst cries for help and descriptions of anxiety or depression or some other unnamed but relatable struggle, the singer repeats these words:

*Sometimes I feel like giving up
But I just can't
It isn't in my blood*

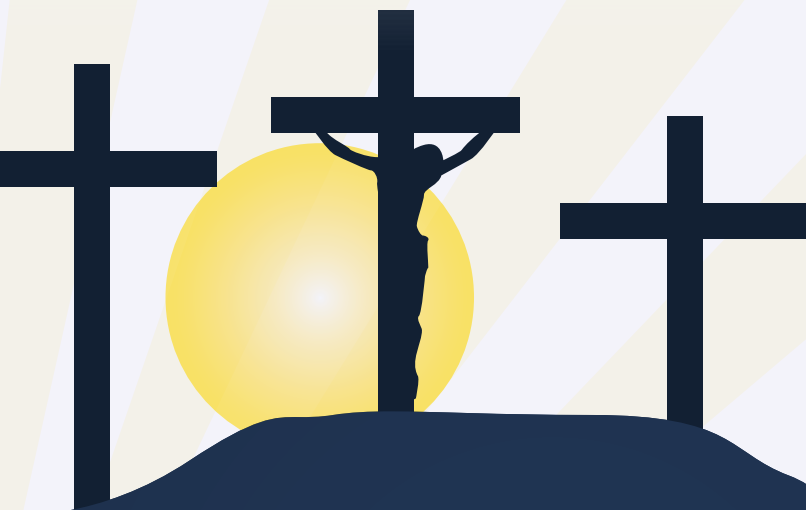
The tears that lined my face were not the result of sadness for the pop star on my radio. I cried because I feel that truth in my own life, in my own family. Every single one of us – on every side, on every branch – struggles with something or some things. And yet we do not give up. We fight. We keep going. Not always immediately or well or happily, but giving up is not in my blood.

I thought about that as I nodded my head to the song, tapping my steering wheel for emphasis. Yes! I am strong! That is who I am! I thought proudly.

And then I thought about my daughter, who spent months recuperating from a broken leg last year. I thought about how incredibly hard her experience was (for both of us), how painful it was to encourage her and motivate her and watch her give up over and over again. I thought about how many times I snapped in that season, yelling that she is not allowed to say the word cannot anymore. And then I thought about how this song is the exact thing I have been trying to tell her – that she *cannot* cannot, that she cannot give up, that she cannot be anything other than strong and brave and fierce.

After all, it is not in my blood, and it is not in hers.

But then new tears sprang up for a completely different reason. I thought about how many times I have, in fact, given up and quit, how many times I have been anything other than strong or fierce or brave. And I remembered that even when I could not stand on my own or take another step or handle one more blow, it was okay.



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The truth is that giving up actually is in my blood. I am just as weak and fallible and human as the next person. And just like all the pep talks and motivational posters and fight songs and inspiring books cannot force my daughter to face challenges with strength and courage, nothing can change my own tendency to run away, to give up, to quit. I cannot will either one of us into new personalities, new abilities, new DNA.

Long after I listened to that song, the chorus played in my head on a loop, weaving in and out of my thoughts. The more those lyrics ran through my brain, the more the word *blood* rang in my ears and my heart. And then the tune changed, and I remembered another song about blood:

*Would you be free from the burden of sin?
There's power in the blood, power in the blood;
Would you o'er evil a victory win?
There's wonderful power in the blood.
There is power, power, wonder-working power
In the blood of the Lamb.
There is power, power, wonder-working power
In the precious blood of the Lamb.*

In what might be the strangest mash-up of our day, I suddenly had an old hymn mixing with this new pop song until I had to Google the lyrics for both to separate them again. "There's Power in the Blood" has several verses, but the short version was summed up long ago in Philippians. We can do all things not because it is in our blood but because it is in His.

Giving up is in my blood just like it is in my daughter's and just like it is in everyone else's. We share that DNA as humans, and no nature or nurture can change it. But Jesus and His blood becomes ours and overwrites our genetic code, our predispositions, our weakness, and giving up is most certainly not in His blood.

I do not know what you are facing right now, but no matter what is in your path today or what is coming tomorrow, you can feel secure in the strength Jesus offers you. You can rest in the knowledge that giving up and giving in are not in His blood, and He is given us that power along with our salvation.

You can do this, whatever this is. You can stand up, you can fight back, you can hold on. Do not give up, friend. It is not in His blood.

Dear God, I do not know if I can do this. This thing I am facing feels like too much. It is too hard, too scary, too much! I know if I am left to my own devices, I will never make it. Will You help me? Will You give me some of Your strength? Will You help me face what is coming next – and do it with grace and peace and love? Just as Jesus faced the cross for the good of the resurrection and the people He loved so much, I know I must walk this path You have laid in front of me. For my good and Your glory, God, I know You are working it all together. Give me the strength to do my part. Thank You, God. Amen.

This is an excerpt from *Journey to the Cross: Forty Days to Prepare Your Heart for Easter*, from the (in)courage community. Used by permission from Dayspring.

Join us for Easter Service Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 11 a.m.



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