



January 2013

Dear friends,

Do you ever struggle with fear? I do. So does my husband. We do not want to struggle with fear and what it produces in us, anxiety, but we do. We do not feel the battle every day, but it is always there, always taunting. Some days our faith is as small as a mustard seed and it moves these burdensome mountains. We rest in the embrace of Jesus and we live like we believe He is faithful.

Then, something happens, conflict arises, someone gets upset with us and we are not prepared. We get blindsided on a day we do not have on the full armor of God. On those unexpected days, we are almost taken out. Often the fear and anxiety is so strong that we feel immobilized. We can't focus, we can't pray, we can't listen. Our minds are consumed with the what-ifs which is straight up fear. Does that ever happen to you? We hate it but it still gets us, it rears its ugly head and for a few seconds or minutes or for days we feel trapped. The burden is too heavy. We cannot carry it. Yes, of course we try to carry it, try to fake it until we make it, but that is pointless. We always have this cycle of pain and finally we own up, get transparent and beg God to rescue us.

Most days I wonder, is God tired of me yet, have I used up all my prayers, does He quit listening because I keep repeating myself? My mind knows all that is bunk, a lie, bull, but in those fearful anxiety induced moments I don't think rationally. I know the truth but I fail to walk in it. Heck, I even know Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Jesus is my Savior and Lord. He is my most consistent friend and I have a proven history of His faithfulness over our lives. What in the world is wrong with me?

Reality check: I am human. I am weak. I desperately need Jesus. I am a wimp. I struggle with fear that manifests itself in anxiety. I hate it.

Therefore, I am always on this journey of remembering God's faithfulness, thinking on what is true, living in gratitude and loving what is right. Every day all I can do is put on the armor of God and stand. Then, I have to trust God will fight for me.

What's the armor?? Put on the full armor of God to stand. (Ephesians 6:10-20)

Belt around your waist – TRUTH

Breastplate over chest – RIGHTEOUSNESS

Boots on your feet – READINESS (that comes from PEACE)

Helmet on your head – SALVATION

Shield in your hand – FAITH

Sword in the other hand – WORD OF GOD

As I wake to a new day, God is whispering softly to me, remember what I have done for you in the past. Remember how my people stacked up stones of remembrance so they would not forget my faithfulness. Thus far I have helped you. Do not forget who I am. In Joshua 4, the Lord told the people to go pick twelve stones from the Jordan River and stack the stones to remember crossing the Jordan River on dry land. In I Samuel 7:12, Samuel set up a stone and named it Ebenezer saying, "Thus far has the Lord helped us."

In every aspect of my life, my God has not forgotten me. He has not forsaken me. He has never abandoned me. If I will only remember, I can rest in His goodness and faithfulness. He is constant. He is good.

Consider His goodness over Grace Klein Community. Remember. Stack the stones.

For Grace Klein Community, here are a few of our stones:

1. New volunteers have joined us to help with food delivery, sort donations, deliver donations, help with adoption yard sales, etc.
2. Twelve months of God's provision for this food box ministry. We are amazed month after month as God provides food and volunteers to make it all happen. Sometimes we wonder, where will the food come from, there's not enough food, there's not enough money to buy food, but He brings it in crazy and miraculous ways.
3. Six yard sales in 2012 to raise money for families that are adopting a child.
4. 200+ jugs of laundry detergent were made and shared with families that needed it.
5. Over 200,000 meals were provided to friends in Jefferson and Shelby Counties.
6. Teams went to share God's love in Belize and Guatemala this year.
7. 50+ families had to make a fresh start for various reasons (fire loss, rehab graduation, divorce, death of spouse, etc.) and your donations furnished their homes.
8. Many families were able to come off the food box list because their situations improved. Some families even started delivering food boxes themselves.
9. We had our first community night and everything was provided through local businesses and friends of Grace Klein.
10. We have our first staff member, Gabe Thomas.
11. Volunteers are growing in their faith as they serve families and learn how to be community to one another.
12. Meaningful friendships are being built, friends are learning how to walk with Jesus and God is changing all of us.

As you look forward to a new year, take some time to think about and maybe write down the ways God has shown Himself faithful to you. We have to remember who He is and trust Him for what is around the bend. We may battle fear and its sidekick anxiety, but God will fight for us if we put on the armor of God and remember that thus far the Lord has helped us.

Suited up for battle,

*Hebrews 13:16 "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."*