

The Power of Hope

And being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6

Jasmine had known emotional and mental abuse for as long as she could remember. Neglected as a little girl, she grew up to jump from relationship to relationship, looking for someone to validate her worth. But it never worked—the men in her life always seemed to remind her of how horrible she felt about herself.

In time, Jasmine became suicidal. Only one thing kept her from ending her life: She couldn't think of a suitable home for her cats. After months of depression, lying on the couch and crying out to God for relief, Jasmine suddenly felt a calm inside like she'd never felt before. Without knowing why, she got up and drove to a small group meeting she'd heard about at a nearby church.

She really didn't know what she was looking for. But when the leader invited Jasmine to attend their weekly studies, she did. Though she never told anyone in the group about her desperation, the members' acceptance and encouragement changed her life. Jasmine found that she wanted to live—and she gained renewed strength and the ability to love on levels she had never thought possible. Three years later, she's walking closely with God and realizes that even though she didn't know what she was doing that first night, it led her to a future she never could have imagined.

Abram didn't know where he was going, either, when God called him to pack up his family and move to a faraway place. He was seventy-five years old. "Show me, and I'll go," is probably what most of us would have said. But Abram, in faith, accepted God's limited direction of, "Go, and I will show you." Genesis 12 reveals the whole story: Abram faced an uncertain future, but he went—and the world will never be the same.

We all have a story, and we're in the middle of it. We can look ahead either with expectant hope, paralyzing fear, or something in between. But with the perspective of God's truth, we can face the future with joy and boldness.

Prayer strengthens hope as we come to trust the One who knows all. "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11). God holds the future. Live in hope.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad You finish what You start in us. You get the job done—and I'm grateful for that. You don't leave us like an unfinished project on a workbench. You don't get distracted and forget. Thank you, Lord! You have started my life, and I know you will finish the development of my character for Your good purpose in my life. Create in me integrity, faith, and joy, Lord, and help me to finish well.

"From Power Prayers for Women, published by Barbour Publishing, Inc. Used by permission."