

## *Our help and our shield*

When failed leadership, a global pandemic, cries for social justice, a massive jolt to the economy and the need to make friends with the earth's climate all crashed in on America in 2020, many people found themselves turning to the Lord Jesus more fully and fervently than ever before. Psalm 33 reads: *"Our soul waits for the Lord, who is our help and our shield."*

We all faced the struggles of being "sheltered-in-place," which has caused much loneliness and pain in our lives—in our society. Jesus recognizes the depth of the sorrowful heart because He lived and died in its presence. When His friend Lazarus died, Scripture says, *"And He wept."* Jesus felt pain of loss just like any one of us. We feel this sorrowful heart when we remember His Passion and death on the cross. Pain, sorrow and grief are a part of life, yet need to be worked through—not held inside or avoided. Those who stuff anger, as I often do—or pain, or fear—may have it arise to bite them in the end.

Personally, I struggle with anger issues that have yet to be resolved and grief issues that have never been touched. I have a lot of inner-work to do as I follow my path to a better way of living. Jesus recognizes our efforts and rewards us with His Love, even when we can't figure it out or make it better on our own. He wants to help—He yearns for our out-stretched hands. The sorrowful heart is a fact of life, but it doesn't have to be *a way of life*.

Psalm 33 also reads: *"May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us who have put our hopes in you."* As we stand tall and put our trust in the Lord, we find solace in the tough times and courage at every moment. It has been written that "Courage is finding something important that is greater than your fear, and moving toward it." We experience courage when we face our fears and believe that Jesus is infinitely more powerful than any worry or dread that we may have. He calls out of us new strength and vitality that we may never thought we had.

Jesus is *"our help and our shield,"* and we can trust His wisdom and power to pull us through, even when we don't see the way—or see ANY way! Let Jesus come in and find you where you are at and heal your brokenness. This is who our Savior is and this is what our Savior does!

by Rich Melcher