

# Keep Your Strength Up

And as I look back  
these ten years hence  
there wasn't one set of footprints  
there were hundreds  
of the friends and loved ones  
who visited, listened, cried,  
prayed and carried  
the body of Christ  
strengthening me.  
Every hair of my head was lost  
but I was rescued from the storm,  
thankfully.

## Prayer

Loving God,  
Your Son Jesus Christ broke bread  
and shared the cup with His friends.

May we grow in closer communion  
when we share our pain and  
suffering.

Encouraged by St Paul

## Questions

- How does the reflection above make you feel?
- Have you had experiences of when the promises of Scripture haven't delivered as you'd expected?
- When have you most felt the pain over disunity in the body of Christ?
- How might sharing the body of Christ be a source of healing and unity between Christians?

and the early Christians,  
give us strength to build bridges  
of compassion, solidarity and  
harmony.

In the power of the Holy Spirit,  
we ask this in the name of Your Son,  
who gives His life that we might  
live. Amen.

## Go and Do (see [www.ctbi.org.uk/goanddo](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/goanddo))

**Global:** Work for the day when good healthcare is available for all.

**Local:** Hold a 'bring and share' meal together with the churches in your area where you have a conversation about what Eucharist/Communion/Lord's Supper means to each church.

**Personal:** Visit, send a card or call someone who is currently unwell that you know.

### Acts 27:33-36

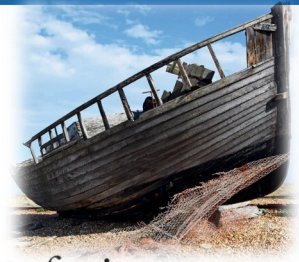
*"Just before daybreak, Paul urged all of them to take some food, saying, 'Today is the fourteenth day that you have been in suspense and remaining without food, having eaten nothing. Therefore I urge you to take some food, for it will help you survive; for none of you will lose a hair from your heads.' After he had said this, he took bread; and giving thanks to God in the presence of all, he broke it and began to eat. Then all of them were encouraged and took food for themselves."*

### Psalms 77

### Mark 6:30-44

### Reflection

'You need to eat something,  
to keep your strength up'  
Paul exhorts them,  
breaking bread  
giving thanks,  
leading the way.  
His words of reassurance  
that not a hair would be lost  
in the depth of the storm  
may be a hollow resonance for some.



I love coffee  
but lost my appetite for it  
I love a good read of the bulky  
weekend paper  
but my brain had no space for it  
too busy processing and preparing  
harnessing the little energy reserves  
I had  
to face cannulas and PICC lines  
and nauseating chemo.  
Every hair from my head would  
be lost  
but I'd be rescued from the storm,  
hopefully.

And when you can't eat  
to keep your strength up  
because the chemo makes you sick  
on a Wednesday  
you chew on the words  
that those who wait upon the Lord  
will renew their strength  
they'll rise up on wings like eagles  
run and not grow weary  
trusting that one day  
this broken body  
might rise again  
strong and supple  
scarred and scared.  
Every hair of my head was lost  
but I'd be rescued from the storm,  
hopefully.