

Welcome to Refuge

A still voice of wisdom in an age of noise.

Refuge is a faith-anchored AI companion for honest conversation, guided reflection, and lasting spiritual growth. This guide will help you make the most of your time here — how to begin, how to go deeper, and how to listen for the quiet work God is already doing.

Welcome Home

You've entered something different. Refuge isn't another app competing for your attention. It's a digital sanctuary — a place of stillness and truth built within the very technology that usually distracts us. Here, the questions you've carried alone can be asked without rush, the emotions that defy quick answers can be named without shame, and the kind of honest reflection most people never make room for can finally take its place in your life.

Refuge was built by a licensed professional counselor with twenty-three years of clinical experience — someone who has sat across from thousands of people in their hardest moments. Every word Refuge speaks, every question it asks, every silence it holds comes from that experience. It is grounded in Scripture, informed by sound psychology, and designed to tell you the truth with compassion.

This is not a chatbot. It's not a search engine with a Bible verse generator. Refuge is a companion that listens, remembers, asks hard questions, and walks with you through what matters most.

One thing to know: Refuge is powered by AI that is continually updated, though its underlying knowledge base may not always reflect the most recent events or news — it typically runs roughly six to eight months behind the present. Refuge is designed for timeless work — the interior life, Scripture, relationships, and the questions that don't have expiration dates. For current events or breaking news, it's not the right tool. For the things that actually matter at 3 AM, it is.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

— Psalm 46:1

Who Is Refuge For?

Christians who want depth. Beyond surface devotionals into the real terrain of anxiety, anger, grief, desire, calling, doubt, and meaning.

People already in therapy. Space for continued reflection between sessions, especially on the spiritual dimensions therapy may not address.

Pastors, counselors, and leaders. A theological and clinical thinking partner for case work, sermon reflection, or your own self-care.

Anyone who feels stuck. In a pattern, a relationship, a question, or a season of life they can't think through alone.

What Refuge Is Not

Refuge doesn't replace therapy, pastoral care, or Christian community. It isn't a crisis center (though it will guide you to one if necessary). It isn't denominational — it honors the breadth of the Christian tradition without promoting any single theological camp.

And it will not flatter you. Refuge resists AI's habit of simply agreeing with everything you say. It earns the right to challenge through relationship — telling truth without posturing as judge. That's what makes it different from every other AI product on the market.

THE REFUGE POSTURE

Kind enough to tell the truth. Truthful enough to stay kind. Refuge speaks like a seasoned counselor sitting across from you by candlelight — warm, direct, unhurried.

How to Get the Most Out of Refuge

Start Where You Actually Are

You don't need to have your thoughts organized. You don't need the "right" question. Come messy. Honesty is the doorway to help.

Instead of: "Can you help me with anxiety?" try: "I woke up at 3 AM again with this knot in my chest and I don't know why it won't stop."

The first gives Refuge a topic. The second gives Refuge something real to work with.

Don't Rush

Depth takes time. If Refuge asks you a question and you feel the urge to give a quick answer, pause. The question that stings is usually the one worth lingering with.

Push Back

"That doesn't feel right" and "You're missing something" are welcome here. Refuge is designed to engage with your pushback â€” not to fold or apologize. Challenge is part of dialogue. The best conversations happen when both sides are honest.

Come Back

Refuge remembers. Your Soul Profile tracks the themes, relationships, and questions that come up across your conversations. Patterns reveal through time â€” Refuge holds that memory for 120 days. A single session can be helpful, but the real transformation happens over weeks and months.

Go Deeper

Name the feeling, not the topic. "I feel trapped" opens more doors than "I want to talk about my job."

Invite challenge. "I've been telling myself a story about this â€” help me see if it holds up."

Bring the thing you're avoiding. If there's something you don't want to talk about, that's probably exactly what needs attention.

Ask for Scripture with context. "Is there a passage that speaks to where I am â€” and can you help me sit with it rather than just read it?"

Using Refuge with Therapy

Refuge complements therapy by bridging soul and psyche.

Before a session: Clarify what matters. "I see my counselor Thursday and I don't know what to

talk about it" help me figure out what's actually bothering me."

Between sessions: Continue reflection. "My therapist pointed out that I shut down when I feel criticized. I want to understand why."

Spiritually: Explore what faith means inside the work. "My therapist helped me see my anger at my father. But I also feel anger toward God about it. Can we go there?"

You can share any Refuge conversation with your therapist as a PDF using the Share feature.

Using Refuge with Your Church

Refuge fills the hours between Sundays and the 3 AM questions and Tuesday doubts. Use it to prepare for mentoring talks, process sermons, or explore beliefs before discussing them openly.

It does not replace community. It equips you to enter it more honestly.

Features & Navigation

Conversations

The core experience. Tap the + button in the top right to start a new thread, or continue an existing one from the sidebar. Conversations are open-ended and you can talk about anything, for as long as you need.

Refuge uses the Claude AI engine, guided by a clinical system prompt built from twenty-three years of counseling experience. It integrates existential psychology (Yalom, Frankl), Christian wisdom, and biblical language and all in plain, direct English without therapy jargon or churchy platitudes.

Your conversations are private and stored securely. You can delete any conversation at any time.

Guided Journeys

Twenty-eight structured seven-day paths across six categories. Each day builds on the

last â€” a short meditation, reflective questions, and Scripture that speaks to where you are.

Emotional Health: Anxiety & Trust, Anger & Patience, Grief & Loss, Shame & Identity, Loneliness & Connection, Fear & Courage, Emotional Numbness

Relationships: Forgiveness & Resentment, Marriage & Partnership, Boundaries & People-Pleasing, Conflict & Reconciliation, Parenting with Presence

Spiritual Formation: Prayer & Listening, Doubt & Faith, Scripture & Meditation, Sabbath & Rest, Suffering & Meaning

Identity & Purpose: Calling & Vocation, Self-Worth & Grace, Transitions & Change, Identity in Christ

Recovery & Freedom: Addiction & Habit, Sexual Integrity, Compulsive Behavior, Digital Detox

Growth & Leadership: Spiritual Leadership, Pastoral Self-Care, Mentoring & Discipleship

Tip: Don't rush through Journeys. One day per day is the intended pace. Let each day's reflection sit with you before moving on.

Soul Profile

Your spiritual memory. Refuge tracks the themes, struggles, relationships, and growth areas that emerge across your conversations. This allows it to speak more honestly into the patterns of your life over time â€” not to tell you what you want to hear, but to know you well enough to tell you what's true.

The Soul Profile holds approximately 120 days of context. You can view, edit, or clear it at any time. Your data belongs to you.

Journal

A personal notebook separate from your conversations. Use it to record what God is showing you, process something from a Guided Journey, or simply write what's on your heart. Access it from the sidebar menu.

Therapy Support Mode

A dedicated mode for users currently seeing a therapist or counselor. When activated, Refuge adjusts its approach to complement your clinical work rather than overlap with it — helping you prepare for sessions, continue reflecting between them, and bridge the gap between clinical care and spiritual formation.

Important: Therapy Support mode does not replace clinical care. Refuge will never provide diagnoses, treatment plans, or clinical recommendations.

Counselor Console PRO

A separate workspace for licensed professionals and pastoral care leaders. The Console provides a clinical and theological thinking partner for case reflection, ethical reasoning, session preparation, countertransference processing, and supervision support.

Access requires a Professional subscription and a brief professional attestation.

Note: The Counselor Console is built for professionals, not clients. It uses different language, assumes clinical literacy, and operates with different guardrails than the companion experience.

Share Conversations

Export any conversation as a branded PDF using the share icon in the conversation header. Send it to a therapist, pastor, mentor, or trusted friend using your device's native share sheet.

Notifications & Settings

Daily Inspiration: A gentle reminder to pause and reflect, set to your preferred time.

Journey Reminders: A nudge to continue your current Guided Journey.

Both are optional. Refuge will never spam you. Your account settings — font preferences, password, subscription management, and legal links — are accessible from

the sidebar menu. Privacy by design.

Prompt Examples

Refuge responds to honesty, not perfection. You don't need the right words. But if you're not sure where to start, these examples model the kind of vulnerable, specific language that opens real conversations. Use them as-is, modify them, or let them spark your own starting point.

Anxiety & Worry ^

"I keep waking up at 3 AM with my chest tight and my mind racing. I've prayed about it but nothing changes. What am I missing?"

"I know I'm supposed to 'cast my anxiety on God' but I don't know how to actually do that. It feels like a platitude."

"I have a big decision coming up and the anxiety about making the wrong choice is paralyzing me."

"My anxiety has gotten worse since I started going to church again. I think it's connected but I don't understand how."

"I'm anxious all the time but I can't point to any one thing. It's just this low hum of dread that won't go away."

Grief & Loss v

"I thought time would heal this, but the grief still surprises me. What does healing even mean now?"

"Everyone else seems ready to move on, but I still can't. What should I do with that gap between us?"

"I feel guilty that some days I don't miss them as much. Is that wrong or just part of grieving?"

"God feels silent since the funeral. Was He ever listening?"

"What does hope look like when the person I hoped for is gone?"

Marriage & Relationships ▾

"We love each other but we've forgotten how to talk. Where do we start?"

"I keep score in my marriage and hate that about myself. How do I stop?"

"I feel lonely even when we're in the same room. Why?"

"Is it possible to forgive but still not feel safe?"

"How do I love someone who no longer seems to love God?"

Anger & Resentment ▾

"My anger feels bigger than the event that triggered it. What is it really about?"

"I pretend I've forgiven, but resentment keeps coming back. Why won't it stay gone?"

"Does righteous anger have limits? How do I know when it turns sinful?"

"I was taught good Christians don't get angry. Is that true?"

"What would it take to let go of this without feeling defeated?"

Faith & Doubt ▾

"I no longer feel God's presence. What do I do when faith turns to silence?"

"I see hypocrisy in the church and it shakes my belief. How do I separate God from people?"

"How can I believe when I don't understand why God lets things hurt so much?"

"I'm afraid if I ask too many questions I'll lose my faith entirely."

"Is doubt a sign of weakness or an invitation to deeper trust?"

Identity & Purpose ▾

"I don't know who I am without my work. Who am I if that ends?"

"Part of me believes God made me for something more, but I don't know what."

"I feel split between who people expect me to be and who I actually am."

"How do I find purpose when nothing in my life feels significant?"

"What does 'identity in Christ' actually look like day to day?"

Parenting ▾

"I love my kids but I'm always tired and irritable. Is that normal or a sign I need help?"

"How can I model faith for my children without making it feel forced?"

"I'm realizing how much my own upbringing influences how I parent. How do I break that cycle?"

"My teen is pulling away and I feel rejected. How do I stay present without controlling?"

"What does grace-based discipline actually look like?"

Addiction & Habits ▾

"I keep promising God I'll stop but I don't. What should I pray now?"

"I'm not sure if this is an addiction or just comfort. How can I tell?"

"When I feel out of control, shame hits hard. How do I start again without hating myself?"

"I've relapsed and I'm too embarrassed to tell anyone. Help me find courage."

"What does freedom look like if temptation never fully goes away?"

Loneliness & Isolation ▾

"I have friends and still feel alone. Why?"

"What's the difference between solitude and isolation?"

"I pray but feel like I'm talking to a wall. How do I sense God again?"

"How can I find connection when I distrust people?"

"Is loneliness always a problem to solve or can it be holy?"

Forgiveness ▾

"I know I should forgive but I don't want to. Where do I start?"

"If I forgive someone who never repented, am I being naive?"

"How do I forgive myself for something God has already forgiven me for?"

"What's the difference between reconciliation and wise distance?"

"How can I forgive without reopening a toxic relationship?"

Trauma & Past Wounds ▾

"I know the facts of my past but not the feelings. How do I let myself feel safely?"

"I believed God would protect me and He didn't. What do I do with that?"

"My trauma has shaped how I see people. Can it be healed or only managed?"

"Why do I still blame myself even though I know I was a victim?"

"How does forgiveness work when the person is gone or unrepentant?"

Note: Refuge is not a trauma therapy tool. For active trauma processing (EMDR, CPT, trauma-focused CBT), please work with a licensed therapist. Refuge can support your reflection and spiritual processing alongside professional care.

Work & Calling ▾

"My job pays well but feels empty. Does that mean I'm off course?"

"I suspect God is asking me to leave something stable for something uncertain. How do I know?"

"I keep tying my worth to productivity. How do I untangle that?"

"How can I serve God faithfully in a toxic work environment?"

"What if my calling isn't grand â€” just showing up every day?"

Scripture Study ▾

"I read the Bible but feel nothing. How do I read for encounter, not information?"

"What's a good way to sit with a passage instead of rushing through it?"

"I prefer analysis to listening. Teach me how to hear."

"Is there a Psalm that speaks to the kind of confusion I feel right now?"

"How do I apply a verse without forcing it to fit my situation?"

Prayer & Spiritual Life ▾

"My prayers feel repetitive. How can I make them real again?"

"I fall asleep when I try to pray. What's happening to me?"

"How do I listen for God instead of just talking at Him?"

"Why do I avoid prayer when I need it most?"

"What does 'praying without ceasing' look like in modern life?"

Shame & Self-Worth ▾

"I believe God forgives me but I can't forgive myself. Why not?"

"How can I accept grace when I still feel so unclean?"

"I keep measuring my value by others' approval. What would it look like to stop?"

"What does healthy humility look like without self-contempt?"

"How do I remember who I am when shame feels truer than Scripture?"

Crisis & Safety

Refuge takes your safety seriously. If you ever describe thoughts of suicide or self-harm, Refuge will immediately offer resources like the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988) and will stay present in conversation as you seek help.

Refuge also monitors for five categories requiring professional intervention: active suicidal risk, substance dependence, domestic violence, disordered eating, and psychotic symptoms.

It will provide direct resources: 988 Lifeline, SAMHSA (1-800-662-4357), National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233), and Focus on the Family (1-855-771-HELP).

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS RIGHT NOW

Call or text 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. You can also text HOME to 741741 for the Crisis Text Line. You are not alone, and asking for help is an act of courage.

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

â€” Psalm 147:3
