

God Is Our Peace

Peace Moment

9/18/2022

If you live long enough, you become accustomed to grief. I have lost grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, a sister and three brother-in-laws, cousins, and friends.

But when I lost my twin sister Glenna at 23 months, I was too young to understand or deal with grief. So I had unresolved grief as a child that shaped many of my perceptions in life and even my beliefs about God. This initial childhood grief has in many ways shaped all my experiences with grief.

Growing up I knew two family stories: the story of how my twin sister died and the story of how my older sister was prayed for by the elders and recovered from life threatening encephalitis after a week in a coma. How do I reconcile these stories? One of a God who saves a child whose life is in danger and one of a God who allows an innocent child to die?

Statements like “God had a purpose in heaven for Glenna or God needed Carol here on earth” were not satisfying to me. I cannot resolve these contradictory outcomes which leads me to find comfort in prayer that is not about outcomes but about *healing*. If I understand the *balm in Gilead* as God dwelling with us in our moments of grief, of loving us even as we walk through the valley of death, then I am comforted. The love of God brings spiritual healing regardless of outcomes.

When my friend and mission center President Terry Read was struck and killed by a car while out walking his dog there was no opportunity to pray for healing. He was gone in an instant. Life gives us moments when we will question: where are you God? For many the answer is in a future salvation. And that is always our *hope*. But in the meantime, we go on living. And in this life, I am assured that we are called to be the hands-and-feet of Jesus: to bring salvation in the present. To find joy, hope, love and peace in God’s presence through every moment of life, the good and the bad. The cycle of life – whether it plays out over a day or a hundred years – remains a mystery. But within that mystery there is hope and within that hope there is joy, love and peace. I turn the rest over to God, trusting in the eternal love of the Creator, Redeemer and Comforter whom we praise and worship this day. Even in our deepest troubles, God is our peace. *Glenn Johnson.*