

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:** NONE BUT GOD can satisfy the longing of the immortal soul; as the heart was made for Him, He only can fill it. ~Trench

**AND YET, IN THE MIDST OF IT ALL, GOD IS THERE**

God spoke to my heart this morning and I felt He wanted me to share His Father's heart with His children that are in a place of sorrow and pain that only He can touch.

Several weeks ago I lost two dear friends; one due to a tragic car accident, the other from a long and difficult battle with Cancer. Losing a loved one is never easy. It is difficult to say "farewell" and know that a part of your life is changed forever.

The familiar, dear face is now an image locked away deep in your heart. No longer can you hear the sounds of their laughter that brought a smile to your face and a lift to your heart. The voice is stilled. You miss the "out of the blue" bear hugs, the comforting touches as life deals you a hard blow, love gifts given, and the little notes put in various places that brightened your day.

Your ears no long hear the familiar sounds of your lives together; the cough in the night, the steps down the hallways, the giggles from the living room and then the erupted laughter as something funny caught their fancy, or the opening of the fridge door for that midnight snack. Changes are forced upon us through death. Emotions go crazy! Tears erupt at the most inappropriate times and we resist "letting go."

Losing a loved one is a long and painful process to walk through and sadly there are no short cuts in the process. I don't believe that we are ever *totally prepared* for the final passing over of a loved one.

*And yet, in the midst of it all, GOD IS THERE!*

When my husband, Joe, went home to be with his Lord, nine years ago, the year following his passing was full of trials and errors, laughter and tears, memories, memories, memories, and a liberal sprinkling of "If only I would have" and the "I should have." I learned many things about myself. Weakness and strength alike were revealed as the Holy Spirit gave insight and the courage to forge ahead. He helped me keep my focus centered on Jesus. It wasn't easy to do, but Joe's favorite scripture often came to mind in **Philippians 4:13** which says, *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!*"

*And, in the midst of it all, GOD IS THERE!*

I'd like to share this story as it seems appropriate at this time. Maybe you can relate as I did.

*I have a sister 24 years my junior. One day, I was going to the store, and Mira wanted to go with me. I told her she could go, but she had to put on her shoes.*

*Being only 4 years old, she said, “OK, but will you tie them for me?”*

*“Sure,” I replied with a big brother smile.*

*She bolted into the next room to put on her shoes, returning with a big smile and the shoes on the wrong feet.*

*Looking at her shoes, I smiled and said, “Mira, your shoes are on the wrong feet.”*

*She looked down, then looked back up at me with a very sad face and replied, “These are the only feet I have.”*

Often I felt like this little girl who without the proper understanding of the situation, felt sadness and yes, maybe a touch of despair—the despair of being “left behind.” In the midst of confusion, hurt and overwhelmed by the suddenness of necessary changes in my life that I wasn’t equipped to handle, I could only say, *“I’m doing all I know to do—all I can do!”*

I believe that big brother picked up that little girl and holding her tight, lovingly whispered, *“It’s okay little one. I love you. Everything’s going to be all right. I’ll help you put your shoes on the right feet and then we’ll go to the store together.”*

Our big brother, JESUS, will do the same, for He loves us!

Trials and tribulations touch the life of every human being in one form or another. During these difficult and painful times have you even found yourself crying out things like?

*“God where are you? I don’t understand what is happening to me and my family. What am I doing wrong? Am I such an awful person that you are punishing my family? Hasn’t my family suffered enough? What’s next Lord? How much more can I stand? My heart is breaking. I don’t know what to do. Help me Lord!”* and we can agree that these are often irrationally words but, say them we do!

*And in the midst of it all, GOD IS THERE!*

I’ve learned many things about death, grief and our human nature, as I have seen departed souls go home to be with their Jesus. I am so thankful for the truth that the Lord truly is in the midst of *everything* that touches His children’s lives.

Encountering death once again in the loss of my two dear friends, I was saddened by the reality of life, yet able to minister to some of the family from a heart and spirit empowered by God because...

*And in the midst of it all, GOD IS THERE!*

**John 14:1-6** says, **“Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place**

**for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.** “Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”**