

G O D ' S M I S S I O N A R Y

# STANDARD

EVEN DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES,  
GOD IS STILL CERTAIN

PAGE 8





ROBERT BOOTH

## There Will Be A Day

Pain. Suffering. We all grow weary of it. Everyday, all of us hear new stories of people in pain and people suffering. The suffering is in varying degrees, but it is still there. And sometimes, it becomes personal. It touches us and our families. I have talked to numerous individuals who have gone through excruciating pain and suffering. I have seen people become bitter as their journey took them through the depths of suffering. But I have also seen people bear the weight of suffering with a beauty of Christ that is wonderful to encounter and challenging to the core of my soul.

There is good news, though! As followers of Jesus Christ, there is coming a day when there will be no more pain. No more suffering. All tears will be wiped from our eyes. The trials of life will be over.

Jeremy Camp writes these words that resonate with all of us. *“There will be a day with no more tears, no more pain, and no more fears. There will be a day when the burdens of this place will be no more and we’ll see Jesus face to face. But until that day, we’ll hold on to You always.”*

What do we do in the meantime? In this issue of the Standard, we take a look at pain and suffering and what we can do while we go through it. Obviously, this brief look only touches the surface of this topic, but our hope is that these few pages give you hope and comfort as you encounter pain and suffering. I would encourage you to not lose heart! As your journey may take you through pain and suffering, the joy and peace that God gives you will surely outweigh the sting of life.

Another songwriter wrote the beloved words, *“There is coming a day when no heartaches shall come. No more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye. All is peace forevermore on that happy golden shore, what a day, glorious day that will be.”* 

# My God, My God, why...?

יִתְבּוֹזַע הַמֶּלֶךְ יִלָּא יִלָּא

Eli, Eli, lama...?

TIMOTHY COOLEY SR.

**T**his anguished *Why?*—first wrenched from the lips of the psalmist—surprises me with its intensity when it writhes out of the mouth of the Savior, gasping for breath, bearing the sins of the world, left alone—deserted! Generations of God’s people have felt a similar agony.

The books of Psalms, Jeremiah, and Job are freighted with variations of the questions, “*Why* do the wicked prosper?” and “*Why* do the godly perish?” The singer Asaph confessed he nearly slipped when he focused on “the prosperity of the wicked” (Psalm 73:3). Psalm 10:1 agonizes, “*Why* standest thou afar off, O Lord?” Because God has implanted a yearning for ultimate meaning in our minds, the *why?* questions are not going to be silenced.

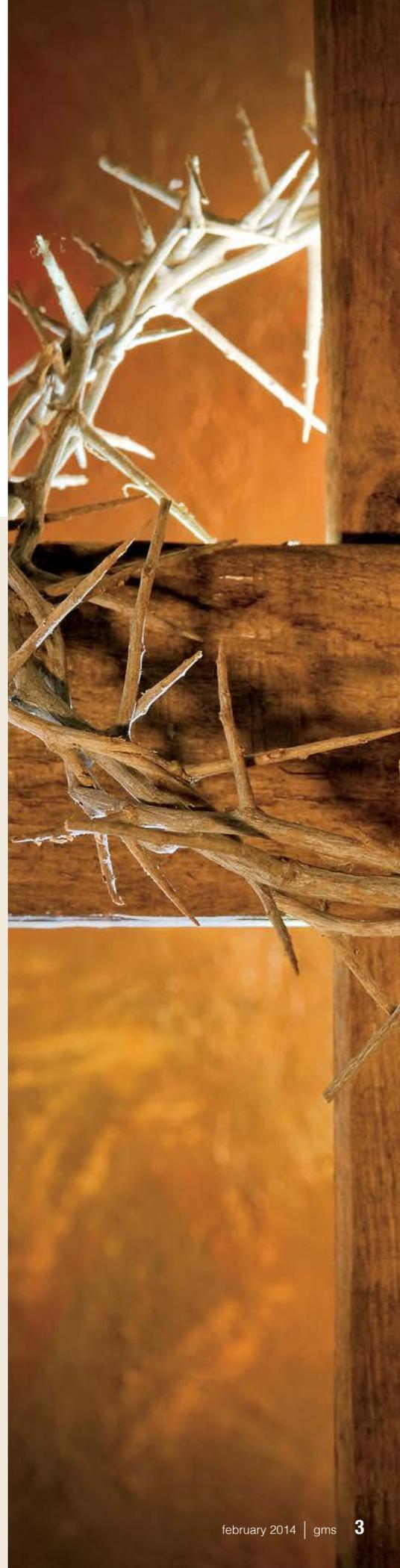
If God *knows* everything, if He can *do* anything, and if He *loves* us, *why* this mess? *Why* this unrelenting pain? The *whys* thread their way through the entire Holy Book. The great *WHY?* is capitalized on the cross!

So, *Why?* Is it an intellectual question—a request for information or insight? Is it an emotional question—a puzzled, anguished asking for relief? Is it a question at all, or is it merely an exclamation of agony? Yes, all of the above!

Yancey (1991, p. 30) says our agony reduces to three questions, 1) “Is God unfair?” 2) “Is God silent?” 3) “Is God hidden?” The disparity between what *ought to be* and *what actually is* seems so great that the pain can swallow us up!

We are tempted to regard pain as a terrible enemy that must be quieted, but Brand and Yancey (1984) have amply demonstrated that pain is a gift from God. It lets us know something is wrong and motivates us to seek restoration. Still pain is the gift that nobody wants (Brand & Yancey, 1999). The misery and the agony obliterate everything else in view.

Paul Brand, a medical doctor who has specialized in studying pain, has explained that leprosy delivers irreparable damage because the person loses the ability to feel pain. He described a patient whose hands he had labored for years to repair and whom he had taught to compensate for the lack of pain in numerous ways in order to protect himself from harm. Finally the patient, having made amazing progress, expressed his deep wish to visit his home for the weekend. The man was delighted to sleep at home, but he awoke after the first night to discover with horror that a rat had mangled his finger while he slept. The second night he determined to stay awake all night to be sure this could not happen again, but he finally succumbed to sleep. *continued on page 10*



## Hanover celebrates 75 Years of Ministry



On October 6 the Hanover congregation celebrated 75 years of ministry to the Hanover area. It was in 1938 that Rev. Ralph Rudisill founded the Hanover Gospel Tabernacle (which is now Hanover God's Missionary Church) in the former St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Walnut Street in Hanover. This building was rented for four years, at which time it was purchased for \$4000. Rev. Rudisill continued to pastor the church, conduct weekly radio broadcasts, and direct the Fellowship Camp, which was started in 1952, until his death on February 23, 1971. His daughter-in-law continued to pastor the church until 1972 when the ministry and properties were given to God's Missionary Church, Inc. Rev. Marlin Crock and others filled the pulpit on an interim basis until Rev. Alvin Shaffer came in 1974. Under Rev. Shaffer's leadership, our present building was built in 1978. Rev. Michael Hoskins came to pastor the church in 1994 until 2000. At that time Rev. John Fisher came and has been here until the present.

Our 75th anniversary celebration turned out to be a very special day with beautiful weather, great fellowship, good food, reflection on interesting things of the past, and also challenges for the future. Pastor Fisher challenged the congregation in the morning service to a strong desire to know Christ and the power of His Resurrection (Philippians 3:10).

Rev. Barry Arnold, who had frequented the church and camp during the days of Rev. Rudisill as a special speaker, shared some of his memories of past in the afternoon service. Another highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of a citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in recognition of our 75th anniversary milestone. The citation was presented to Pastor Fisher by Representative Wil Talman of the 193rd district.

We were also pleased to have with us for the day former pastor Michael Hoskins and his wife Carol. They shared special music in each service and Pastor Hoskins preached in the evening service.

Above everything that happened in the past and the wonderful day that we enjoyed together we want to thank the Lord was all that He has allowed us to accomplish as a congregation--for all the people that have been touched, for all the times of sensing the moving of the Holy Spirit and for all that will be accomplished as we press on into the future. To God be all the glory!



CONGRATULATIONS TO Rev. Philip Ledger & Cynthia Linch. They were united in marriage on November 2, 2013.

## Passings

**JULIE A. HABECKER**, 48, of Stouchsburg, went to be with her Lord on Sunday, September 29, 2013, at her home, surrounded by her loving family. She was the wife of Brian T. Habecker. They celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary on June 6th.

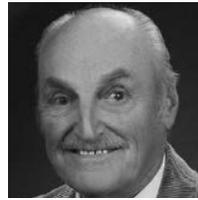


Born in Reading on September 7, 1965, she was the daughter of Leonard M. and Sharon R. Kotulka Raub of Womelsdorf. Julie, along with her husband, owned and operated Raub's Twin Kiss in Myerstown and Raub's Sub Shop at the Green Dragon and the Roots Markets. She attended the Lebanon God's Missionary Church. She graduated from Penn View Christian Academy in 1983, the Lebanon County Career and Technology Nursing program in 1984 and Penn View Bible Institute in 1985. Julie enjoyed reading, scrapbooking, being with her friends and especially being home spending time with her family.

In addition to her husband and parents, she is survived by her sons Jared K. husband of Amber Habecker of Stouchsburg, Jerren B. husband of LeAnna Habecker of Lebanon and Jaden A. Habecker at home; her daughter Janelle B. Habecker at home; brother Greg L. husband of Jen Raub of Myerstown and her sister Audrey L. wife of Rev. James Bender of West Union, OH.

She was preceded in death by a brother Duane L. Raub and grandparents Oscar and Pauline Raub and John and Eliza Kotulka.

**JOHN I. STRAUB**, life-long resident of Penn's Creek, slept the sleep of death, and entered into the presence of His Lord Jesus Christ, on the afternoon of Oct. 23, 2013. John was born Aug. 26, 1939, in Swengel, to his father Rev. George I. Straub, 48-year superintendent of God's Missionary Church, and mother



Mary E. (Dressler) Straub. He graduated from Middleburg High School, after which he worked as a self-employed contractor. John was a passionate and meticulous craftsman who often reflected with quiet satisfaction that his work would stand the test of time, and, as he once noted, "far outlive him."

While he enjoyed building, his paramount pride and interest was in the family which he built and nurtured. On Sept. 1, 1963, he married Carolyn Jacobs, his faithful wife and dearest friend. John and Carolyn had two beloved daughters, Vicki Renee, wife of David Rochester, of Seneca, S.C., and Heidi Lorraine, wife of Nathan Arnold, of Lebanon, Pa. His only grandchild, Johnathan S. Arnold, was born to Heidi and Nathan on March 23, 1995, and is currently studying for the ministry in his memory.

From a child he was an avid hunter on Jack's Mountain. God answered his prayer as a young man to purchase the property adjacent to the mountain, overlooking the village of Penn's Creek, and there he carefully and lovingly constructed the home at 180 Memory Lane, in which he lived until his passing.

continued from **page 7** moment, you can feel His presence and rest quietly in His arms.

The feeding tube was inserted on August 12. We started at 60 cc and had to back it down to 30 cc because I started vomiting. August 16, I posted this verse on Facebook: Romans 15:30 "I urge YOU, brothers and sisters, by the Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me." I completed radiation treatments on August 22. My pain medication increased to 2 pain patches and Vicodin.

As my journey continued another CAT scan revealed spots on my lungs. On September 4, I woke up with no feeling in my legs. After an ambulance ride to Reading hospital and then on to Philadelphia, I spent several days in the hospital hoping to be well enough to go home and attend my 48th birthday celebration

on September 7. God was gracious and after a rough ride home I attended my party and spent time with both family and friends.

At this point the medical field had exhausted their options and I rested on the never-failing arms of God. As the tumors continued to grow, the pain increased, and my body began to fail. Jesus never failed me. My loving husband ministered to me over and over again. Brian, I am so glad God gave you to me. Family and friends stood faithfully by and showed me their love.

The journey was over on September 29, 2013. Surrounded by loving family and friends she stepped onto the shores of heaven and found it home! Julie did not wish to walk this difficult journey but since it was in God's plan, she was used time and time again for His glory. ❏



JANUARY 2011

# My Cancer Journey

AS TOLD BY  JULIE HABECKER

THIS AMAZING ACCOUNT WAS WRITTEN PRIMARILY BY JULIE, CONSTRUCTED BY JOURNAL ENTRIES AND STATUS UPDATES ON FACEBOOK. SOME OF IT WAS EDITED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THIS IS A STORY OF HOW GOD'S GRACE AND STRENGTH WAS MANIFESTED DURING TIMES OF PAIN AND SUFFERING. I THOUGHT THE STANDARD READERS NEEDED TO READ THIS AND I SHARE IT WITH YOU WITH THE PERMISSION OF JULIE'S HUSBAND, BRIAN. —EDITOR

In May of 2012, I noticed a growth on my head. A biopsy done in that month confirmed a non-cancerous pyogenic granuloma. Medications were received to reduce the size. However, 2 more bumps appeared on either side of it. In June, granuloma continued to grow and my first surgery was performed June 12, 2012 to remove a 4 cm growth. All 4 biopsies came back cancer free. In July, 2 weeks after surgery, granuloma returned and doctor decided I needed a 2nd opinion. Brian and I prayed for God's guidance and direction for the very best doctors. An appointment was made at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. At this time the granuloma was 7 cm.

August 10, 2012 we were informed that the diagnosis of my mass was in question, therefore a second surgery was scheduled for August 14, 2012. The mass was successfully removed, but I battled pain, nausea, and fever. As I wait for the results of the biopsy, I have NO fear. If it is something other than what I think, God will be right there to carry me, I have no doubt." I was comforted by these thoughts: "Though my world spins all around, the Potter is in control." I'll trust the Potter's hands; He knows what's best for me. He has a perfect plan these human eyes can't see. Though the path ahead I cannot see, I CHOOSE to place my trust in You.

We were told on August 24, 2012 that biopsy showed angiosarcoma, a fast-growing cancer. Aggressive treatment was recommended and plans for another surgery were made. This surgery would go into the skull and remove what is necessary, reconstruct the skull, and take muscle from back and put on top of head and another skin graft.

A special prayer meeting was held on August 25, 2012 at the Lebanon God's Missionary Church for me. God's presence very real. I was placed here for such a time as this! God knew ALL about what I would have to face even before I was born. He has

groomed and molded me for this time. I do not know what the future holds but I DO KNOW who is holding my future. He is with me EVERY step of the way. It's so good to know the One who has EVERYTHING in control even though my world is shaking. He has the whole world in the palm of His hand and is in control of that movement.

The 3rd surgery took 10 hours and was performed August 31, 2012 going down to the third level of the skull right next to brain. The hardest part of the journey thus far was the unexpected decision to shave all of my hair to reduce the risk of infection. The surgeons were pleased with the results and thought they got all the cancer. However, they tempered this comment "we thought we got it all the first time".

I returned home after an 8 day hospital stay. During that time we discussed treatment options. I also noticed I was having trouble hearing from the left ear. Nausea continued to be a problem. Finally feeling some better we decided to do some wig shopping. I decided that nothing was like your real hair.

Post-surgical pathology report showed NO SIGN of cancer in any of the layers of the skull. We didn't know if it was anywhere else. We planned for radiation treatment for prevention of future cancer. The course would be six weeks of daily radiation excluding weekends at Reading hospital. Radiation ensued on October 22, 2012. I trusted that God would protect my body from side effects.

On the third week of radiation I noticed my first hairs started to fall out. Were wigs and hats my destiny? Radiation was completed December 4, 2012. Thank God there were minimal side effects, mainly being tired.

What would 2013 hold? The first two weeks of January I noticed two small bumps. If these spots were cancer, God may have other plans for me. On January 18, CAT scan showed suspicious activity and I had another biopsy January 22. Since

I felt fairly well, with the permission of my doctors, we took a vacation to Florida. Doctor's orders were if tumor started to grow I must come home. This vacation was a much needed respite for what was to lie ahead. I made many memories with my wonderful husband and Janelle and Jaden.

In February, I received a phone call from my doctor indicating that it appeared that the angiosarcoma had returned. After more tests, diagnosis was confirmed on February 12. It appeared that I had stage 4 cancer. We decided to get a second opinion from John Hopkins hospital, who agreed with my doctor's diagnosis.

The course of treatment was a combined chemotherapy treatment which entailed a five-day hospital stay in Philadelphia, then home for seventeen days repeating this procedure for up to six months. Brian and I decided it was time to ask the hard question, "How much time with or without chemo?" The Doctor said that there was very little chance of cure but without chemotherapy I would only have six months. We consulted with Dr. Kracht for his opinion and he concurred with my other doctors. The decision was made for both natural and my hated word, chemo. At this point I knew I had cancer because I saw the tumors but felt no effects from them.

The dreaded treatments started on February 26. Without a miracle I knew I had less than one year. After the first round was completed, nausea was the only side effect I felt. I attended my daughter-in-law LeAnna's bridal shower – two days before I would start my next round of chemotherapy. I trusted God as many people fasted and prayed for me. Another round was completed and side effects were nausea and neuropathy (tingling) in my feet. God answered prayer and I attended and enjoyed my son Jerren's wedding on April 6, 2013. Two more rounds of chemo were given in April. I battled nausea, light-headedness, low cell counts, and dehydration. Due to low cell counts I was back in the Reading hospital for blood. Thankfully God allowed me to return home on Mother's Day,

and I spent the evening with my family.

Chemotherapy completed and the ENT doctor discussed a fourth surgery to give me some extra time – not a cure, just time. It was a difficult decision because neck muscles were involved. The week before surgery God gave me two awesome days. I felt normal. God is good ALL the time. All the time God is good. We proceeded with the twelve-hour surgery on May 28. From the left side of my neck the surgeon removed neck muscle, nerves, lymph nodes, and my jugular vein and from the right side, lymph nodes. There was lots of swelling and I was able to return home after a 7 day hospital stay. My husband was beside me all the way.

June was a difficult month as I continued to struggle with nausea, lost my sense of taste, and started having frequent headaches. As I suffered with yet another headache, Jaden knelt and prayed for Jesus to take it away, and He answered that child's prayer.

Two weeks after surgery I noticed two more spots. Doctors recommended another round of radiation. The radiation treatments started on July 2. These treatments would last for seven weeks. The first five weeks, treatment would be done two times a day, six hours apart on the head and neck area. The last two weeks would only be on the neck. By the end of July I battled dehydration, weight loss, difficulty swallowing, unable to taste anything, and even more nausea. Another symptom developed—numbness in my legs. An MRI was scheduled to try and figure the cause. "It seems every time I turn around, there is something else to deal with. I can say through it all, He is carrying me." Oh, how I wished to be able to taste something and swallowing wouldn't be so difficult. God blessed me with the privilege of attending Penns Creek Camp one last time and to visit with many old friends.

August came with even more challenges. Five weeks of radiation are completed, only two more weeks to go. My weight loss now stands at 65 lbs. Doctors are concerned and talked about a feeding tube. Headaches are becoming more frequent and severe. An MRI showed several more spots on my head. I started wearing a pain patch. My precious family

gathered in my home on August 11, laid hands on me, and prayed for God's touch. God answered and I felt a little better and was able to keep medications down. Through it all, when you feel like there is no hope in sight; God makes sure you know HE IS THERE. Sometimes it takes a while and you wonder where He is, but at the last [continued on page 5](#)

APRIL 2013



"I WILL PRAISE HIM  
IN MY STORM.  
IT IS A CHOICE  
AND I CHOOSE  
TO GIVE PRAISE."

POSTED BY JULIE ON FACEBOOK,  
AUGUST 10, 2013



# Even During Uncertain Times, *God is Still Certain*

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ROBERT BOOTH

**D**uring uncertain times, God gets our attention. When life is spinning out of control, the tendency is to go to God. For this reason, God gets more done in moments of crisis, than in the smooth, paved roads of life. God gets way more done in our lives too, when things are uncertain.

Too many times we don't learn much when things are fine. We learn the most about ourselves when we go through hard times. and we learn the most about our heavenly Father when we go through hard times. There is a danger of becoming spiritually complacent when things are just smooth sailing.

I love the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. His story is full of uncertain times. Yet throughout the narrative we read the words, "And God was with Joseph". Even when Joseph couldn't feel God and see what God was doing, God was still certain. God was still in control. God is an expert in taking care of His people.

So, perhaps you just lost your job, or your spouse passed away, your children are far from God, perhaps you have been diagnosed with a health issue, your world seems to be crashing around you, let me remind you, God is always at work. He gets more done in uncertain times than in certain times.

However, the question that begs to be answered is this, "what are we supposed to do in the meantime?" What are we supposed to do when times get more uncertain? What are we supposed to do when things go from bad to worse? What are we supposed to do when God doesn't seem to answer?

The book of Philippians was written by Paul to the church that he planted in Philippi. And in all honesty, if I were to just write these words, you would laugh at me,

but what the Apostle Paul, experienced, gives these words credibility. One of the first churches he started was in Philippi. After that he was headed back to Jerusalem, but the church leaders told him not to go because the Jewish leaders wanted to get Paul because they felt like he was corrupting Judaism.

But Paul continues to Jerusalem and arrives at the temple. The Jewish leaders see him, and call for action. A mob attacks Paul and drags him out of the Temple. They are about to beat him to death. These same Jewish leaders falsely accuse Paul and tell the Rome authorities that he was a false teacher. Ultimately, they decide to send Paul to Rome for trial. Paul is now under arrest. He is sent on a boat to Rome. While he is on the boat, a huge storm comes and blows the ship out of course on the Mediterranean sea and for two weeks they are lost. Then they are shipwrecked for around three months. It took over two years for his trial to take place. During this time, Paul begins to write letters to some of these churches that he had planted. And the reason this is important is because what he is about to say sounds extremely unpractical, but you can't really argue with the source.

Paul says, I have had rocks thrown at me, I have been falsely accused, I have been scourged, shipwrecked, snake bitten, and left to die. In the meantime, he had written this letter, and here is what he says about praying in difficult times. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice (4:4)." Paul is suggesting that we spend what time is necessary to capture the understanding of God's grace and mercy in every situation.

He goes on to say, "Let your moderation (or gentleness) be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand (4:5)." In other words, don't allow uncertain times to affect your character. If your character is based on good times, when bad times come, you character will diminish. Don't allow something over which you have no control over(-circumstances) to take control of your character which is to be a reflection of God's grace inside you.

In verse six, Paul says to not be anxious about anything. Now that's not really helpful advice. But Paul doesn't leave it there. Paul gives us the secret to handling the problem. How to handle uncertain times. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (4:6).

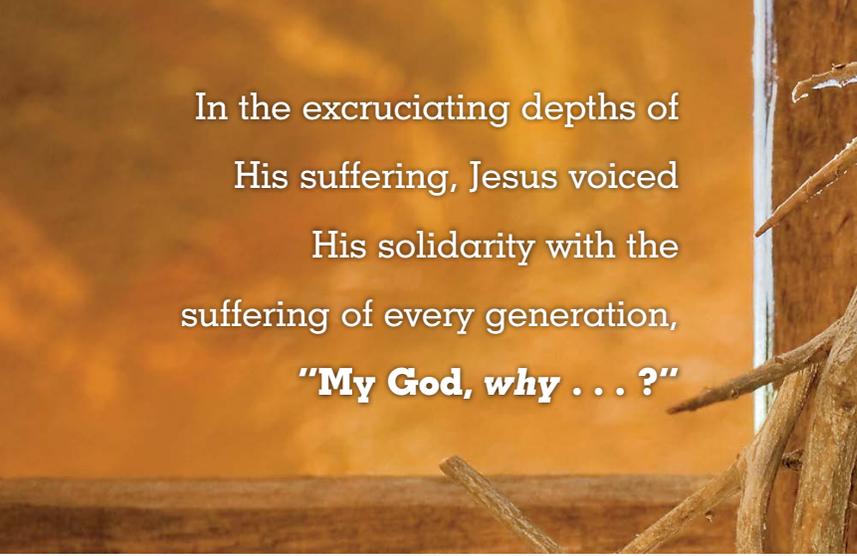
And we have the tendency to ask "Really? Pray? What do you think that I have been doing?" In this verse, Paul is telling us, "I want you to spend the time necessary to understand for yourself what you really need." What's the request behind the request? You see, in times of difficulty, it surfaces our deepest insecurities, it loosens up and brings to the surface our deepest fears. I don't think that most of us pray to the level of our insecurities and fears. Instead we pray "here is what I want and here is what I need". You can pray like that if you want, but that's not going to help your anxiety.

Verse 7 says "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Not circumstances. What if we could learn to pray this way? That at the end of your prayer, you found peace. In the times of uncertainty, we are to pray until God's peace comes. Not to pray until the circumstances change, because they may never change.

I admit that I grow weary of hearing phrases, "God answered my such and such prayer. God is so good." Yes, that is true, but God is good all of the time! Even if the circumstances never change, God is still good! Even if our prayers aren't answered the way we feel they need to be, we can still trust him! We have the opportunity to pray until the peace of God comes. C. S. Lewis said "I learned prayer isn't about changing God, prayer is about changing me." Pray until you get God's peace.

It's still available! ▣





In the excruciating depths of  
His suffering, Jesus voiced  
His solidarity with the  
suffering of every generation,  
“My God, why . . . ?”

continued from **page 3** His hand fell against the hot glass of the hurricane lamp and seared through the layers of skin and tendons. He returned to Dr. Brand, weeping. The doctor wept as well. With tears, the patient exclaimed, “How can I be free without pain?” (Brand & Yancey, 1984, p. 241). The inability to feel pain was imprisoning him! Without pain, he could not protect himself from innumerable dangers all around him.

Brand and Yancey explain that pain “unifies the body” (1984, p. 241). It reminds us that one of our members, maybe one of our least members, is in need! That is true in the individual, in the society, and in the church. “The body poorly protects what it does not feel” (p. 247), so we need pain to help us care for the damaged member. Furthermore, “pain is directional. It hurts not in order to cause discomfort, but to demand a change in response to danger” (p. 258). We nod in dutiful response, but that does not take away the agony when it hurts!

Pain can make us feel terribly alone, but sometimes the aloneness is itself the pain. This forsaking that Jesus experienced and that many of us have tasted seems to be a direct violation of the oft repeated promise, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee” (Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5; 1 Samuel 12:22; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Hebrews 13:5). The sense of distance is vivid in Psalm 22 where “far” occurs three times in verses 1, 11, and 19. Emotional distance, physical distance, and relational distance all combine their forces to overwhelm us with a sense of being abandoned.

Sometimes there is no escape from the pain, so we weep in brokenness and learn to trust in desperate, tender dependence upon the Father. Like the sheep that the shepherd carries on his shoulders, we may feel a closeness that was not possible without the pain. Nevertheless some of our brothers and sisters have tasted only abandonment in those times. All the way from Psalm 13:1 to Revelation 6:10, the saints weep, “How long, O Lord?” It’s a variation on the “why?”

The free will defense helps to explain some things in a valuable way. God did not create evil, and He does not predestine evil. He chose to give humans freedom to choose, and their abuse of their limited freedom brings suffering. The explanation helps, but it still leaves an anguished gap. Truesdale

(1996, p. 107) offers, a tense balance, “In the Cross, God answers forever all questions regarding His goodness. On Easter morning, God settles all questions regarding His sovereignty. No matter how troubling the questions regarding evil, Christians should look to the Cross and the Resurrection.”

In his first epistle, Peter says there are several reasons people suffer: 1) “for evildoing” (3:17, see also 4:15); “for righteousness’ sake” (3:14, see also 4:14, 16); and perhaps mysteriously “according to the will of God” (4:19). We understand when we or others suffer for wrongs or even for blunders. We struggle more, but Jesus has forewarned us not to be surprised, when we are “persecuted for righteousness sake” (Matthew 5:10). We especially agonize when the suffering seems pointless. Something inside shouts, “Things should NOT be like this!”

In the excruciating depths of His suffering, Jesus voiced His solidarity with the suffering of every generation, “My God, why . . . ?” The question should take us back to Psalm 22 in its entirety, even more so because Matthew makes at least five allusions to various parts of the psalm. In vv. 21-22, the psalmist shifted from lamenting to praising God for hearing him. Shipp (2011, p. 54) explains, “The depths where God was not are now the depths where God is.” We are not forsaken after all! *Immanuel!* He is the *with-us-God!* As Isaiah declared, “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old” (Isaiah 63:9).

When Jesus appeared after the Resurrection, both Jesus and His disciples talked about His scars! (See Luke 24:40, John 20:24-29.) Brand and Yancey (1984, p. 291) conclude, “That is why I say God hears and understands our pain, and even absorbs it into Himself—because He kept those scars as a lasting image of wounded humanity. He has been here; He has borne the sentence. The pain of man has become the pain of God.”

Shipp explains, “The cry of dereliction from the cross means ‘suffering, and subsequent glory’” (2011, p. 58). He further remarks that there are “24 quotations or allusions to Psalm 22 in the New Testament” (p. 57). Just as the Captain of our Salvation was made “perfect through suffering” (Hebrews 2:10), so in our lives suffering achieves character development there is no other way to achieve, it accomplishes ministry depth there is no other way to achieve, and it refines our trust in the Father like nothing else can do! Paul reassures us in 2 Timothy 2:12, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” ■

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 travel notes from the  
 president

**September 29:** I preached at the Duncannon church in the morning. It was good to be with Pastors Jeremy & Brian Fuller and congregation. Thank you to Sis. Faith Fuller for the lovely meal. We traveled back home and enjoyed having almost 20-30 Penn View dorm kids along with the bus driver, Lewis Ray Hoover, in our home for a pizza after the evening service. Later in the evening, we received the news that Julie Habecker made her home-going. We are so saddened for her family.

**October 1-6:** I preached a revival meeting for Pastor James Durr at the Bible Methodist church in Walker, MI. It was a joy to be with these fine people. I was honored to speak at the chapel service for the Pilgrim Bible Academy and Pastor Mike Shiery.

**October 7:** I attended the viewing for Bob Smerek later in the morning. We give our sympathy to his wife Lois (Deetz) Smerek and family.

**October 8-10:** We, along with our son Jim, took my mother on a little trip to see the fall leaves. We were honored to stay overnight in at the home of Dr. & Mrs Wesley Knapp!

**October 13:** We made our usual visit to the Lebanon church for their Harvest Home Sunday. This year, it was announced, that half of the Harvest Home grocery donations would be given to a needy family, of which I made several comments about during the message. It was a total shock, when at the end of the service they made it known that the Harvest Home was for Rachel and I, we were the "needy family." We traveled back to Middleburg with a car loaded to the roof and a trunk full and now we have cupboards full! The kindness of these dear people will never be forgotten! (Jon, if there is room, you could insert the photo that I included here.)

**October 15:** I attended chapel service to participate in the unveiling of the new logo for Penn View.

**October 17:** Some of the General board members interviewed Paul Ryan for a conference license, then continued on with the Penn View board meeting.

**October 20:** We spent the day with Rev. & Mrs. George Maloyed at Knightstown, IN. I preached in the morning service and we were honored to hear Bro. Maloyed preach in the evening. It was also very nice that Rev. & Mrs. Steve Davis were there for the weekend.

**October 21:** Rachel and I spent the night at Springfield, IL and enjoyed visiting the presidential library, museum, grave and home of Abraham and Mary Lincoln.

**October 22-27:** I preached a revival meeting at the Pilgrim Nazarene church in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Truly the town has the right name, such a pleasant town and fine people. We so enjoyed being with Pastor and Mrs. William Carpenter and this fine congregation, including the special meals in their homes and not to forget breakfast every morning at the Hy Vee with Bro. & Sis. Charles Conner, some of the patriarchs of the congregation. It was a shock to hear of the sudden death of John Straub, son of the late General Superintendent of our conference, Rev. George Straub.

**October 28:** We traveled through Nebraska and made a short stop at the Kearney Archway, a must see place if you travel through that area. We enjoyed a wonderful evening meal with Gary and Becky Hunt and daughters at Wauneta, Nebraska and later met with their congregation.

**October 29:** We left early after a good nights rest in the Wauneta Immanuel Missionary Church's very comfortable guest house. We made it clear to Pastor and Mrs. Hunt that we didn't want to trouble

them for breakfast, we would get an early start and find a place to eat down the road. It became interesting just how far down the road we would need to travel before we found a place for breakfast, as the towns were extremely small and few and far between. We traveled on to Colorado Springs, CO where I preached a revival for Pastor Marvin Mosely.



HARRY PLANK

year, Dan Tapio and wife, Ruth, visited Manatoba Springs, ate at the Mason Jar Restaurant with Bill & Freeda Chase, at Dennys with the Ray Crooks and in the home of parishioners the John Lucas's and Ralph Gaults'. Thank you, to each one of you for your kindness! It was also good to be with visiting ministers; Rodney Stearns, Stuart Hallam and Brandon Byler! We enjoyed the view of Pikes Peak and plenty of mule deer who grazed in the front lawn almost every day. We fell in love with the "PKs" two-year-old Michael and one-year-old Charisse. We regret that we were not able to be at the wedding of Rev. Phillip Ledger to Cindy Linch this week. Congratulations! We trust God will make them a blessing as they serve at the Fort Myers Rescue Mission.

**November 4 & 5:** It was with mixed emotions that we left Colorado Springs. We were anxious to get back home, but we truly left part of our hearts with these dear people. Since our route took us past the Abieline exit, made a quick tour of the boyhood home, presidential library, museum and burial of the late Dwight Eisenhower.

**November 6:** I visited Rev. Mike Hoskins in the Mt. Nittany hospital in State College. After prayer meeting, it was nice to be with Scott and Tena Norman for a lunch in their beautiful home along with Pastor and Mrs. Jeff Stratton and family.

**November 7:** I conducted a General Board meeting for most of the day. We also attended the viewing of Barbara Houseworth at the Millmont Calvary Chapel. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

**November 10:** We were with the Hanover congregation this morning. It was good to have two members of the Halter family in the congregation. Our thoughts and prayers are with them in the death of their brother Gerald. Thank you to Pastor and Mrs. John Mark Fisher for the good meal and fellowship in the parsonage.

**November 15-17:** I preached a weekend meeting at the Pillow church. Some encouraging things are happening. Pastor and Mrs. Aaron Dorman are putting their heart in this ministry and the people were welcoming and friendly. Thank you, to visitors from the Sunbury church and Pastors Durkee & Habecker along with several parishioners from the Gratz congregation. ☑

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