

GOD CAN HANDLE YOUR GRIEF AND ANGER

Kerry S. Doyal

The two angst-filled pieces below I penned a few years back after the death of a twin girl from my community, whose funeral I was honored to hold. Her twin brother had died of "crib death" (SIDS) at one month, and she slipped away into heaven a month later. Both seemingly healthy children were suddenly ripped from their parent's arms.

If we say God does not cause these horrors, we can not deny He could at minimum prevent them. We let God "off the hook" too easily at times, making honest faith and painful grieving even harder. Grieving can be ugly. The questions that flood one's soul are not only torturous, but also often blasphemous.

Putting on the face & pretending one has not had it out with God is not only not helpful, but hurtful. While some seem to never pass through such dark nights of the soul, most are not so blessed. Their journey through the valley of the shadow of death is a white-water rapid ride beside jagged canyons of despair, over rocks of doubt and with stalls in eddies of anger and pain.

On a personal note, my almost seven week old nephew Mark Liam Miller, himself a twin, recently died. After a few days of seemingly decent health - he was half of a boy-girl preemie tandem - life got harder and eventually unlivable for him. Upon his death, I revisited the pieces below, and offer them as a memorial to Mark and as hopefully solace to any that may tragically need them. Peace.

Stuck With God?

Is He not only Master, but also monster, this mysterious one we call God?

Is He, this oft-cryptic Creator, a mangler of hopes, a dream-dashing despot?

Are we left - no forced - to embrace and worship one who is our vilest tormentor? Behooved to bow before a beast we can not predict or control?

Are we obliged to crown as king this seemingly cruel one? To dub as divine one whom seems at times more devilish?

In a word, are we stuck with God? Is there no way around Him? Are we stuck with a God, who bids - no commands - us to bend before Him in

praise, though he at times seems heaven-bent, or is it hell-bent, to wreck havoc in our lives? Are we inescapably stuck with God?

To be frank, we are "stuck" with God, but not the one described above. While God is not tamable, He is no wild beast preying upon the helpless, the defenseless.

Though God is indeed mysterious, yet He is also merciful and wise and good, even when what He allows is clearly not good. Who is ready to argue for pure the goodness of death and suffering?

Yes, we are stuck with God, as He is stuck with us, His beloved, erring creation. However, we are not stuck with God in that there is no other option. We are delightfully stuck with God and there is no better option.

He is not a cruel, devilish despot. Sovereign? Yes! Unknown in His ways at times? Yes! Yet, not aloof. He tasted death and suffering too.

And not a vile tormentor. He asked forgiveness for those who tormented Him, forgiving those who blasphemed His name.

And He is certainly not a mangler of hope. Indeed, it is He who gives true & lasting hope.

We may not know why - and that may understandably bother us deeply. But we do know Who - and He can comfort us immeasurably.

How good it is to be stuck with God.

WE CAN'T BEGIN TO IMAGINE

We can't begin to imagine how you feel, how you truly feel. At least I can't.

We can't begin to relate to your pain, your loss, the horror, the devastation of soul, mind and body. At least I can't.

We can't begin to know what to say or do. How to comfort or best help. At least I can't

But, then again we are not what you need most. We are not what matter most. I know I am not.

But He is.

While we can't begin to know how you feel, or relate to your pain, or know what to say, or do, or how to best comfort you, He does.

He too lost a beloved child. He too knew pain unspeakable, was intimately acquainted with sorrow.

While He could have prevented this, He did not. We are left to grapple with mystery.

And to be held in His sympathizing, truly empathizing arms. Arms that bear scars of His own pain.

While He could have halted this death, He also could have halted Jesus' death too.

But He didn't.

And because of it - there is new life offered for all.

What new life may come from this death? What unknown joy may grow from this tear-stained soil? God alone knows. God alone. And it is God alone that you need.

We can offer our best love and help at this time. We must and we shall. Gladly and freely. Yet, the best we can finally offer is God, Who can not only imagine what you are going through, He has gone through it Himself.

Though He took your beloved, He offers Himself to you.

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