

Daily Devotional, July 21, 2020 Jesus is With You in Your Pain

After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met Him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" John 11:28-37 (NIV)

One of the truths about God that I will never truly comprehend is that, when we pray, God does not just hear our prayers. God feels them. God is moved by our requests, our dialogue to Him, our hurts, our sorrows, and our joys. God cares about us, and God feels joy when we feel joy. God feels sad when we are sad. As we see in our Bible passage today, this is the one time in the Bible where we see a record of Jesus weeping, because He felt the pain of His friends. It makes us wonder how many other unrecorded times, Jesus wept for others. How often does He weep for us today?

Earlier in this chapter, Martha tells Jesus, "If only you had been here, my brother would not have died" (v. 21). Now we are looking at Mary, her sister's, response. She said the exact same thing to Jesus. She fell to her knees and said in the very next verse, "If only you had been here, my brother would not have died". This time, we see a different side of Jesus. This time, Jesus did not have eloquent words. Instead, He wept. He did not just get teary-eyed or let a few teardrops roll down his cheeks. He outwardly wept. Can you imagine the moment? Jesus, the Son of God, weeping at the pain and grief His friends felt. He wept fully knowing that He had every intention of raising Lazarus from the dead in the next few minutes. This was all going to be a part of His ultimate plan. Yet, at the moment, He saw and experienced the pain of His friends and wept openly. My friends, Jesus is with us in our pain. He even feels our pain. Jesus was human, yet divine, and he felt the same pain and anguish that we feel.

What is the storm of pain you are facing? Maybe you have recently received the phone call that no one wants to answer. Maybe you just received the test results no one wants to hear. Perhaps you have recently found yourself in the waiting room at the hospital, being sent home because of the precautions that the hospitals have been forced to carry out due to the pandemic. Instead you find yourself waiting helplessly at home and praying for your loved one.

Or it might be that you are stuck at home in quarantine, traumatized and wondering why everything seems to be falling apart around you. Let me assure you that God is with you. God is with you in your pain and feels it with you. God might even be shedding a few tears for you.

My friends, when you face your trials and hardships, you must know that you are not alone. God is with you, feeling your pain and sadness. God cares deeply for you, and God will never leave your side. Spend some time in contemplation, being reminded of this truth and finding encouragement in knowing that God is always with you in your joy, in your sorrow, and in your pain.

Prayer: Dear God, as I start my day, I pray that your hand holds me and guides me. Please be my comforter when I am worried, my strength when I feel weak, my patience when I feel frustrated, my peace when I am angry, and my confidence when I am in doubt. Demonstrate your power within me, Lord. Make me a vessel for your goodness. Amen.