

Reasons Ministries

When Evil Comes Close To Home

One objection to the existence of God used frequently by atheists, and which also elicits a troubled heart in believers, is why must we suffer, why is there evil in the world? Evil is no respecter of persons. Christians and nonChristians, the nice, the mean, the rich the poor; everyone suffers. Back in the fall of 2011 my dear wife, Beth, was diagnosed with endometrial cancer. At first we thought the cancer was caught early. Little did we know that in a little more than a year my wife would be passing into the presence of our Lord on February 2, 2013 at the relatively young age of 54. Previous to my wife's death my 57 year old sister, Doreene, lost her battle with cancer and passed into the Lord's presence in February of 2012. I lost two important women in my life to cancer in less than a year.

Between the diagnosis and death of Beth we did all those things a follower of Christ is to do. We prayed for God to heal Beth of the cancer. We sought the prayers of friends and acquaintances for Beth's healing. Beth followed the admonition of James chapter 5 and called for the elders of our church to anoint and pray over her, not once but twice. On the medical front we followed Beth's oncologists's advice and pursued aggressive chemo therapy. We believed, we trusted, we entreated God to hear and answer our prayers for healing. When healing seemed unlikely, we prayed for more time. Surely God would grant Beth more time to spend with her children and grandchildren. He is the healer after all, so why wouldn't God heal my wife. She was his child. She walked with him and served him for many years! She was one of the sweetest persons you could know. She was needed by her family, particularly her grandchildren and even more so by her granddaughter. Beth was one of her surrogate mothers.

But God did not heal her. Beth died. Was her death unfair? Yes! Was her death a loss for her family and indeed in many ways for the kingdom of God on earth? Yes! Why did God not heal Beth? I do not not know and I will not know until heaven. I do know that when Adam and Eve freely rebelled against God sin came into the world and messed everything up! I know that all of us will die unless Jesus returns first. But I do not know why, in Beth's case, God said "no".

So why is there evil in the world like cancer and heart disease and murders and rapes and wars and tornados and earthquakes and on and on and on? Why do Christians suffer? Why doesn't God heal us when we are sick and protect us from all the bad things that happen? Doesn't he care? Doesn't he know what we are enduring? Why? Why? Why?

There are no easy answers, but God has done something that is remarkable, even unthinkable. He has entered into our vail of tears and has witnessed from our level the terrible evils in this world. I believe Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb not because he was sad Lazarus had died, but because he saw the true ugliness of death. In less than a week, Jesus experienced untold suffering at the hands of his torturers and then suffered an excruciating death on the cross. Not only did he suffer physically, he suffered spiritually as he became the sin offering for every one of us. And he was completely innocent! So his suffering was unjust. Yet his suffering was voluntary. Imagine the Creator allowed his creation to nail him to a cross for sins he did not commit. So yes, God knows our suffering through the suffering of his Son. And because his Son rose from the dead, we too will be raised and will be with him forever. Despite all of my unanswered questions, my sense of great loss, my daily sadness and loneliness, I know that my Redeemer lives, that my wife is in his presence and that all who know him will be with him forever. It is then that all of our questions will be answered. Until then, we struggle, we question, we wrestle, we trust, we hope, we wait and we know that because he suffered, he is able to help us and indeed rescue us from anything that we will endure in this world. Hebrews 2:17-18 reminds us that "Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to be in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. He then could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and temptation, he is able to help us when we are being tempted" (NLT).

Got Questions??

About God and the problem of suffering?

The Bible's reliability?

The uniqueness of Christ?

What is a worldview?

Christianity vs. Other Religions

Basic Apologetics?

Evolution vs. Creationism

**I can help with answers!
Give me a call or send me an email! I would love to come to your church for a weekend of ministry.**

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Reasons Ministries' Mission

The mission of Reasons Ministries is to equip believers to know what and why they believe so they can stand firm in the Christian faith, be effective tools in God's hand for reaching those that do not yet know Christ and to be able to apply practical apologetics to everyday life.



Question: What lessons about living can we learn from the dying?

Answer: Having watched my sister and my wife lose their battles with cancer (not the war mind you since Jesus won the war when he rose from the dead), I have learned a few things about living from the dying.

Attitude matters: It has been said that all of us are dying, some are just closer than others. I watched both my sister, Doreene, and my wife, Beth, struggle with cancer. In both cases I saw two women who maintained a positive attitude despite the suffering, pain and indignity of cancer. Rarely did they have any self-pity or fear of dying Both persevered graciously to the end.

Use your time for what matters most: My wife had always suffered from insomnia. During many sleepless hours, Beth would spend some of the time praying. One of the complications my wife developed from the cancer and the seemingly endless chemo were blood clots. The blood clots required her to spend a lot of time in bed. I asked her if she wanted a TV in our bedroom, but she said no. I asked her what she would do with all that time by herself and her response was, it gives me more opportunities to pray. I know she interceded for her family, but I

think she spent a lot of time talking to her Lord which prepared her to face the journey ahead and prepared her to meet Jesus. Beth used her time for what mattered most.

Hang on to the truth of the Gospel: Both my wife and sister had known the Lord for many years. They received him when they were children. My sister had experienced the loss of her husband 5 years earlier from a brain aneurism. Since he was a believer he was in heaven already. Beth and Doreene faced death with courage and resolve, because they both knew the truth of the Gospel. They knew that death had been defeated when Jesus rose and because he lived so would they. About 2 weeks before Beth passed away she was hospitalized for several days. I asked her how she was so peaceful about facing death. I said, "you have known this for quite some time, haven't you?" She replied, "yes." While many would become increasingly fearful as they approached death, Beth became increasingly peaceful. I know much of her peace came from her assurance that all she had ever believed was true. If Jesus is who he said he was then everything he said is true. Jesus demonstrated that he is who he said he is, the eternal son of God, by rising from the dead. Jesus taught that heaven is real and that we will be with him forever. It is this hope that filled the hearts of Beth and Doreene. Thank you Jesus, because of you I will see my wife and sister again!

Past & Upcoming Events:

June 6, 2013— I led an all day Scripture Workshop for those pursuing Ordination and Consecration in The C&MA, Ohio Valley District.

June 23, 2013— I preached at First Alliance Church in Columbus, OH.

July/August, 2013 — I taught a New Testament Survey Course at Indiana Wesleyan in Louisville.

October 2013 — **Teaching a college course, "Themes In Biblical Literature"** A course that looks at our origins, the nature of God, why we suffer, what it means to be human, sin and salvation.

About David's Ministry:

David has been such a blessing to us at Northeast. We have an AMAZING worship service each weekend. Yet we know that for our people to continue to grow in their spiritual walk, it takes more than just engaging in a weekend experience. David's teaching has helped us satisfy that place for our mature believers to dig deeper, and at the same time challenge our younger believers to seek answers. David is always prepared and brings in many resources to aid in keeping our people engaged. After every session, there are always those who stay to discuss in more detail. Thanks David!

—Laura Wingfield, Groups Minister, Northeast Christian Church, Louisville

About David



— 18 Years of Pastoral Ministry. Ordained and Licensed through the Ohio Valley District of the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA)
 — Adjunct Professor @ Indiana Wesleyan University at the Louisville, KY Campus since 2001 Have taught 11 different courses and over 800 students (many courses were in Bible and Apologetics).
 — Graduate of Toccoa Falls College with a B.A. in Missiology and Alliance Theological Seminary with a Masters in cross-cultural and theological studies.

- Additional Masters level work at TFC and Columbia International University
- Serving on Ohio Valley District Licensing Ordination & Consecration Committee and as a District Presbyter
- Started Reasons Ministries in November 2008
- Married 33 years to Beth with three adult children and two adorable grandchildren.
- Work currently as a mortgage loan advisor for First Fidelity Mortgage in Louisville, KY.

Prayer Needs:

- Please pray for speaking opportunities for me in spring of 2014.
- Please pray for God to provide increased financial support for the ministry.