

Dear Partner in Ministry,

The emergency pager is always unpredictable. It goes off when I least expect it, and rarely when I'm ready for it. The hospital pages me with a four digit extension to call back, with the expectation that I will then be at the hospital in thirty minutes. Most of the four digit numbers I have memorized: the Burn Ward ICU, the ER, and the Surgical ICU. Yet there is one page that is always hardest for me, the PEDS ICU (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit).

What makes these calls so difficult is that they are always the same. A mother has lost her child, the father is no where to be found, and I am at a loss for words because the only thing that I could say to give her hope does not make any sense, because she is not a Christian. So I do my best to love her, mostly in silence, and end with a presentation of the only way for her to experience hope, the Gospel. Yet the hardest thing of all is that most times, like the women in Bible times, "she refused to be comforted, because her children were no more" (Matthew 2:18).

I received one of these pages this Tuesday and was reminded of something that I always tell seminary students when they come in for training: "Never tell someone that you understand, show them that you understand." That mantra did not seem like it was going to work this time, because I just plain did not understand what it was like! So I prayed.

The Lord brought a Scripture to mind. It is a passage that I think of often at work. It is Romans 12:15, "weep with those who weep." When I walked into the ICU, this was not difficult to do. The mother was staring aimlessly off into space, crying. When I introduced myself, she was in so much shock that she had to think for a moment to remember her name. She explained that she was 7 months pregnant, and had fallen that day, inducing labor. The baby did not survive.

I wept. I asked the Lord to help me understand what she was feeling. The guilt that I then began to feel was overwhelming. Yet not only guilt, but hopelessness and despair. She was from Central America (She spoke only Spanish, of course) and had arrived three weeks back. She had no family or friends around; she was all alone. Then there was a big surprise. She was a Christian. She had not found a Church in L.A. yet, but she knew the Gospel well.

As I began to step into her shoes and feel some of what she felt, I knew that a silent love was what was needed most. As I wept with this woman, and began to actually mourn with her, God began to comfort me with Scripture. We do have guilt and it is overwhelming, but Christ bore our shame on the cross. Without God there is no hope, but through the resurrection we have a living hope. We may feel all alone, but God is everywhere.

Now that I had actually mourned, God was faithful to comfort me. I knew, at it says in 2 Cor. 1:3-4, this was the comfort that I needed to share with this woman, these were the words she needed to hear from God. The great thing about Scripture is that when I am struggling with words and wondering what to say, I know God will have it already written down for me.

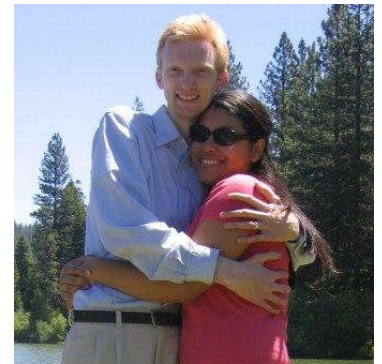
Psalms 23 is famous because David describes in poetic form what this woman was feeling. There are times in our life when all is well. Money is in the bank and the kids are healthy. It feels like our Shepherd is leading us by gentle waters to drink and grassy pastures to feed. We readily praise His name because we feel His blessings. But then, then there are those moments when we walk through the valley of death's shadow. Around every turn lurks strange noises in the gloomy darkness, and we are all alone.

It is during those moments, more than the easy ones, when we must remind ourselves, as did David, that God is our Shepherd. Though we do not feel Him, He is walking through the valley with us, and is right now preparing our journey's end. The table is all set; everything is ready, waiting for us. Soon, my brothers and sisters, we shall see Him face to face.

I was exceedingly joyful, even through the flood of tears, to watch God birth a hope in this woman to anchor her soul. As the author of Hebrews says, it is a hope that is "firm and secure" (Heb. 6:19), anchored in the Holy of Holies, impervious to the storms of life that threaten us.

Please continue to pray with me, that God would be pleased to use us to refresh the hearts of the saints and bring the lost to Him. To Him be the glory forever.

**We would love to hear from you if we can serve you in any way...**



Obviously the biggest change in my personal life...Crystal P. Grauman. Change is good :) Christianity is about change, changing into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. The marriage was wonderful, a big thanks to any of you who played a part; we were so very blessed. If you want to see any pictures, there should be some up soon at [www.grauman.com/josiah](http://www.grauman.com/josiah)

Now that we're back at home we got right back into ministry. Crystal and I are preparing to lead a missions trip to Mexico City from July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup>, again, more details on the web if you'd like.

Please pray for our schooling as well, I am in summer school trying to finish up a class so that I can graduate Seminary May 2007. Also, Crystal needs to test out of a Greek class in order to finish her degree. We obviously need prayer as well that the Lord would help direct her to just the right job this Fall.

For those of you who do not know, we moved into a little apartment in Glendale and are loving it. It is only 12 minutes from the Hospital! We pray that God establish the work of our hands as we seek to make our home a place where the hearts of the saints are refreshed, and where His Gospel is proclaimed.

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