The University Heights Messenger

I Don't Always Understand

We truly are but a single phone call from our knees, aren't we? Just a little more than an hour ago my mother called. The moment I picked it up I could hear her broken, ragged breathing and knew what was coming. Through the tears she managed to tell me that Rachel's cancer has spread into the lymph nodes. The worst case scenario has become the reality. I must be honest and tell you that I did not initially feel anything. For the first time in my life I learned exactly what people mean when they say they just went numb.

As I think about it, this has not been the only first in my life since Jackie and I moved here less than six months ago. For the first time in my life I have experienced what it is like to have absolutely no control over the situations I have found myself and my family in. For the first time I know by experience what it means to be absolutely helpless to alleviate or fix the circumstances around me. In the short time that we have been here I have been in Central Baptist Hospital more than I have been in any hospital in my entire life. I have watched my wife admitted into Central Baptist multiple times since we've been here because it was simply impossible for her to keep anything down. I have watched her struggle to lift her head as she literally wasted away on that hospital bed. I have watched an entire team of nurses struggle to insert a needle in her arm because her dehydration was so severe that they could not find a vein. I did not tell her or anyone else, but it was killing me to stand by unable to do a thing to help. When she slept, I cried in the seat next to her bed.

Jackie is not the only member of our small family making frequent trips to the hospital and doctors office.. Alexander's allergies are getting worse and his reactions more varied. His every cough causes the two of us to freeze in our tracks. No matter how diligent we are in seeing to it that the things he reacts to are out of his reach, he somehow finds a way to get into something. The emergency room doctor said it best when she said, "You live with a terrifying child." Nothing is as terrifying as watching your child vomiting, breaking out in hives, swelling, and struggling to breathe as he stares at you wondering what is going on and why you're not stopping it. Nothing makes you feel more helpless. These past few months I have physically felt as bad as I ever have in my life. I have been taxed emotionally more than I have at any point in my life. It is all because of the worry and stress arising from circumstances of which I have no control.

I was on the phone with my father a few minutes after talking to my mother. He broke down before he could get through everything he was trying to tell me. Dad struggles with certain problems which will make what is to follow with Rachel incredibly difficult for him personally. So do I. At that point I did another thing that I have never done before. I closed my eyes and asked God a single question. Why? Rachel is only 28 years old, recently married, and pregnant with her first child. Why is my little sister having to face this disease which her doctor told her was potentially fatal? Why

must her husband, a brand new Christian, have such a test to his faith so early on? Why must my parents, who have just come through years of emotional battles within the church, have to face this now? Why are the one's that I love the most in this life, whom I would give anything and everything for, having to suffer as they are while I am forced to stand by and watch? Why has all control been taken away from me?

Then it hit me right between the eyes. Control was never mine to begin with. "**Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.**" Matthew 10:29-30. No, brethren; I don't know why all of these things have happened in such a short amount of time to the people that I love the very most. I do not know if God was seeking to teach me that I am not in control of every circumstance and that there are times when I will simply have to trust in Him and His mercy. Regardless, I have learned it and I thank my God for teaching me.

I don't know what is going to happen with my sister from here on out. My prayer, and the prayer of thousands, was that Rachel be completely cancer free. That was not God's plan and I don't understand. Then again, I don't have to, do I? It is mine to trust Him. Whatever decision He makes is the right one and I will rejoice in it. The following days will be difficult one's for my family. They will be very difficult for me and I ask your understanding if I do not appear myself. However, these last few months have been wonderful months for me and I anticipate the next few will as well. My faith and reliance on God has grown ten-fold. Even when the tears start flowing, *especially* when the tears start flowing, I hear that whisper in my ear: "**Be still, and know that I am God.**" Psalm 46:10

In Need of Prayers	General Information
Sharon Tirey continues her cancer treatments. Remember Kristen Osterling's unborn baby. Remember David Blakeman and his health concerns. Pamela Clayton has been sent home to spend her final days with her family. Rachel Knollman will have the remaining lymph nodes on the left side of her neck removed. Wayne Galloway is in Central Baptist Hospital undergoing dialysis for kidney failure. Robin Miller's surgery will be in September 3. Lilly Fitzwater (Bill Morelan's mother) is recovering in a care facility in Ohio. The contact information is posted on the bulletin board in the hall.	Remember that on August 22 the congregation is going to begin a monthly door knocking effort at evangelism. We will meet here at the building at 10 A.M. and divide into groups of two to walk through neighborhoods inviting people to visit with us and asking if they would be interested in a Bible study or the correspondence course. Please make your plans to participate. **University Height Church of Christ** **445 Columbia Avenue** **Lexington, Ky 40508** **859-255-6257** **www.uheightschurch.com**

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