



Suffering: Coming to Know Christ Better and Sharing His Comfort

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“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

– 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

As Lilly walked down the long white hallway, she tried to focus on her steps rather than her thoughts. But the smell of disinfectants, hand sanitizer, and cafeteria food kept bringing her back to reality. The doctor had just given the news that her father might not make it long enough to get the transplant he so desperately needed.

At 17, Lilly had seen many sterile hallways inside hospitals waiting for news on various family members. This one was different. She felt as though she'd burst with the rising pressure of questions, pain, and grief. More than that she had the overwhelming sense that she could not do this alone. But she and her mom *were* alone - hours away from friends and family in an unfamiliar hospital waiting for a miracle.

Lilly turned the corner, and there in the waiting room sat Mrs. McDonald, the mother of her high school best friend. Lilly's jaw dropped. She tried to speak, but no words came out of her mouth. Tears began to stream down her cheeks. Tears welled in Mrs. McDonald's eyes as she stood to embrace Lilly. Mrs. McDonald had driven almost three hours, sat in the waiting room for another hour watching for Lilly and her mom, and brought them snacks, Kleenex, ChapStick, and magazines – “Because I know what it's like to sit and wait at a hospital,” she said.

Mrs. McDonald's presence reminded Lilly that she was never *really* alone. She recalled the verse she had learned in Sunday School, Christ's comforting words “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). In that moment, though the pain and questions were still very real, Lilly felt peace.

God does not always tell us why we suffer, but He does promise that our suffering will not be wasted. When we share in Christ's suffering, the Bible tells us it is an opportunity for Christ's glory to be revealed providing us with both comfort and joy (1 Peter 4:13). And ultimately, He will provide an occasion down the road to share that comfort with someone who may be in a similar time of suffering, just as Mrs. McDonald did (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

Let's Chat!

- Are you Lilly or Mrs. McDonald? Are you in a place of needing to be reminded of the comfort of God in suffering, or are you able to share how God has comforted you?
- How do we come to know God better by experiencing His comfort?
- Is there a younger girl or lady you can reach out to and share Christ's comfort through suffering?
- Is there an older woman you can ask to share her story of Christ's comfort through suffering?

Take-Away Truth

The God of all comfort calls us to know Him better through suffering and to share His comfort with others.

Find more conversation starters: <https://women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more>

