

ENDORSEMENTS

Weber offers a much-needed, open, and honest resource for a type of loss culturally we push under the rug. In offering her story and recognizing the many, many dynamics that reveal themselves when a child is lost, Weber begins an important conversation. This book will be helpful if you've experienced your own loss, or for the individual or congregation that wants to respond better to the mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers all around us who mourn, while still rejoice, with their child, in the arms of Christ.

—Deaconess Heidi Goehmann, writer, blogger,
and speaker at I Love My Shepherd Ministries

*Never
Forsaken*

GOD'S MERCY IN THE MIDST OF MISCARRIAGE

KATHRYN ZIEGLER WEBER

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PREFACE

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, Amen. (Third Article of the Apostles' Creed)

When I speak the words “resurrection of the body,” I cross myself in remembrance of my Baptism. This isn’t something I was taught as a child, but rather something that became important to me as I grew in my faith. Why? Why is this simple gesture (though perhaps a little too pious for some) important to me? It is something I do to show “This is what I believe.” It is a tangible action that connects me to the very real water and Word poured over me when I was too young to understand. Then, when I found out I was pregnant, I would discreetly place my hand upon my tummy before crossing myself and make a tiny sign of the cross with my thumb where I imagined my baby to be. This was not only a comfort in the moment; it would become a greater solace for me later.

So in weakness and in health, I cross myself, and most times I look forward to saying those comforting words of the Creed—“the resurrection of the body.” *Most* times I look forward to saying them. In my weakness, my confession in word and action may be less than convincing. Yet even at my weakest, the words, the promise, and the movement are the anchor to which I cling.

I had experienced death before I ever miscarried, and I learned at a young age that death, loss, and grief are constant visitors this side of eternity. When loved ones died, I went through a period of mourning and grieving. I learned to remember them with fondness and hope for a blessed reunion in heaven. There is something unique, however, about the loss of life within your own body. And although the circumstances are different for everyone experiencing infant loss, the grief is very profound and creates the same needs.

With the children who have died in my womb, I have learned that the only hope I have to cling to is Christ. There are no souvenirs of

their existence or memories to hold onto, not even a promise of meeting them as healthy newborns cradled in the arms of my Savor. There are only the promises of Christ alone. So, I cling to His resurrection and the promise of wholeness therein.

The only meaning and justification I can find for having to move through grief is that it produces a greater dependence upon Christ. Among the many recurring themes of miscarriage and infant loss, there are two that presently stick out in my mind:

- finding meaning for the pain and loss—the “Why?”; and
- finding peace or resolution—the “How?”

These two questions often create a vicious cycle of thought: *If I could just know why it happened, then I would know how to move forward.* Often, though, answers to these questions aren’t good enough. The “why” of pain and “how” to escape it are not found within ourselves or in the little shrines we build and rituals we create to try to give deeper meaning to our suffering. In fact, there is no explanation for it. There is only a remedy—Christ. But that truth can be less than satisfying because of our sinful ways of understanding and grieving.

With my miscarriage came many false hopes for getting better and finding healing within. I had created a dark room inside my head, and my heart found it comfortable and comforting to dwell there. That room is grief. It is always there. It is an impenetrable room where I convinced myself that only I was allowed to enter. In that room, I didn’t know what to do with myself; sometimes I didn’t know how to get out of it. Some days I didn’t *want* to get out. It was comfortable to just sit and do nothing. Grief has a way of not just being a visitor but a constant companion, and it takes time to learn to live with it. It took time for me to realize that I would never find my lost children in that room. I couldn’t even remember them well, no matter how long I sat and reflected. In that room, I held only the gory details of their lives: the pain, the suffering, the helpless waiting to learn whether this child would live to take his or her first breath, the silent ultrasounds. It took time for me to discover that the only way I would be able to appropriately remember them was to find another way.

Grief forces us to grow up in ways we would never invite and could never imagine. The stages of grief become things we work through daily and move through, like a ritual or a creed, a cycle we work through but never quite move out of. Grieving is something for us to do even as we long for and miss the lives we had hoped to carry into this world, nurture, care for, and send off into the world on their own.

I realized that I needed to leave my darkened room and walk down a road as a pilgrim setting off on a journey of reflection and discovery. The road may have twists, turns, and a darkened path, but it is a way forward nonetheless. Grief is not a place to sit alone; it is a journey on which we join others. Each of us deals with grief a little differently, and our experiences are unique—but the journey itself is not unique. One need look no further than the cross to realize that there is no escaping the pain and suffering that sin brought into this world. Christ walked the road to Calvary, a road well laid out by foreigners, thieves, sojourners, bloodthirsty murderers, and self-righteous law-abiders. His pilgrimage was not for Himself, because He wasn't anything but sinless and holy. No, His path to death was not for Himself; rather, He took that journey in order to be with the very people He came to die for and save. He took that road for us.

As we wait for the healing of our lowly bodies and the restoration in heaven of what was lost on earth, we cling to what we know. We continue to lift our weak arms and make the sign of the cross over our fragile bodies, knowing that God's power is made perfect in weakness. With feeble voices, we continue to recite the promises we have in the Creed. And with tear-filled eyes, we search the Word of God for our comfort. We believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. And if that is all that we can cling to in this time, then it is enough to know that we are never forsaken.

While feelings can deceive us in the midst of grieving, we are never forsaken in the midst of our suffering and loss. God's Word provides us with comfort and assurance that He is surely with us, even while we pass through the fires of life. We confess a God who has

power over death, and we hold dearly to all those promises He offers us—especially His promise of presence.

I am delighted that you have decided to use this book on your own journey with grief. My heart breaks for the same reasons you have been moved to read it. My prayer for you is that God would use my journey and His Word to help guide you to see and better know your Savior in the midst of your suffering. Perhaps not all of these chapters will directly relate to you, but I hope that each will reveal something new and helpful for you in your pilgrimage with grief. I understand that the weight of the Law already hangs heavy upon the mother who has lost a child, but some of these chapters might challenge the baptized grieving mother to face ugly aspects of her grief in which sin can rear its nasty head. I pray that God would show you the good that only He can make of what may be some of your saddest days.

For now, know that you are not alone. The women who share the stories in these pages are faithful women who have braved the storms of miscarriage and infant loss and have come out on the other side. They still carry grief as a constant companion, but they also hold the joy of Christ in their hearts as they treasure up and ponder all the beautiful memories they had with their children while in the womb and, for some, while in the world.

May God bless you and keep you in the study of His Word and the contemplation of the life that He has given and that He has allowed to be taken away.

WHY?

In this life, we are left with little explanation as to why some things happen. This study will address the peace God offers us through His Son amidst the frustration of so many unanswered questions. We will try to focus on Christ as the answer to all our “whys” even when we are left without answers.

VERSE FOR MEDITATION

For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation.

Psalm 62:1

INTRODUCTION

Why? This question seems like a good place to start. Several years ago, I lived in the mission field with a family. Their oldest child at the time was four years old. She would delight in her bad influence over her two-year-old brother by teaching him words like “No!” and “Why?” Everything for the two of them became a protest or a question that demanded answers, and no matter the answer given, it was always followed with another “Why?” If you have experience with little children, then you know exactly how this never-ending process goes. If you are struggling with a miscarriage or infant loss, you also know how the vicious cycle of unanswered questions revolves in your head. You can be given all the technical answers, and you still ask, “Why? Why my child? Why me? Why my family?” Even if by some supernatural occurrence God came into your home to sit and sip tea, and He did answer these questions fully and completely, I believe His answer still would not be

enough. What we really want is not answers but our children.

The following is a reflection from Kristina Odom. Kristina came to the United States from Finland to study theology. She met her husband at the seminary where they both studied together. They were later married and together they have grown a family. What she learned from her theological studies helped her as she faced the death of her second child. She reflects on what it means to ask questions in the midst of grief due to a miscarriage and due to infant loss.

HOW LONG, O LORD?

It was a time of big changes in my little family's life. My husband had just finished his studies at the seminary, and we were preparing to move to his first call. Our daughter Edith was six months old, and before we made the big move, we traveled overseas to visit my family so they could meet her for the first time. Soon after the trip, we found out that I was pregnant again.

We moved and settled down and finally had our first doctor's appointment at fifteen weeks. The ultrasound showed that we were having another girl, but it also showed that there were some serious concerns. What followed was a whirlwind of doctors' appointments and then sad news. In week eighteen, we were given a diagnosis. Our baby girl had Down syndrome, but even more serious, a very severe heart defect. She had less than a 30 percent chance of surviving until week twenty-six, the time for our appointment with the pediatric cardiologist. Her heart was enlarged and would continue to grow and eventually begin to fail; this could also put my life in danger, as there was a risk for a "mirror syndrome" in which my heart could mimic her heart failure.

But our little Matilda Grace surprised everyone, and at that appointment she was doing wonderfully. She continued to do so until week thirty-six, despite her very enlarged heart. During these weeks of waiting and watching, we felt much anxiety and fear, but we were not asking very

many “whys” yet. Those would come later. We prayed for healing, for the opportunity to meet her outside the womb while she was alive, and for faith so we would be able to say with Job, “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (1:21), even when He took our baby girl home to Himself.

The Lord answered some of our prayers with a yes. The day arrived when we would finally meet her. Matilda had not died in the womb; we would meet her while she was alive. Her heart was now failing, but she was still fighting!

Matilda was born via C-section on a beautiful winter morning. Much to everybody’s surprise—again—she was well enough to cry. We heard her weak little cry and cried ourselves. And yet again, God answered our prayers with a yes. She was baptized and granted everlasting healing right there in the operating room. What a comfort this would be for us in the days, months, and years ahead. She was quickly brought to the NICU at the large children’s hospital next door. For me, the day went by in post-op while the doctors and nurses tried to keep Matilda stable. Then, midafternoon, she suddenly crashed, and the nurses in the labor and delivery unit rushed me over to the NICU so I could see her. That trip seemed like a long wait while I pleaded with God to not take her yet. I had not yet seen her or held her; I had only briefly touched her hand before she was moved to the NICU. Once again, He answered my prayers with a yes. I saw and touched my beautiful daughter several times that afternoon and evening.

The next day Matilda had major heart surgery. The surgery was supposed to take six to eight hours but lasted eleven. The anxiety I felt was almost unbearable, and it only increased as the hours went by slowly. Again and again, I cried and pleaded with God that He would let me hold her before He took her home.

She spent the night in PICU in very critical condition. The next morning, we were called over by her doctors. The news was not good. She had had a massive brain hemorrhage during the surgery. There was nothing else

to be done for her. Her heart was too weak to function without machines, and her brain had shut down. We spent the day with her, waiting for my parents and our other daughter to arrive. Edith visited her sister for the only time. Once everyone else had arrived, we took turns holding her. Then all life support was discontinued. I held her in my arms while she took her last breath here on earth.

God had answered our prayers. Yes, we did get to hold her before she died. No, He did not heal her here on earth but took her home to heaven.

The days, weeks, and months that followed are a blur. There are a few clear memories here and there, but mostly they are foggy. Leaving the hospital without my baby was heartbreaking. And that feeling persisted as I spent the next days going to the funeral home to finalize the arrangements, seeing her before and during the visitation, watching her casket as it was carried into and out of the church by my father and her godfather, then seeing it lowered into the ground. The aching, empty arms. The pain so overwhelming that it was hard to breathe. *My baby's body is in a dark hole in the ground!* The tears and the questions to God finally came. My husband was there to listen, hold me, and wipe my tears. But there were no answers.

With the questions came anger, kindled by the fact that my milk for my sweet baby came in the night she died. *Why don't you answer me, my dear husband? My God? Why did You take her? Why did she have to be so sick?*

We had said our good-byes, left her in the PICU, and gone back to labor and delivery for one last night. And there it felt like my body had betrayed me. I had been pumping and pumping for my baby with no result, but now that she didn't need it anymore, my breasts were full of milk.

Why, oh why, God? Why do You have to be so cruel? If You are almighty, could You not have prevented this from happening?

Matilda's death was the ultimate blow, and I could not stop dwelling on it, questioning God about it, and being angry with Him because of it. I knew

the theologically correct answers to many of my questions: it is because of sin that she was so sick; Jesus has died and risen for her sickness and for all suffering; in Him we are all perfectly healed already, although not necessarily while we are here on earth; and so on. But that knowledge did not help me in my suffering when the unbearable pain made it difficult to breathe, when I didn't know how to survive the day. That knowledge only increased my anger.

Somehow the days and months went by. We lived through the pain every day, and we survived. I still don't know how. Our sweet Edith gave us a reason to get up in the morning and brought joy even to the darkest of days. Eleven months later I was pregnant again. We were so excited, only to meet more grief. The baby died at six weeks. On the one-year anniversary of Matilda's funeral, we lost baby Jesse.

We were back in the darkness, but this time we stayed busy with a new house and renovations. One month later I was pregnant again. This time I dared not hope. And sure enough, baby Jamie died at eight weeks.

We had lost three babies in fifteen short months. The pit was deeper and darker than ever, and the questions to God continued. Why, oh why do we have to lose not one, not two, but three babies? It's not fair. So many people have lots of children and never lose any. Why do we have to lose three? *Why do You do this to us?*

Why are You not answering?

Anger was my dominant emotion for a long time. Even simple comments such as "Praying for comfort and peace" made me angry because I felt that there was no room for peace. The pain was overwhelming. I felt like Rachel, refusing to be comforted because my children were no more (see Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:18).

I could not see or feel it at the time, but just as the Lord promised to restore Israel in Jeremiah 31, He would restore me and bring me comfort in His good time. As the months went by, my anger subsided a little when

I realized that peace is not a feeling; it is a state of being. We have peace with God because of what Christ has done for us. Even if I don't feel at peace, my relationship to God is not changed. I am His child because Christ's merits were given to me in my Baptism. No suffering or pain can take that away, regardless of how I feel.

Not only did I question God, but I also had much doubt. I didn't doubt His existence, but I did, very strongly, doubt His love toward me. (How could He love me if He sent me so much suffering?) I doubted my own faith. (What did I even believe anymore, when I was so angry and questioned Him so much?) My husband assured me that my cries and "whys" to God were signs of faith: if I didn't believe in Him, I wouldn't go to Him with my questions.

Slowly the darkness lessened. God did not give my unending questions direct and specific answers, but He continued to speak through the Word that my pastor husband preached. I didn't want to hear it; the words about His love and mercy were too painful. How can He be loving and merciful yet bring me so much pain? Does He not care that I'm in agony?

Church was the worst and hardest place to be. I cried through so many sermons and services. I could not sing or pray; I could not even utter the words of the Lord's Prayer.

But church was also the most restful place to be. I heard. I received. Even if those words brought me more pain, they did not put more burdens on me. I did not have to be stoic and pretend to be doing well. My church family sat with me in my grief and accepted me where I was. I did not have to try to glorify God in my losses. I was allowed to cry and lament to Him and bring Him all my questions. I didn't even have to pray because my loved ones prayed for me when I couldn't. Even there I was on the receiving end, just as I am in the Divine Service where He gives me His Word and His Supper. As with everything in my relationship with my Lord, I don't have to—and I can't—do anything. All I do is receive His grace and rest in that.

I began to hear God's answers again. And what I heard was that it is His love and His mercy that have given me this burden to bear. It is a severe mercy but a mercy nonetheless. He loves me and is teaching me how much He loves me, what He has done for me, and what I am in myself. Through the heavy burden of grief, I learn that I'm not strong, that I can't get through this by myself. His main purpose for this is not that I would become a better person or better mother or better Christian. That is not why He gave me this to bear.

I learn that trust in Him, as the First Commandment teaches, doesn't come naturally to me. No matter how hard I try, I can't learn to trust Him more, not for my salvation, and also not in His wisdom and love for me when He leads me through dark valleys. Because of sin, I don't trust God completely and perfectly as the Law demands. All I can do is to repent.

It is certainly true that He also works sanctification through my suffering so that I do become more thankful for the gifts He gives me, such as my daughter Edith. I also see how my sinful nature always shows its ugly face in all things. The good works I do in my vocations—and maybe even become better at—are just that: good works for my neighbors.

But the Lord primarily uses my suffering to show me how dependent I am on Him for my salvation and for everything else. I'm too weak, helpless, sinful, and angry with God. If I'm honest, I have to admit that I want nothing to do with Him. I have to confess that if I am to make it home to heaven to see Jesus and see my babies again, I have nothing to do with it. During my darkest days, hearing that I should lean on Jesus offers me no comfort. These words are not the Gospel; they're the Law, so I have another burden to bear when I hear that I have to do something. Because of my sinful nature, I can't lean on Him, hold on to Him, believe or trust in Him. He has to hold on to me. And He does. He doesn't let me go. In His mercy, He feeds me with His Word and His Supper even when I don't want it. And little by little, His Means of Grace give new life to my soul.

I have tasted God's love. I would like to tell you that it is always a rich,

delicious feast. But often, when watching my children suffer, I have to be satisfied with a tincture, just a taste. For the time being.

“Like a patient just waking up from surgery, I feel groggy. Pain. Hunger, yes. Some nausea. I am thirsty but leery of drinking too deep too fast. In and out, I am uncertain. At this point in my life, I cannot jump up and leap for joy. The sites of the Surgeon’s amputations still throb. He will have to watch my wounds for infection, I think, very closely indeed.”¹

There were, however, two questions I never asked God during those most painful months and years. I did not ask, “Where are You, God? Why have You abandoned me?” I wanted to accuse Him of that too, but I knew the answer. I had studied the doctrine of vocation. I knew that He was hiding behind those around me. He was caring for me, wiping my tears, and listening to my questions through my dear husband. He was loving me and giving me a reason to live through my sweet daughter. He was reminding me that I was not forgotten through my sister, who, from the other side of the big ocean, sent me a message almost every day for many months. He was in church with me and holding my hand while I was crying during sermons through the kind old lady and dear friend sitting next to me. He was feeding me through my friends who made freezer meals for me after we lost Jamie.

He was close by. I saw Him everywhere, and as painful as it was, it was also the only thing that brought me some comfort. In my darkest days, not even the Gospel brought me comfort, but this knowledge did, at least a little. So I finally learned that when we in our suffering cry, “Where are You, God?” we lift our eyes too high and look too far. He is very close, coming to us, caring for us, and loving us through those He has put in our lives. And He comes even closer in the Divine Service, where He gives us forgiveness, life, and salvation through our pastors when we receive His Son’s body and blood in our mouths.

Did this knowledge take away my pain and my questions? It didn’t seem

1 Schultz, *The Problem of Suffering*, 54.

to immediately, but God used time to lessen my pain, calm my fears, quiet my questions, and strengthen my faith in Him. Almost five years after we lost Matilda, the overwhelming pain is gone; only sadness and longing remain, and I no longer need to have all my “whys” answered. Jesus’ death and resurrection and my participation in that in my Baptism are enough. I know my babies are safely home, and I plead and beg that the Lord would keep me, my husband, and our other children in faith so we can join them one day.

Grief veils our vision. We don’t always see things as clearly as we might have before. As Kristina so eloquently put it in her reflection, she knew God was present and that He was “hiding behind” those around her. When we are bombarded with so many questions, doubts, and concerns in the midst of grief, we can’t always see that God is present, working, hearing our prayers, and answering the question of why He has become hidden to us. Yet He is constantly answering us through His Word, His presence in the Divine Service, and His people.

Grief can also make us forget or become deaf to what we have heard. We may already know the answers, but if you are like me, you will say several times throughout your journey, “Tell me again. I need to hear it again. Tell it to me a different way than before, even though you have already told me a thousand times. My head knows, but my heart needs to hear it again.”

Throughout this book, we will look to God’s Word and read it again and again to be reminded why God has allowed us to suffer and how He answers us and remains present, merciful, faithful, and compassionate to us in the midst of it all.

A SIMPLE UNDERSTANDING OF “WHY?”

1. **Our suffering is because of sin—not our sin specifically, just sin in general.** We are not immune to the effects of sin. It should not catch us off guard that we suffer in this life—yet it always does, and it always will. No matter how carefully we guard our lives, sin and death are always a present reality. And while we mourn the effects of sin and death, we also thank God for the joys that remain unscathed in our lives and for His faithfulness to us.
2. **We have Christ.** Christ is the atonement for our sin. When we suffer the effects of sin, we can look to the cross and know that there is the answer to all our questions. When we ask, “Why my baby?” God says, “Here, have My Son.” God made our sufferings temporary and gave us His Son so that we may live in joy in the last.
3. **We trust in God’s presence.** We can know God is present even in the silence of unanswered questions. While the silence may seem deafening at times, God promises us in His Word to be near the brokenhearted (Psalm 34:18). We can know that He is present with us in His Word and Sacraments and near us through the compassion of our neighbors.

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

The shock of death in the womb makes us acutely aware that our bodies are broken due to sin. The life and death that pass leave a mother not only with an awareness of her broken body and broken heart but with a plethora of unanswerable questions as well. “What was going on inside my womb for the time that I carried my baby?” “Was it caused by something I did or didn’t do?” Questions can torment a grieving and broken heart. And unanswered questions can produce guilt, doubt, and anger.

This is why it becomes so important for a Christian to know and understand that it is due to the fall into sin that we are left with broken bodies that sometimes surprise us by failing and falling apart. Our broken bodies, however, have another message to proclaim apart from “pitiful broken-down sinner.” Our broken bodies can remind us that restoration is coming, healing is coming, and wholeness is ours in Christ.

Open your Bible and read 1 Corinthians 15:51–58.

1. In verse 54, Paul writes, “When the perishable puts on the imperishable,” which indicates that there is a specific time that this happens. When is that time?
2. How does holding on to the hope of resurrection and victory that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ offer answers to our “why” questions?

One of the best examples in the Bible of unjust treatment and questioning is that of Job. Job is a natural biblical connection for when we suffer and ask, “Why?” However, reading the Book of Job for comfort is futile, as it is not written to comfort but to show how faith responds in the midst of trial. Job loses it all; then he is poorly comforted by family and friends, is told to forsake God and die beside his wife. Yet we do, somehow, find comfort in seeing him suffer so much, wrestle with God, and still be able to make the great confession we read at the end of the book. Job’s confession is an important anchor for all to cling

to in the midst of uncertainty and of asking, “Why?”

Read Job 19:23–26.

3. What are some of the significant points in Job’s confession?
4. Why would Christ be a comfort and an answer for Job’s “why” questions when considering the loss of his children, land, animals, and physical well-being?

Job’s confession and hope were sure and certain for him. After all the trials he had been through and after doubting himself and questioning God, he clings to the confession he gives in verses 25–26.

We see a similar proclamation in Revelation 21:3–5. Read it now.

5. At what point in our life, in the whole of the Bible, and in this passage in particular do we see God “dwelling” with man?
6. What are the promises in Revelation that our sinful flesh can cling to when facing the death of our children?

One of the most powerful stories in the Bible is that of the death of Lazarus. It shows us Christ most clearly as fully man, sharing in our earthly struggles, and fully God, bringing the dead back to life.

Read John 11:1–44.

7. In verse 21, we see Martha making her own confession of who and what she knows Christ to be and to be capable of. Taking into consideration the text from Revelation 21:3–5, what does Martha confess but fail to realize?
8. This pericope (specific reading for a day of the Church Year) shows us how death causes confusion and causes us to ask many questions. What is one of the questions asked in our text, and what is significant in Christ’s response? (Look at vv. 37, 40–42.)
9. According to the text, why did Christ allow Lazarus to die?
10. What caused Christ to weep, and why?

God Himself knows the never-ending interrogation that death

brings to its survivors. He knows full well that the wages of sin is death, and for that, He paid the price for us. While we sit in sackcloth, mourn, continually ask, “Why?” and challenge the many “what ifs” of our loss, Jesus responds in the same way He did when calling Lazarus from the tomb. He says to death itself: “Unbind him, and let him go” (John 11:44). He proclaims victory over death’s power by commanding it to release us and let us go as well. As true God, Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth, and He has the present power to fix all our earthly problems. Yet He waits, just as He did with Lazarus. He waits so we might know Him better, so we might learn to cling to His death and resurrection, His promises, and His healing. He gives us only one answer in the midst of questioning and grieving for our little ones, and that is Himself. The answer is Christ Jesus because it is He who has overcome sin, death, and the devil for us. It is Christ who freely offers us the same incorruptible flesh, put on us in the waters of Holy Baptism. Christ is the only answer because in this time, Christ is who we need most.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. What are some of the questions to which you desperately feel that you want answers in the midst of your loss?
2. How do you think having your questions fully answered would help you in your grieving?
3. Do the three points of study listed earlier (“A Simple Understanding of ‘Why?’”) address your questions, and if so, how?

HOMEWORK

Take some time to write out all the questions that came to mind in the midst of your suffering. Formulate each question in terms of struggle, then turn it into a prayer that acknowledges God as the answer and peace for each doubt and question. For each question, address God, write out your struggle, write what you seek from Him (e.g., peace,

pardon, comfort, and so on), and last, commend it to Christ.

Example

Address God: Heavenly Father,

Your struggle: I struggle daily with understanding what was medically wrong with my baby that (he or she) died before I could hold (him or her) and bring (him or her) to the waters of Holy Baptism.

What you seek: I trust that You know all things and that You are a merciful God, as You show us in Your Word. I entrust my cares and concerns to You in this time of grief. Give me peace and help me to always remember Your Son when I think about my own child, whom I long to hold in my arms and love.

Commend it to Christ: Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER

Gracious heavenly Father, You know all things and have answered all our doubts and questions of “Why?” by giving Your one and only Son to know our life of struggle and pain and to ultimately die for us in order to bring us back to You. When questions of “Why?” taunt us, help us to focus on the cross and the promise we hold that is the same for us as it was for Job:

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God. (Job 19:25–26)

Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN: “JESUS, LEAD THOU ON” (LSB 718)