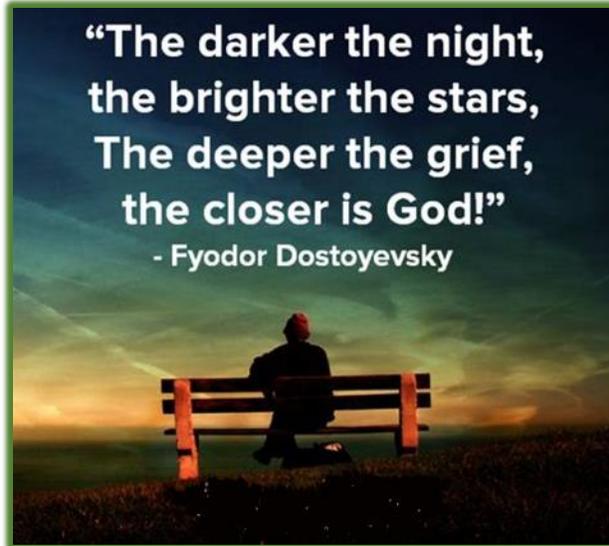


Grief and God's Plan

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**“The darker the night,
the brighter the stars,
The deeper the grief,
the closer is God!”**

- Fyodor Dostoyevsky

I was sitting in a motel room alone. Outside a tornado was raging across the sky. The motel office called and told me to come to the office to shelter in the recreation room. I didn't care. I wasn't going.

I was mad at God.

Three weeks before my sister called me and told me to come back home, my mother was dying. Cancer. It was

two weeks of hospital visits with my mother, time with my dad in the residential housing for hospital patients' families. Now, my mother was going back to our hometown in an ambulance to hospice care. Death was imminent.

“Why God! I'm mad! If you want her so bad take me, too!”

To the tornado with outstretched arms I yelled, “Come and get me! I dare you!”

I watched the tornado pass by the window in the field across the road. It was very close. Then, it quieted down outside and there I was, standing in the middle of the window. Alive. Unharmd. Alone with God and sobbing.

“I'm still mad God but I'm sorry. I'm sorry I was selfish. So, here I am God, what are you going to do with me? You must have a plan.”

I knew my mother was ready to go be with God. She was one of his angels. In those two weeks she said her goodbyes. She gave advice. She made plans for my dad. We held a sort of funeral with her in the hospital room. She smiled throughout the service and thanked us for our kind words. She told me to go

home and back to teaching my students. Then she slipped into a coma and was transported to hospice. Back at my house, I waited for the call that it was over. One day, I had this overwhelming feeling of loss. I called the hospice. It rang several times. When my brother-in-law answered, he told me she had just died. I knew it.

I was still mad at God but not in a destructive way. I knew I still had work to do for God but I would never be “home” again until my life is over because my mother wasn’t here on Earth. I went to confession and told the priest I was angry with God for taking my mother. He told me it wasn’t a sin to be angry with God as long as I used my anger to follow God’s plan for my life in a productive way. As time passed, grief eased, and I lost the anger. One day in mass, as my husband and I shared the peace of Christ with a kiss, I felt the wash of the Peace of Christ flow through my body. I knew I was following God’s plan, even if I didn’t understand it.

No more yelling at tornadoes and no more yelling at God. When I face challenges, I let that feeling of Christ’s Peace into my heart, and I pray. I hope I never get angry at God again but if I do, I know he won’t abandon me.

