

When You See No Relief For Your Pain

I was just on Facebook and a friend had posted that people should have to pass drug tests in order to receive welfare.

Then I sat down on the floor to fold underwear and was thinking about people doing drugs. (Us girls, we do tend to think on a round-about.)

My thoughts went back a few months to April and May, when I would wake up in the night with intense grief and stress. (You could read more here about my goings on this last year.)

And how all of a sudden I had compassion for people who turn to alcohol when life gets hard.

Because sometimes your heart hurts so much it makes you feel wild and desperate for relief.

In those heart-pressing moments of grief I longed for anesthesia. But in reasoning through this, I concluded that **followers of Christ do not anesthetize themselves.**

We don't mask the pain.

When our hearts are at a level 10 on the pain scale, we scream out for comfort. We run to arms –to Someone.

How do you know God is real? many people ask.

I will answer –because on the blackest nights of my life I have had someone with me. I have found comfort in the tenderness, strength, and hope of the living God.

I've tried different treatments to escape pain in the past –like eating chocolate or going shopping. ("Retail therapy" my sister-in-law calls it.) I've tried putting in a chick flick

to watch love and happiness. That's just the truth. But the chocolate gets swallowed. I shrink the new shirt I just bought in the dryer. The movie ends. All of these anesthetics wear off quickly, and then there is the stab of pain again.

But God's presence in suffering does not wear off. In fact, I am convinced that **the Lord is a gifted artist in the way he comforts his people** –surprising us individually with a balm of encouragement so intimate and well-timed that it feels like chocolate and a new shirt and a chick flick all at once.

It feels like being loved and cared for.

This is what waits for the raw heart that seeks God.

So I ask you –what pain are you experiencing today, and are you trying to soothe it with anything inferior to the comfort God offers?

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