

# Why Your Pain Is Not Meaningless

I left the writers retreat so that I could teach Spanish on Friday afternoon. With a few minutes to spare, I decided to swing into the church and get a hug from my husband. The parking lot was full, which was weird for a Friday when usually only my husband is there working on his sermon.

*I wonder what's going on, I thought.*

Soon I could see what was happening, and I groaned.

Pulling in to park on the side, I sat quietly in my car, as I could see military men with guns drawn. Two other men stood with an American flag spread open and taut, in front of a gathering of people under the front portico.

*Oh God, no. No. Not this.*

Only eight months ago our family had been on the receiving end of one of those flags, and for one second I thought I was going to crumple in the front seat.

*You know what this feels like,* the Spirit said quietly to my heart, and immediately I was calm.

*Pray,* He said.

So I prayed for the family and friends gathered around, that God would give them the strength for this most painful moment in the day of saying goodbye to their loved one.

I prayed for the widow—or whoever would receive that flag.

*Lord, strengthen her heart as she hears the guns fire, watches the slow folding of the flag, hears the click of military heels, and opens her hands to receive the honors due*

*her husband.*

*Comfort them, Lord. Comfort them in this day.*

And then it was over.

I talked to my husband afterward and found out I knew the elderly couple. **Different than giving flowers or a casserole,** God had allowed me to minister quietly to this widow's heart, in a moment in which she most needed it.

All of this in the same weekend in which I am attending a writers conference in a mansion, with the Lord whispering to my heart, *Your dad is with me. He used to live in poverty as a child, with no father to love him, but now he is with me in a beautiful place with his own special room. And someday you will be here with us.*

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Cor. 1:3-4, NIV)*

Praise be.



As I write this, it's Sunday morning. I'm still in the cozy library room of the mansion, and I have a message for you:

Pain is not meaningless.

**GOD WANTS TO FILL YOU WITH  
COMFORT—SO MUCH THAT YOU CAN PULL**

# OUT THE FREEZER BAGGIES AND RUBBERMAIDS TO SEND SOME COMFORT HOME WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

In the trials you face this week, will you look to the Father of compassion in expectation of comfort?

And when He comforts you in His own intimate way, will you stand ready to pour out that comfort onto the hurting souls God puts in your path?

**Christy Fitzwater** *is the author of A Study of Psalm 25: Seven Actions to Take When Life Gets Hard. She is a blogger, pastor's wife and mom of two teenagers who resides in Montana. Visit for more information about her ministry.*