

“I Don’t Know What To Say!”

“No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.” Job 2:13 (NIV)

A wonderful Christian man was in deep sorrow over his little boy in the cancer unit of a hospital. He would lose all 3 of his sons to various forms of tragedy but the suffering he saw in the eyes of his youngest son really tore him apart.

The father was a Christian man known to many people for his wonderful ministry to others. How could anyone offer comfort to a person who knew their Bible so well and had ministered so ably to others from it?

The father had confessed that if one more person quoted Romans 8:28 to him he would choke them. That verse reads as follows, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.” (NIV). The man did not need any more assurances of God’s presence and sovereignty in life’s issues. He was looking for something else.

People in pain are not always looking for answers when they ask, “Why?”. What they are trying to say is that this does not make sense. They are giving ex-

pression to the thought that the problem of pain cannot be adequately addressed. Human reason fails us when we seek to find answers to some events in life.

The father of the little boy mentioned above was riding the elevator down from his son’s room one day and a student nurse who had been attending his son happened to ride down with him. She felt she had to say something to the sorrowful father and commented, “Sir, I just do not know what to say.” The father responded, “That is exactly right.” Sometimes in grieving with someone there really is nothing to say.

When someone hurts extremely, we should not rush in and try to justify God or suggest He has nothing to do with the difficulty they are facing. The Lord can exonerate Himself when and if He so desires. Do not seek to make excuses for the Almighty.

The first reaction of Job’s comforters on seeing his extreme suffering is what we read in our verse today. They kept their mouths shut and wept with him. That is

all they did for a week and it was wonderful.

Perhaps one reason that people without significant problems in life avoid coming into contact with people in pain is because they do not know what to say about the sorrow the other person is feeling. Not knowing what to say causes them to stay away from the scene of adversity.

I suggest that when you have opportunity, just go to the home of suffering, weep if you can or should, put a comforting arm around the one in pain, tell them you care, and leave quietly.

Do not, under any circumstances, tell them you understand their sorrow. Regardless of how you have suffered you do not know their pain. Point them to the Man of sorrows (Isaiah 53:3), our Lord Jesus, and urge them to make their complaint to Him. He invites all who are struggling to come and find rest with Him.