



DAY 17

Is Anyone Listening

Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

When I was volun-told by Katie Baird that I should write a Lenten devotional, and I saw the prompts, I thought immediately that I would be avoiding the topic "a time I felt God wasn't listening." This is something I currently am going through, following the very recent loss of my Mom to a quick and cruel battle with pancreatic cancer. The loss happened so quickly that I didn't even have time to process the fact that she had cancer. And then she was gone.

However, the more I sat and thought about it, even though this is very raw and fresh, I'm choosing to be vulnerable. I can't say my feelings are resolved, or that I feel like I forgive God for everything that happened, but maybe writing it down will help me get to that point. For a long time, before she passed, I was in the bargaining stage of grief. Maybe if I cried hard enough, or prayed hard enough, that it would make the situation all a bad dream. But it didn't work, so the only conclusion is that there was nobody listening to me.

No higher power cared that I was losing my Mom, the kindest and gentlest soul. Someone I still don't know how to live without. I wish this story had a satisfying ending, that I had an epiphany through prayer and realized that there is a greater purpose behind this. I'm not there, and I don't know when or if I will be. It certainly feels impossible right now.

However, one thing I do know is that I was-- and am-- surrounded by love as I move through this difficult time. Between church friends, family, my sorority sisters, my coworkers, my students, and even strangers, there hasn't been one moment that I felt unsupported or alone. And maybe that's where the whole "answered prayers" thing comes from-- the people God sends to support you in times of struggle. On the days I feel the most down, and I feel like I'm walking a tightrope of grief and am so close to tipping over the edge, I remind myself of the people around me, who made meals, cleaned my house, gave a hug, sent a card, or checked in. I may not ever know how or why this happened, or why God allowed me to go through this struggle, but I do know that I am never alone.

Creator God, I give my thanks for friendship and love. Help us all to understand your will, hear your voice, and feel your presence in the dark and difficult times in our lives. Amen.

- Ally Bozeka