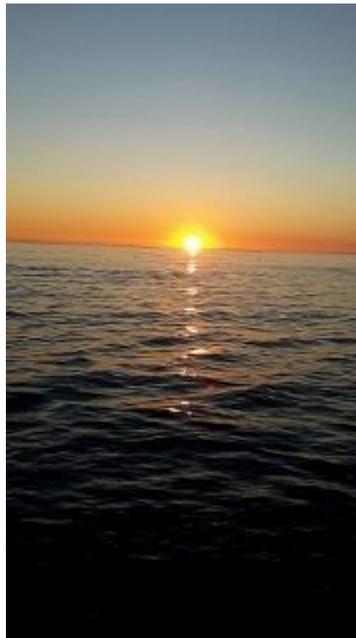


**Waiting for God: In the fourth quarter -  
maybe inside the two-minute warning**

Gary Heartsill

*The old order changeth yielding place to new,  
And God fulfills himself in many ways,  
Least one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself; what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of.*

Alfred Tennyson  
*The Passing of Arthur*  
Lines 407-416<sup>1</sup>



Jeanne, Ruth, and roses<sup>2</sup>

2015

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<sup>1</sup> Tennyson, Alfred. (1929). *The Idylls of the King: The passing of Arthur*. In Schweikert, H. C., Lowe, M. E., & Miller, H. A. Jr. (Eds.), *Adventures in prose and poetry* (pp. 629-632). New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Co.

<sup>2</sup> Kelly and Lisa took this Pacific picture 1/17/2015 during their ceremony for Jeanne's remains to join her mother Ruth.

Guidance for reading this paper

This note is to point out this paper is mostly written for me, Kelly, and Lisa - with maybe Jaime.

I have pretty well met the tasks I had set up to do except the paper is not formatted for a college paper or for one in seminary - it is designed to get me past some hang ups with the emotional reality of Jeanne dying and reconcile my intellectual reality with my emotions. At this point most of the work is done and I now want to share the conclusions.

You will find out I have moved more toward the center for reconciling Jeanne's death and where she went and when we will get to see her and tell her how much she is missed and to say (for me) "I am sorry." What this means is one can get to the cross and die an honorable death - a happy death - by going through what John teaches or what the other three Gospels teach. Both lead to the cross.

Of course, we are all different and the grief is a personal thing as this paper will say. It is noted we are all coming from a different perspective meaning from the loss of a wife and the loss of a mother...although similar we have discussed there is a big difference which none of it take away from the wonderful wife and mother Jeanne was.

If this were a book I would dedicate it to you two girls as I have found out you two love her and miss her every bit as much as I do so I am going to dedicate it to you two anyway. I really do love you girls. You are the closest thing to being Jeanne.

With tears in my ole eyes, I say thanks. I hope this helps us all.

gh

Please note there are different sections and sometimes the notes are repeated (this is the first of two introductions for instance). Just read it through and enjoy. There are some good quotes I have dug up for all of us and it just makes loving and missing Jeanne that much more authentic as we are working on our own personal lives, while living and dying.

A Family Funeral Service for Grammy

November 1, 2014 Rose Hill, Ardmore, OK

Scripture

O.T. - The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he carried me out by his spirit and put me down in a plain full of bones. He said to me, 'Man, can these bones live again?' I answered, 'Only thou knowest that, Lord God.' This is the word of the Lord God to these bones: 'I will put spirit into you, and you shall live! I am the Lord'...I began to prophesy as he had bidden me, and there was a rustling sound and the bones fitted themselves together. These are the words of the Lord God: 'Come, O wind, come from every quarter and breathe into these slain, that they may come to life'...breath came into them; they came to life and rose to their feet, a mighty host.

N.T. - Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit.

Committal

Unto Almighty God we commend the soul of our precious Jeanne departed, and we commit her ashes at this resting place; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of her already resurrection and into her life eternal, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Judge of the world.

I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors.

Compilations

Cherishing memories that are forever sacred, sustained by a faith that is stronger than death, and comforted by the hope of a life that shall endless be, all that is mortal of our Jeanne, we therefore return to the elements and deposit at this resting place, amidst these beautiful surroundings of nature, in the assurance if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, but eternal in His sight forever.

A moment of silenceClosing Prayer

Dear God, be with us now as wait to be with you. We know our job here is not yet done. Grammy finished early and we just say thanks because we do not know why but we know we will find out when our time comes. The Lord Giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord....

We say **Hallelujah! Hallelujah!** for Jeanne. She is in the arms of Jesus and in the bosom of God. We are happy for her. (We pray to her to say hi to Ruth and Ralph, Hobart and Sadye, E. C. and Mary Louise...and there are more.)

Dear God, now be with us in our grieving. (Be with us in this closing - but never goodbye - with Jeanne.) Be with us and help us to live life abundantly and fully and help us be authentic with our lives. Help us, we beseech thee...Help Kelly love her family and friends, help Lisa love her family and her squirrels, and help me love my family and my riflemen. Thank you Jesus for this time at the grave, with Jeanne, with one another, and YOU. Bless this tombstone knowing and remembering there is one more front date (and two on the back) to add. **Amen and Amen**

### **Somewhere <between> the *No Longer* and the *Not Yet***

This paper is my attempt to clarify, justify, and finally reconcile some of the theological, philosophical, and existential issues about death and dying. The motivation to pen this is due to my wife Jeanne passing away almost a year ago. I am classifying this as a high-grief death as it has been characterized by intense emotional physical reaction, which is "usually associated with normal grief"<sup>3</sup> (DeSpelder & Strickland, p. 219). Both of my daughters, by the way, have experienced this same reaction. Although my critical and basic assumptions about death and dying have not changed for about 50 years, some of the particular church and Biblical beliefs that have surfaced after her death have given me middle of the night heartburn and little daytime relief from the reoccurrence and surge of/with grieve expression. Therefore, this personal and reverent theandric<sup>4</sup> essay is designed to help calm my broken heart and aid my worried mind about Jeanne's death and give me purposeful thought about my own death.

The 50 year comment above is an intellectual reality (IR) comment I have been comfortable with for myself, church, and life. This reality held up pretty well when Jeanne died but the emotional reality (ER) I have found out, will not stand up in the heat/pressure/situation. With time during the last few months I have been able to test the emotional reality with a deeper look into the intellectual reality. What this means I had, so to speak, to take my emotions into the deep water where my intellect was and let them swim together. The two must be reconciled.

An example of the emotional questions that would not swim in deep water are:

- (a) Why did she die after 99 days - most of which were in ICU?
- (b) What if we had gotten her through the illness?
- (c) Where is she now?

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<sup>3</sup> DeSplender, Lynne. A., & Strickland, Albert L. (1987). *The last dance: Encountering death and dying* (2nd ed.) Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

<sup>4</sup> theandric - relating to the divine and human or joint operation.

- (d) Why does everyday "feel like she died yesterday"?
- (e) When (if ever) will I be able to hold her in my arms again?
- (f) How come I didn't die first?
- (g) When should I expect the next shoe fall?

From the subtitle "Somewhere <between> the *No Longer* and the *Not Yet*" the operative words are No Longer for yesterday, Not Yet for tomorrow, and Between is NOW or the present. This existential enlightenment was made clear to me in the late '60s with the Ecumenical Institute and using the idea of living in the present has stuck with me theologically, philosophically, and ontologically; meaning, it is the way of life - or my perception of it. The Gospel of St. John has said this best - especially since I got back from Korea in '69 - and has been renewed having audited a Perkins School of Theology class this last fall on the Gospel of John, or The Fourth Gospel (FG). The author's theme of NOW plays well with both my IR and ER and fits in really well with my existentialism. The FG in about 14 verses promotes "the hour is here," "I am he," "whoever believes in me has eternal life," and "I came that they may have life." The term for this is "realized eschatology." This theme will cement and blend my emotional wellness. This theme will guide me through the questions on life - and dying.

Of late, my emotional awareness has been influenced by the literalists who fundamentally promote what most of the Christians in our society promote/believe/espouse with reference to issues like there will be no wives and husbands in heaven, heaven talk in general, "I go to prepare a place for you," "on the last day," and the second coming of Jesus. These comments come from the Synoptic Gospels, promoted by Paul, and are promoted from the Apocalyptic views in the Bible. So, because of me being a Methodist I cannot be accused of "bibliolatry,

inerrancy, literalism, or fundamentalism"<sup>5</sup> (Willimon, p. 96). So, I reject these views and will promote in this paper the bottom line that will glue and cement my IR with ER the verse where Jesus says to Martha **"I am the resurrection...Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die"** ( John 11:23-26).

### **The 99 days in hospital**

If Jeanne had died a few years ago or maybe had died quite suddenly, I have my doubts if my grievance would have been as critically severe as it is now - even after a year since she died. The reason for this is I had a chance to fall in love with her again right after she went to hospital. I realized the importance, the severity, the tragedy of our relationship and what my part played in this time of sickness. Toward the end I apologized for my failures with her and us and asked for her forgiveness - and I told her the playing field was level. All was forgiven and then, as I had been doing since early in 99 days steadfastly bucked up to getting her well, getting her to snap out of it, getting her to where she could get off the ventilator and talk again. Her last words to me ten days into this were "We will hold hands and grow old together."

We worked pulling us all through the key hole to get her well - and did! - for about 92 days and then she crashed. The next seven days were pulling us all - including her of course - back the other way through the key hole to let her - to watch her - to help her die.

Now, looking back, and this is where it really sucks for me, I missed it. I missed paying attention to the last years. Ok, to go back and have that to do over...again, I was hoping all along to start over when she got home I (bleeping) well know what to pay attention to this time.

Of course, there are a thousand things - just holding her hand, the car door, the vacuum cleaner, smiling, looking at her, asking her, listening to her, loving her - treating her like the woman of my life. Oh God...no one will ever know how much - ever!

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<sup>5</sup> Willimon, William. H. (1990). Why I am a United Methodist. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

The issue no one (save my girls) "seems" to understand, better: I cannot convince anyone to understand that life is slipping by and if you miss loving your wife now and she dies, she is gone - you will have missed it...you (bleeping) missed it.

I have covered/told this story before about the painting she finished in 2010 with the crown of thorns and with the face of a little girl, the cross, drops of blood, a shepherd with sheep, some dark color at the bottom, and some beautiful light color at the top. After her service (the girls and Tommy nailed it for the 400 people in attendance) actually a couple of days afterward I was putting the picture back up on the wall and then I saw where the face of the little girl came from. It was Jeanne. She is looking up talking to God. I know. I saw her early one morning in rehab - same expression on her face - about 10 days before she died. And when I saw the painted face after putting the picture back up I crashed...I will never get over how much, how hard, that painting hit me. She titled it "Thank you!" But there is more. There is another face in her painting.

So, why didn't I sit down with her in 2010 and ask her about the light and the dark and the faces? This is what hurts today (and will forever).

And the whys go on.

I missed it.

I missed loving Jeanne.

And now she is gone.

## Laments

Rather than take the time to write and incorporate this into my paper I want to follow somewhat like the author did in the book that Jaime recommended to us at supper on Wednesday.<sup>6</sup> Here are some of his sayings that fit the way I have felt and feel about Jeanne's loss - I have changed the he's to she's.

"Rather often I am asked whether the grief remains as intense as when I wrote. The answer is, No. The wound is no longer raw. But it has not disappeared. That is as it should be. If she was worth loving, she is worth grieving over. Grief is existential testimony to the worth of the one loved. That worth abides.

"So I own my grief. I do not try to put it behind me, to get over it, to forget it. I do not try to *dis-*own it. If someone asks, 'Who are you, tell me about yourself,' I say - not immediately, but shortly - 'I am one who lost my wife' " (pp. 5-6).

"I did not know how much I loved her until she was gone.

"Death is the great leveller [sic], so our writers have always told us. Of course they are right. But they have neglected to mention the uniqueness of each death - and the solitude of suffering which accompanies that uniqueness. We say, 'I know how you are feeling.' But we don't" (p. 25).

"Nothing fills the void of her absence. She's not replaceable. I can't go out and get another just like her" (p. 32).

"My wife is gone. Only a hole remains, a void, a gap, never to be filled" (p. 33).

"When someone loved leaves home, home becomes a mere house" (p. 51).

"What do I do with my God-forgiven regrets?...I shall live with them...And I shall allow them to sharpen the vision and intensify the hope for that Great Day coming when I can throw myself into her arms and say, 'I am sorry.' The God of love will surely grant me such a day" (p. 65).

"Have you changed, someone asked...He meant whether my character has changed...I never knew that sorrow could be like this...Each person's suffering has its own quality. No outsider can fully enter it...And I know now about helplessness - of what to do when there is nothing to do. I have learned coping...there are two things with which we must cope: the evil in our hearts and death. Everyone knows that there is no technology for overcoming death. Death is left for God's overcoming. I have changed, yes. For the better, I do not doubt. But without a moment's hesitation I would exchange those changes for Jeanne back" (pp. 72-73).

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<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Wolterstorff. (1987). Lament for a son. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

### Back to my roots - to get to NOW

The life which thou seekest thou wilt not find;  
 For when the gods created mankind,  
 They allotted death to mankind.  
 ...(Therefore) let thy belly be full;  
 Day and night be thou merry;  
 Make every day a day of rejoicing  
 ...This is the lot of mankind.<sup>7</sup>

Sheldon Kopp says "The oldest surviving work of fiction is the *Epic of Gilgamesh*...about four thousand years ago, near the beginning of civilization in Mesopotamia" (p. 23). Gilgamesh in this poem is told by the barmaid Siduri about the hopelessness of his adventure and quest for the meaning of life. Gilgamesh realizes that someday he will die and nothing can save him from dying. As a psychotherapist Kopp helps other 'pilgrims' in their search for the meaning of life. They ask "Why did all this happen to me?" His answer is "The meaning of life can be revealed but never explained. The point is that *there is no point*." Kopp now begins to answer some of the questions in this paper. "The central fact of my own life is my death. After a while it will come to nothing...The imminence of my own death is the pivot around which things turn. This makes what is going on NOW all that counts (upper case mine). All relations are temporary, but it is so terribly hard with my wife...the people whom I love most, it's so terribly hard to remember that we have so little time...Too often, I forget that I am dying" (pp. 30-31).

Kopp discusses another adventure from John Bunyan's book *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Christian is a "man on the march" and "is more committed to the going than the getting there"<sup>8</sup> (p. 92). To show how well this fits in with my existentialism, the Kopp exact quote is:

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<sup>7</sup> Heidel, A. (Ed. and Trans.). (1946). The Gilgamesh Epic. In W. H. McNeill & J. W. Sedlar (Eds.) *The origins of civilization*. (1968). (pp. 78-152). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Kopp, Sheldon B. (1972). *If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him! The pilgrimage of psychotherapy patients*. Ben Lomond, CA: Science and Behavior Books.

"Latter-day Christian Existentialists have illuminated this distinction, by pointing out that being 'good' in order to achieve the future rewards of Heaven is a pietistic striving characterized more by pride than by virtue. The kingdom is come. It is here, now, at each given moment for each of us. It need only be accepted to be achieved. Each moment of Salvation must be encountered for itself as part of the spiritual journey. But we do not get to keep it forever. We do not get to stay in the Kingdom of God, except as we spend our lives on the road. Eternity does not mean 'forever.' Eternity means beyond time. If we live as pilgrims, then at each moment of revelation, we step out of History and into Nature. The Kingdom is come for those who would grasp it, but at each moment, it must be regrasped, and then at the next moment regrasped once more. The openness to salvation must be reasserted again and again and again. The only way to be saved is to spend your lifetime on a pilgrimage...Like Bunyan's pilgrim...It is the journey itself that is his salvation" (pp. 92-93).

So, where are we? What does Gilgamesh and Christian have to do with reconciling Intellectual Reality and Emotional Reality? Are any questions being answered? This back in the books review, these books that got me here in the first place are being washed in the deep waters of my emotions after the loss of a loved one. So far my appropriation of Jeanne's death is going to help me with mine. If I can accept my death then I can accept her death. Yes, it is working.

Before I move from Kopp I must list a few items from his Eschatological List in his Epilogue:

1. "This is it!
2. There are not hidden meanings.
3. You can't get there from here, and besides there's no place else to go.
4. We are already dying, and we will be dead for a long time.
5. Nothing lasts.
6. There is no way of getting all you want.
7. You can't have anything unless you let go of it.
8. You only get to keep what you give away.
9. There is no particular reason why you lost out on some things.
10. The world is not necessarily just. Being good often does not pay off and there is no compensation for misfortune.
13. You don't really control anything.
14. You can't make anyone love you.
27. Each of us is ultimately alone.
29. Love is not enough, but it sure helps.
30. We have only ourselves, and one another. That may not be much, but that's all there is.
31. How strange, that so often, it all seems worth it.
39. The only victory lies in surrender to oneself.
41. You are free to do whatever you like. You need only face the consequences" (pp. 166-167).

### **For those of us who want life instead of death**

There is a little book in my library that has not been touched (well, opened, or read) for about 35 years. I had skimmed it but not really read it - until now. This little theology book<sup>9</sup> is holding the tension between intellect and emotion for me. I probably would never have ever read it again if Jeanne had not died, but the good news is this book will be referenced more than once in this paper as I now have the keys to seeing, holding, and being with Jeanne again...in short, Jesus said to Martha "the most beautiful and comforting words that has ever been spoken in the presence of death: **I am the resurrection (and the life)...whoever lives and believes in me shall never die**...In those words Christ reveals the glorious truth that it is possible for a human being to be forever beyond the reach of death" (p. 47).

Although Jesus corrected Martha's Apocalyptic comment about "the last day" in verse 24 with his "now" proclamation notice, the reference from Sandra Schneiders as she speaks of transcending death, the crisis of death, and then tells us to focus on our own deaths. "Jesus challenges Martha with the revelatory word that must finally be accepted by anyone who wishes to belong to Jesus (see 11:25-26): that he is the resurrection and the life and that the eternal life he gives to his disciples transcends physical death without abolishing it. This must be believed in and through the crises experience of death, that of others and finally one's own. Jesus asks Martha for a total acceptance of his self-revelation and its implications for her: '**Do you believe this?**' "<sup>10</sup> (p. 106).

The little library book says: "Why did Christ allow Lazarus to die...It was not because He was unable to heal Lazarus...We sometimes doubt God's ability to meet our particular situation...But God is always sufficient. With just one word Christ could have saved Lazarus.

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<sup>9</sup> Allen, Charles L. (1959). *When you lose a loved one*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company.

<sup>10</sup> Schneiders, Sandra M. (2003). *Written that you might believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company.

Why didn't He do it?" (p. 42). Allen now declares something I felt was shocking. He answers the question with an answer we could end this paper with (but we won't). Allen says: "I don't know. I just do not know...If we knew all the answers, we would not need faith. Faith takes up where sight leaves off" (p. 43).

So it is, I bow to this answer . We don't have the answers and must go on faith. For sure we can quote everybody in the world and still not have the answer because no one really knows. We won't know until we go face to face with God. And it is at this point I want to spend some time with Allen because I like his comments and his faith discussion.

He mentions Fanny Crosby who was blind from birth and one of the best song (hymn) writers who wrote perhaps her finest song: "Some day the silver cord will break, and I no more as now shall sing; but O the joy when I shall wake, within the palace of the King. And I shall *see* Him face to face" (p. 24). She finally would be able to see.

Right now some of the questions I have been dealing with can be answered with "**I don't know.**"

*(a) Why did she die after 99 days - most of which were in ICU?* "Some day the silver cord will break...and I shall see Him face to face" **and ask Him myself why she spend 99 days dying the way she did.** For sure, we have gone over and over this. But, "**I don't know.**" My worse tearful recollections are seeing her suffer in the hospital - no way to erase or forget what she went through.

Then these two questions *(g) When should I expect the next shoe fall?* and *(f) How come I didn't die first?* both have the same answer "**I don't know**" but will say I still have a task to do and this may answer both. As Richard Bach<sup>11</sup> says:

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Bach. (1977). *Illusions: The adventures of a reluctant Messiah*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press.

Here is  
a test to find  
whether your mission on earth  
is finished:

**I**f you're alive  
it isn't.

We have fretted over the question of

(b) What if we had gotten her through the illness?

We have spent a lot of time trying to come up with justifying our answers but Allen tells the story below that more or less answers the question best. He knew one of the godliest women he had ever known:

"Always I noted how careful she was to close her prayer asking God not to grant our request unless it was best. One day I asked her why she was so careful at that point. She told me the story of her husband. He had a heart attack. The doctor came and did all he could but it was a losing battle. The doctor was listening to his heart and then quietly said, 'He is gone.' The children became almost hysterical and said, 'Mama, pray, Mama pray.' Quickly she knelt and said, 'Lord, bring him back to life.' He opened his eyes, his breathing became regular, he lived for nine years more. But those nine years were for him so painful and unhappy that no less than a thousand times did she regret that God answered her prayer...we do not know all the facts. As the old song tells us:

Not now, but in the coming years,  
It may be in the better land:  
We'll read the meaning of our tears,  
And there, some time, we'll understand.

"For a loved one to die is a heartbreaking experience. But for that one to live might be worse, very much worse. Who but God really knows? Thus let us not judge God until all facts are before us" (pp. 55-56).

The operative words of Allen giving me peace are "We'll read the meaning of our tears," and "Who but God really knows?" Allen also says some comforting words for those of us who have experienced "When a loved one has died" and this helps with question

(d) Why does everyday "feel like she died yesterday"?

Allen says "Our loved ones become inexpressibly precious to us...[She] is gone and we are left stunned and heartbroken...We say...'That one whom I loved is dead.' It is such a cold, hopeless thing to realize" (p. 17)

"Then, out of the very depths of our despair, like the melody of music coming from a mighty organ, like the refreshing sound of rippling waters, comes that marvelous declaration of our Lord, **'I am the resurrection...he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live: And who soever liveth and believeth in me shall never die'** (John 11:25-26).

Then we know! We *know* we have not lost our loved ones who have died. We have been separated, and so long as we live there will be an empty place left in our hearts. To some extent, the loneliness will always be there. But when we really know that one is not forever lost, it does take away the sorrow" (pp. 17-18). [read the last line again!...]

(c) Where is she now?

(e) When (if ever) will I be able to hold her in my arms again?

These two questions is saving the best for the last - at least discussing what Allen has to say about *When you lose a loved one*. He ends his book talking about heaven and Lazarus. He asks why Jesus did not tell us more about heaven and his answer is "there are no words in any language which can convey a true picture of the next life"...and "it would have utterly spoiled this life for us." He concludes by suggesting "death is not a monster to be feared. It is the greatest blessing God has prepared for us" (pp. 57-58). So now we have hope. We have a place to go when we die. Most people will call this place heaven and that is just fine. He refers heaven also as "the other side" and this is ok too; however, we all should agree we will be with the Father. As we read at Jeanne's grave site service "She is in the arms of Jesus and in the bosom of God." This is quite good enough for me...and my hopes for us. Then we will see her and I will be able to hold her in my arms again. This is the hope that is sustaining me now...Thank you Jesus!

Allen suggests, while using Lazarus as the example of what Jesus foretold about his dying, there are "three great truths concerning life after death"<sup>12</sup> (p. 59). For "(1) Lazarus was living independently of the physical body he had on earth. This means that our physical bodies are not essential to our continued life"...(2) "Those on the other side can hear those on this side. When Jesus called, Lazarus heard" (p. 60)...(3) "Though our bodies are different, we are the same people on the other side as we are on this side...On the authority of Christ, there is not the slightest doubt but that we will see and know and love each other again." He then brings up the issue I complained about earlier about no marriages in heaven and Allen helps me with these words: "Marriage is a physical relationship and in heaven we will have spiritual bodies. The problems we think of in regard to the next life have all been worked out by God. We can trust Him to provide the right answers" (pp. 60-61). Can we now say again our words from the grave site " **Hallelujah! Hallelujah!** for Jeanne? Can we not say the same for us in our living, loving, and dying today? Answer: "You betcha!"

For the closing on Allen, noting I do have more comments to add to his words from some more commentators, the first scripture used in the first paragraph in this section on page 17 (your book page 25) again from John 11:25-26 "**I am the resurrection...**" is used nine times in his first book of 61 pages. Would make a good tattoo wouldn't it? (yes, only in Greek, of course.)

As a review:

- (a) Why did she die after 99 days - most of which were in ICU? "**I don't know**"
- (b) What if we had gotten her through the illness? **But for that one to live might be worse, very much worse.**
- (c) Where is she now? **She is in the arms of Jesus and in the bosom of God.**

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<sup>12</sup> Allen, Charles L. (1974). *When you loose a loved one* (with poems by Helen Steiner Rice). Grand Rapids, MI: Revell. You will find these truths on page 105 or your copy (note to my girls) of this book as Helen Rice has added a few pages with her poems .

(d) Why does everyday "feel like she died yesterday"? **But when we really know that one is not forever lost, it does take away the sorrow.**

(e) When (if ever) will I be able to hold her in my arms again? **When I am in the bosom of God.**

(f) How come I didn't die first? **"I don't know" But I am still alive to finish my mission!**

(g) When should I expect the next shoe fall? **"I don't know" But I am still alive to finish my mission!**

Well, at this time I feel pretty good about these answers in spite of having some anxiety about getting my mission done as I do not know how much time I have left - but I am motivated to writing my papers, being a Monk, shooting with my Riflemen, finishing the stuff around the house, being with my kids and grandkids - and enjoying life as much as I can without Jeanne.

#### Fini

*No.*

*It can't be.*

*It just can't be.*

*Someone I love is gone  
and my life is shattered  
into a million pieces.*

*I want everything back  
the way it used to be.  
God, are you there?  
Are you listening?*

*I want my loved one back.  
I'm not ready  
to let go.<sup>13</sup>*

*No one knows  
the tears still inside me.<sup>14</sup>  
People think it's all past.  
They think I'm all better.*

*Every once in a while  
I think, I hope, I pray  
that things will be better too.*

*But then I remember.  
And the pain floods back,  
and the bottom falls out,  
and I fall and I fall.*

*And I know once again  
that things aren't all better.  
My loved one is gone,  
and I cry alone.*

*How much longer, God?  
How long does this last?*

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<sup>13</sup> Kenneth C. Haugk. (2004). A time to grieve: Journeying through grief - Book 1 (p. 2). St. Louis, MO: Stephen Ministries.

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<sup>14</sup> Kenneth C. Haugk. (2004). Finding hope and healing: Journeying through grief - Book 3 (p. 2). St. Louis, MO: Stephen Ministries.