

Wolterstorff helped me say that the miscarriages were ugly. But the message of hope in his Requiem wasn't enough. Perhaps I wasn't able to hear it. I couldn't reconcile my conflicting emotions. In the midst of the uncertainty before the miscarriage I had often felt resignation and despair. Had I given up too soon? Could I have done more to try and love my second child during those three uncertain weeks? Could I have done more to comfort and support Kristine, and so avoid our frequently tense discussions? I still needed a voice for my confusion. Rich Mullins gave me this voice by helping me say simply that *"I do not understand what is happening."*

HARD TO GET³

You who live in heaven—hear the prayers of those of us who live on earth. Who are afraid of being left by those we love and who get hardened by the hurt. Do you remember when you lived down here where we all scrape to find the faith to ask for daily bread. Did you forget about us after you had flown away? Well I memorized every word you said. Still I'm so scared I'm holding my breath while you're up there just playing hard to get.

You who live in radiance—hear the prayers of those of us who live in skin. We have a love that's not as perfect as yours was—still we do love now and then. Did you ever know loneliness—did you ever know need? Do you remember just how long a night can get when you are barely holding on and your friends fall asleep, and don't see the blood that's running in your sweat? Will those who mourn be left uncomfortable while you're up there just playing hard to get?

I know you bore our sorrows. I know you feel our pain. I know it would not hurt any less even if it could be explained. I know I am only lashing out at the One who loves me most. And after I have figured this, somehow all I really need to know is if you who live in eternity hear the prayers of those of us who live in time?

We can't see what's ahead and we cannot get free of what we've left behind. I'm reeling from these voices that keep screaming in my ears. All these words of shame and doubt, blame and regret. I can't see how you're leading me unless you led me here where I'm lost enough to let myself be led. And so you've been here all along I guess. It's just your ways and you are just plain hard to get.

I think that more than anything else, I just wanted to forget. The broken dreams of parenthood. The tension with Kristine before the miscarriage became final. The fact that even in the midst of growing hope of parenthood, there were times I didn't want to become a father. The question of whether I could have, or should have, loved more during the uncertainty of the second miscarriage. Even though I knew there were positive things that happened during both pregnancies, their memories hurt too much. I didn't want to remember them.

David Adam helped me face this pain. Wolterstorff's reflections on the suffering servant offered hope because there was a time in the past when Christ suffered. Adam offered something different. He gave the image of Christ walking with me in the present, through the conflicted experiences of this miscarriage. He gave the image of Christ physically underneath me, lifting me up from the despair and confusion that weighed me down. The story of Aslan in my first letter provided an image of Christ beside me, keeping me out of the valley of despair. Adam's images of Christ underneath me stopping me from sinking, and before me helping me move forward gave me the courage to remember again.

CHRIST BEFORE ME⁴

Christ, you enter through the door of the past with
 Your love and forgiveness.
 You can come where doors are closed and bring light and peace.
 Christ, I put my hands in Yours, for I am afraid;
 I bring memories that hurt and a past that pains,
 for Your healing and renewal.
 Christ, come enter through the door of the past;
 Into the remembered and the forgotten,
 Into the joys and sorrows,
 Into the recording room of memories,
 Into the secret room of sin,
 Into the hidden room of shame,
 Into the mourning room of sorrow,
 Into the bright room of love,
 Into the joyful room of achievement.
 Christ, come enter
 Into the fabric of my being
 Into the conscious and subconscious
 Into the roots of personality.
 Cleans me from secret faults and renew a right spirit within me.

CHRIST BENEATH ME⁵

Christ, no matter how far I have fallen, You are there
 also; ‘Underneath are the everlasting arms,’
 Christ, I look at the hands that uphold me and I see the print
 of nails. The hands that bear me up know pain and sorrow.
 You, Lord, know the betrayals and rejections of this world.
 Christ, ‘if I descend into hell You are there also.’ You experienced
 the many hells of this world. You have descended so that You
 can lift us up. In all dangers, You are there to support us:
 In the storms of life,
 In the sinking of the disciple,
 In the scorning and rejecting,
 In the betrayals and denials,
 In the hells and crucifixions,
 In the ebbing out of life,
 Christ beneath me.
 And I know that You are the Risen Lord of Life.

Adam gave me the strength to remember. Buechner helped me turn that decision to remember into something tangible. I was choosing to remember more than just the positive changes that took place in me. I was also choosing to remember the lives of the two children Kristine and I had lost. Remembering granted them dignity. Granting them dignity both encouraged and challenged me to continue the journey from fear to hope that the two pregnancies helped me begin. It also gave me the strength I needed to write the letter to my second child, for which I’d previously had no words.

REMEMBER⁶

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that if we meet again, you will know me. It means that even after I die, you can still see my face and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart.

For as long as you remember me, I am never entirely lost. When I’m feeling most ghost-like, it’s your remembering me that helps remind me that I actually exist. When I’m feeling sad, it’s my consolation. When I’m feeling happy, it’s part of why I feel that way.

If you forget me, one of the ways I remember who I am will be gone. If you forget me, part of who I am will be gone.

“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” the good thief said from his cross (Luke 23:4). There are perhaps no more human words in all of Scripture, no prayer we can pray so well.