

My First Christmas Alone

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This is my first Christmas “alone”. Although not entirely true since I will have loved ones to spend time with, my father died May 23rd of 2008 and my mother died suddenly last December 23rd. I call this my first Christmas alone because last year is a blur. I barely remember it due to the grief response of shock that follows the death of loved ones. My first Christmas alone exists for a number of reasons. Let me explain.

I have often made the statement over the last year that I do not feel like myself. In reality, I am not myself. Having buried both parents in 2008, I am now very realistically on my own as never before. So...I am in the process of finding out who I am without them. Thus, this is my first Christmas “alone”.

Another thought process which contributes to the “alone” is that nothing feels the same. This too, is true. Many of my daily rituals involving contact with either of my parents are now unnecessary. The lack of need for or presence of these rituals has freed up time and energy for me to invest in other areas. The question arises, “What do I do now with this time and energy?” So...I am challenged with the task of discovering where God would have my energy be invested.

Our very loving heavenly Father experienced His own “first Christmas alone” when He sent His only son to earth to be born in a stable. Prior to that time He enjoyed every moment of eternity in face-to-face relationship with Jesus. Speaking about it in more earthly terms, He knew first hand all that was taking place in the life of His Son because He was with Him. Once His Son left heaven to come to earth, that changed. I am so grateful that it did.

Hebrews 4 tells us, *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”* (KJV) In the “alone” of this season we will be tempted to assume varied things that may or may not be what God has for us. However, this I know is true...Our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus know the difficulties of change, loss, and separation yet have access to the larger picture. As a matter of fact, God the Father has designed this “alone” season.

With this in mind, there is hope for each of us experiencing loss this Christmas to come face to face with God’s presence and help in a new way as we move forward into this next chapter of our lives.

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