

We were stateside anticipating a wonderful Christmas. On December 20, 2014, our youngest son David and his family returned to the states from Lima, Peru where they taught in an International Christian School. They were thrilled to be able to have family time. His wife Bethany had discovered a lump in her breast and had an appointment on Monday, December 22. The doctor told them it possibly was malignant but needed a biopsy to be sure. Throughout Christmas, we prayed and believed God for a good report. Results came back on December 30 that were not good; it was cancer and aggressive. All our plans changed in the blink of an eye when on January 8, 2015 at 2:30 a.m., Bethany left this earth to be alive forever in heaven. Oh, the thoughts that flew through my mind. She was only 32. They had three small children; ages 5, 3 and 22 months. They were serving God and having a fruitful ministry. This just couldn't be happening.

Why? Why? I asked God a thousand times. I think our son David explained it best in an article he wrote. "...It has been an immense source of comfort to be sure that death is the enemy of God. I will never be able to explain all the ins and outs of why God allows for the death of a 32 year old wife and mother, but I am supremely confident that he hates it as much as I do. Death has terrorized his dear children for too long. Yet, Jesus has conquered Death through his resurrection and will destroy him once and for all (I Cor. 15:26). I find this truth a lot more comforting than vague platitudes about God's plan for this loss. I know God's plan for this loss ... it is Resurrection!"

We did not make the trip to Panama. The baton passed without us. Our place was to be with our son, grandchildren, and the rest of our family. Bethany's death deeply touched not only us but also thousands around the world. We were witnesses to countless answers to prayers for David and the children. God supplied (and is supplying) every need!

In March 2015, an MRI of Steve's brain revealed he has Intracranial Hypotension. In short, it is a spinal fluid leak. There is not enough spinal fluid around the brain to keep it floating, as it should. After several trial and error treatments, rest, limiting activity and extra hydration has worked best. Being retired has allowed us to follow this treatment plan. He is much better.

Why do our plans change? I don't know, but God does. He allows change because He sees down the road and knows what we need before we've even thought about it. Have I always accepted changes well? Has my attitude always been Christ-like and positive? No, to both questions. However, knowing now what I didn't know then helps me see why God allowed some huge changes in our lives, so I trust Him for my future.

Sidebar: David remarried a beautiful Christian young woman. They now live in California. The children are happy and secure. If asked, they will say they have

two Mothers - Momma Bethany is in heaven and Momma Jackie is here with
Daddy and us.