

The Power of “Witness”

April 25, 2014

The day after Easter, our beloved Golden Retriever Calvin, only seven years old (that’s mid-life in dog years) had to be put to sleep because of cancer that had been sucking the life out of him. When our son and his wife moved from Texas to California, they were forced to leave him behind because their housing does not allow dogs, and Calvin became my husband’s dog.

Calvin was the exact same shade of red as our Irish Setter, who died seventeen months ago. When we had to put Pele down, there was another big red dog in the house.

But not yesterday. Or today.

And it’s painful.

Ray has always connected in a deep and special way with his dogs, and God has used them to “love on” him, as they say here in the South. So the loss of two beloved four-footed family members in less than a year and a half struck a deep blow of grief to his soul.

I looked forward to his return home so I could just **be with** him. I knew I couldn’t say anything to make him feel better. [Nothing makes a grieving person feel better](#). But there is comfort in the **being there** for someone in pain.

Or in stress. The next morning a friend and I went into a courtroom with another mutual friend to support her in a legal hearing. Several times, our friend said how much she appreciated us **being there with her** and for her.

I am mindful of the week of comfort Job’s friends brought to him when they sat **with him** in his misery, saying nothing in words but everything with their silent, supportive presence

(Job 2:13).

I am also mindful of the good news of the Incarnation, the Son leaving heaven to come into our darkness and misery of life in a fallen world, coming as Immanuel: God ***with us***.

And I am mindful of the big “no accident” of the timing of our painful loss: the day after Easter, when we celebrate Immanuel’s resurrection from the dead, Who is forever alive and, as He promised, He is ***with us*** always (Matt. 28:20).

With us in pain.

With us in loss.

With us in stress.

Praise God for the power of “withness”!!

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/the_power_of_withness