

POWERLINE #7

s: when the storms of life toss you around, what have you got to hold onto?...

d: grab onto the powerline. hi, i'm dave clark.

and i'm shereen holier. during the next half hour we look at the problems of pain and suffering in our daily lives.

d: some hard questions and no easy answers.

s: but there is hope and encouragement.

d: listen for it, in the music and talk that's straight ahead.

d: the band is "white heart," with you can see the world.

s: and we're your hosts, shereen and dave.

d: beth dalton is a mother who has known the heights of happiness and the depths of pain. she tells the story of her son Billy and his younger brother Tanner.

s: Billy was always a happy boy. He would wake up at 5 every morning, and join his mom and dad in their bed. Beth would tell Billy to be quiet but he would lie on his back and whisper "it's gonna be a beautiful morning, I can hear the birds singing." when Beth would ask him to quit talking, Billy would say "i'm not talking to you, i'm talking to me." In private school, Billy was asked to draw a tiger. the result was a tiger with a crooked head and one eye that appeared to be shut. When his teacher asked him about why the tiger had one eye closed, billy replied: because he's saying "here's looking at you kid." these memories and many more led up to the ultimate optimistic statement. beth's youngest son, Tanner was suddenly stricken by a rare blood infection, and died after a few days in hospital. billy was seven. the night after Tanner's funeral, Beth was putting Billy to bed. She would often lie down beside him to discuss the day. on this particular night, they laid quietly in the dark with not much to say. Suddenly, Billy broke the silence.

d: he said "i feel sorry for us, but i almost feel more sorry for all those other people." his mom asked him what he was talking about. billy explained: "i feel sorry for the people that never knew Tanner. we were sure lucky to have him live with us for 20 months. just think, there's lots of people that who are never lucky enough to know him at all. we are really lucky people."

s: it's just a matter of time, that's 4 Him and you're on the powerline with shereen and dave.

d: the problem of pain is our topic this week. powerline's microphones hit the street to find out what folks think about the reasons for suffering in the world today.

girl 1: personally, i believe in the bible and that it's the sin of Adam and Eve. that's when everything went wrong.

man 1: i think its because of people not thinking or having emotions for eachother.

d: what are the reasons for pain and suffering in the world today?

boy 1: the main reason is for greed. everyone is so greedy. like for money, they wanna have the most money, they wanna be the best. and to be the best, they'll do anything, they'll take it away from someone else.

d: is God ever to blame for physical suffering?

girl 1: i personally feel it's the devil's fault. God didn't intend for pain. He says He loves us and if he does then He won't want to hurt us and stuff. So I feel it's the devil's contribution to this world that is causing all this pain and suffering.

man 2: God is not to be blamed for our sufferings. because God created a human perfectly, with purpose in life. until a human declares his own independence from God and he likes to do what he feels like doing. not to blame God but to try to reestablish our relationship with God since it's we humans that move away from Him.

girl 1: and then obviously, people are sefish in this world, like everybody thinks just me alone, we don't think about others so eventually things are gonna go wrong.

d: those guys can really harmonize. "STraight Company" and "put a little love in your heart."

s: powerline's the show and we're shereen and dave. it's time again for our weekly problem letter. if you've got a problem and have no one to turn to, we hope you'll write our problem panel for confidential help and advice on any subject. we'll give you the address in a minute.

d: now onto today's letter. it relates to our theme on pain and suffering. the letter starts out:

girl 2: I'm really upset about the terrible state of the world we live in. crime and fighting seem to be everywhere. planes crash, people die. bombings kill babies. to be honest, i'm afraid of the future and don't even like to listen to the news, because it's so depressing. some days i wonder if it's worth while to even carry on.

s: you're quite correct that these are fearful and difficult times. turmoil and chaos seem to be part of the human scene. your letter is important and actually deals with two different issues. trajedy due to conflict with nature and trajedy caused by the sinfulness of man.

d: wow, that's kinda heavy so let's take them one at a time. i suppose that anytime any of us hears about a major plane

crash, that kills hundreds of people, we're shocked and the event scares us. it's natural to ask: "why does God allow such terrible things to happen?"

s: God does not cause or wish such things such as an airplane to crash. the Bible tells us that God desires for all people to live in happiness and to have a meaningful life. but God made the world in which there are powerful forces of nature. when by either accident or intent we move into conflict with the forces of nature, we suffer.

d: when lightning hit someone, when people are caught in an earthquake or when there's a mechanical failure on an airplane, it's important to remember this: God does not single out people on whom to bring pain. nor is anybody isolated to be free from it. in God's view, the forces of nature are good. sometimes, through the fault of no one, people get caught up in the powerful forces of nature. such as when a person drives into a flooded road, or is trapped in a building during an earthquake.

s: we must remember an important fact. whether we live or die, and we will all die someday, God's love surrounds us in this life and beyond death. when the evil of man plants a bomb or causes someone to die, it's not the wish of God who made us. in the beginning, God gave man and women the freedom to choose between good and bad. this is part of His plan. our choices have consequences which always affect others. so clearly, to blame God for all pain and suffering is wrong.

d: we've talked about how we can be hurt by going against the forces of nature and how we ourselves are often to blame for the pain of others, either by intent or carelessness, or just because we're imperfect people. God is good, God cares for us and he often shows his love for us by using believers to help us in our pain.

s: we should pray for victims and families of disasters. and give thanks for the skills of people that help those in need. at the same time, we can live in the amazement at the mystery of how fragile life can be.

d: margaret becker has a song about God's help in time of need. "I will be with you." on powerline.

d: powerline's tackling the problem of pain this week and margaret becker is singing about God's promise to see us through. so, how do you cope when the storms of life knock you about?

boy 1: if i found out that i had AIDS or cancer, i would do everything i had never done before. i would go extreme and just do bungee jumping and all this stuff that i had never done before.

s: "reach out, I'll be there," encouragement from Straight Company.

d: you're on the powerline.

d: the KTV kids, "a little bit of love." and that's powerline for this week. if you are troubled about tragedy or death and dying, why don't you contact our problem panel for caring, confidential help. also if you would like a transcript or music list from today's show, hit us up at our website, thepowerline.net. it's the same place you can send the wiseguys a message seeking help or advice on any subject. the address again is thepowerline.net. for shereen holier, i'm dave clark. hope you'll join us again next time.