

Control?

From a purely human stand point, yesterday was simply out of control. Friday night we noticed some swelling in Nicole's left ankle. We are very alert to swelling since Nicole is a high-risk patient for blood clotting. The body was designed to be in motion and when it isn't, bad things tend to happen.

So, yesterday morning, as I was out having coffee with a friend, Luella called the doctor. The doctor's immediate response was that we should get Nicole to the hospital as soon as we could so that they could ultrasound her legs for clots. Because of Nicole's injuries, she has to be transported in an ambulance, so I got the call that Luella had to wake Nicole up and tell her that the ambulance was on its way to take her to the hospital. (Not the way anyone wants to start the day!)

Since Saturday is an important day for the gallery Luella directs, I rushed home and changed my clothes, went to the emergency ward, got the gallery key from Luella, and rushed down to Old City Philadelphia and opened the gallery.

Meanwhile, Nikki and Luella were at the hospital waiting for tests to be done to see if she needed to be admitted or not. Because she had to be transported and had to wait to be seen, Nicole was not able to take the medication

she needs to escape the pain of her injuries and began to experience severe discomfort. Thankfully, her tests came back negative and Nicole ended the day back in her bed at our house.

Its hard not to look at the day as a day of futile activity accompanied by needless discomfort. You can't honestly look at the day and make sense out of it. By the end of the day, we were all emotionally and physically exhausted. You want to ask why, because this kind of day offends your sense of rationality and control.

We tend to think of life as being secure when we can understand it and when we have it under control.

Suffering transports you beyond the boundaries of your reason and your control. It forces you to respond to what you do not understand and to react to what you did not plan. It frustrates our love for comfort and ease. It denies us the order and predictability that we tend to expect. Suffering doesn't submit to our desires and it does not cooperate with our plans. Suffering is a kidnapper that comes into our lives, blindfolds us, and takes us to where we do not want to be.

But suffering is not just a kidnapper, it is also a teacher. Suffering teaches you that life in this broken world is fraught

with danger. It warns you that physical things are weak and impermanent. It points you to the fact that there is little that you actually control. It instructs you as to where reliable comfort and sturdy hope can be found.

Like a patient teacher with a resistant student, suffering pries open your hands and asks you to let go of your life. Suffering invites you to find security, rest, hope, and comfort in Another, and in so doing, assaults the irrationality of personal sovereignty that is the delusion of every human being.

In that way, suffering is not just a kidnapper, and not just a teacher, it is also a liberator. Suffering frees us to experience a deeper comfort and hope than we have ever had before. The problem is that we don't always want to be free. Even in difficulty, we fight to retain what suffering shows we didn't have in the first place.

Pray that we will not fight, that we will be good students, and that we will celebrate our freedom even in the midst of exhaustion and pain.

Paul D. Tripp

A WARM WELCOME

... to you if you are visiting today.
Please stay on for morning tea.

* *Skids* for children aged 4 to Yr 6 runs 10.30—11.15am

* CD copies of sermons available.

* Good books on sale.

* Gifts to support the Church's work may be left in the box by the door.

TODAY

9.30am

Sermon **THE FULNESS OF GOD**

Readings **Psalm 2**

Colossians 1:15-23

Morning Tea

10am at crèche

10.30am at skids

11am for rest

6pm **GRANITE (Yr 10+)**
at Warwick's

THIS WEEK

BUPA service

Friday 10.15am at Bupa

ROCK (for high schoolers)

Friday 7pm at Youth Hall

Birthdays this week

Tuesday Bruce Winter
Wednesday Josh Davis

Serving Today:

10.30 Skids

Belinda Mark H

Nathan Lauren L Bridget

Morning Tea:

Bonny Jayne Deb McD

11.45am PAC pack-up

Mark C Josiah Peter Mirow

Paul W

Lock-up

Mark C

Elders:

Peter Finlayson 6762 4701

Ross Fotheringham 6765 3530

Warwick Lyne 6766 1141

John Paterson 6765 4074

Neil Seaton 6762 3197

Michael van der Graaf 6762 7717

Training Morning

Let's help each other get equipped to minister more effectively in the year ahead. Sign up today for the Training Morning, February 18, and choose the sessions which will help make you a more useful minister.

Philippines

Our team is just about finished in Bohol. Today, Bo and Lay are with Lemuel and Mila and the church at Tubigon. The rest of the team is at Ubay this morning, and at Talibon this evening. Tomorrow they all are to travel to Cebu, and on Tuesday, on to Manila & Australia.

Membership

If you are interested in finding out what church membership at Trinity is all about, or would like to become a member, come to the Membership Information evening on the 23rd. Please let one of the elders know if you'd like to do this.

Men's Breakfast

Very positive feedback was received from the two last year, and on Saturday 25th February, beginning at 7:30am, we will be holding another men's breakfast. Flyers are available on the back table—please take a handful to give away. Ross will be speaking evangelistically. The Cost is \$10. Please consider paying for any friends you invite, or if you don't bring a guest this time you may like to offer to pay for someone else's. Let's take every chance to make the most of this opportunity to engage with our unbelieving friends about Jesus.

Family Plans

A reminder that next Sunday the elders will be presenting a draft church constitution, for your adoption a little later.

Speaking Personally...

We are thankful to the Lord following positive reports after Berryl McLachlan's surgery to remove some cancer last week. She is feeling well and in good spirits.

Please remember Enid Walter who is recovering from a skin graft she had in Gunnedah last week.

Kindly remember also Ray and Barbara Meers after Barbara's fall a week ago resulting in a fractured ankle.

Whatsoever is upon you is from the Lord, and whatsoever is from the Lord, to you it is in mercy; and whatsoever comes in mercy ought not to be grievous to you. What loss is it when the losing of earthly things is the gaining of spiritual things? All shall be for your good.

Richard Greenham