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Frankly Speaking...

By Ed Smithson

REMEMBERING

Seven years ago today, at 5 in the morning, my phone rang and my sister-in-law, Shirley Cooley said simply, "Paula is dead." She was my only daughter and 47 years of age.

Memory is a double-edged sword. Not only are we able to remember the good things but the bad things as well. The happy memories allow us to remember and dwell on good times. The bad memories sometimes make us sad and weepy.

I know I am not alone in this. There are many others who have relatives who are critically ill, some young and some old. It is a time

of reflection and self-examination when we face such crises. That is just the way things are. I have friends that have lost their loved ones recently after long bouts with illness. **Roy H. Lanier, Jr.**, among my oldest friends, recently laid his dear wife **Patricia** to rest after an 8 year bout with Alzheimers. I also have other friends that are dealing with critical and debilitating illness with their loved ones.

Two long time friends and their spouses are facing difficult times right now. **Maxie and Fran Boren**, one of the elders at Brown Trail church, has a daughter that has had debilitating cancer for some time and is going through some really rough times. More recently **Bob and Diane Murrell** have had a tragedy with their youngest daughter. She had a fall down a flight of stairs where she attends church, and is still in a coma in a Tulsa hospital. Bob is an elder in the **Central church in Moore, Oklahoma** where I used to preach and has been my CPA for over 40 years. I think perhaps their problem is much greater than mine. There is nothing final about what they are going through.

I have always believed that God uses everything that happens to Christians to eventually work out for the best. We cannot always see that and perhaps never will in this life. But this I must believe because Paul wrote, [“And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.”](#) (Romans 8:28) Because of this and other passages, we realize it is HIS purpose and not ours and we cannot always know what that is.

These kinds of events, while tragic and disturbing to our lives, must only be a blip on the whole scene of life. [“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”](#) (Isaiah 55:9)

When things in our world no longer make sense, faith must take over.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Amthor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

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