

## **Chapter 5**

### **Where is God in my pain?**

Day 1-5

## Day 1

The statement that “no one knows what it is like until they have been there and done that” is certainly the case for infertility. It is one of the deepest disappointments a couple can face and according to the statistics, it can even lead to the break-up of a marriage. In this chapter we want to encourage you, the woman who has had a miscarriage and is battling infertility.

You have already seen in this book that God knows, understands, and hears the cry of the broken hearted. We know that God is at work in your life and has a good purpose for every circumstance in your life because that is what it says in His word. Infertility is not God’s punishment for your sin, although for some it may be a consequence for sin – it is *not* God’s curse on your life or your marriage. It is important to understand that every marriage is different. One marriage is not better than another because one has children and another does not, even though you may be tempted to think this at times. You must counter this temptation with 1 Corinthians 10:13:

*“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man;  
And God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able,  
But with the temptation will provide the way of escape also,  
That you may be able to endure it.”*

**God knows all about your infertility. He wants to work in your heart through this problem. God wants to use it to draw you closer to Him and to teach you to trust Him and His plans for you.**

### Personally to you...

A diagnosis of infertility often leads to an unsettled, heart-wrenching period in a couple's relationship. The emotional roller coaster ride of infertility is simply exhausting. I have been down that road myself.

I have come to realize through the years that everyone's infertility story is different. Some have never conceived, some have conceived through intervention, or, like me, some have conceived naturally but are unable to conceive again. God's plan is different for each of us; sometimes the unique plan that God has given to us includes some pain. He has given His best to each of us even though we may not agree at first.

Almost two years after Caleb was stillborn, I delivered our son Corey. It took two years after Corey was born to conceive again and that pregnancy ended the day after I found out I was pregnant. That was the beginning of my infertility journey. I never conceived again. Has it been hard? Yes, those months of trying to conceive and being disappointed were some of the most stressful and heart-wrenching times in our lives. It was very painful, but we came to terms with it as we realized that we were in this together. We were infertile as a couple. Craig and I knew that despite our outcome God had special plans for us with or without more children. We are tremendously thankful for the one living son we have, but it was never my desire to have

just one child. I lost a dream and the hope of having more children. It took a lot of time for me to come to a peaceful place in my life. It was only through accepting God's sovereign plan and knowing the Lord Jesus as my Savior that I have been able to have the peace I now have. God wants the best for us and he does not promise us everything we want. He gives in His wisdom what He knows is best. But He asks us to give our desires to Him just as He gave His human desire to the Father when He said, "Not My will but Thine be done" before going to the cross. The Bible says that His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours. I do know He will be with you, He will guide you, and He will sustain you through your valley. My prayer is that you will trust the Lord for His good purpose in your life. I pray God will use this in your marriage to draw you together in prayer and trusting God. We must choose to trust God and to be content with whatever His plan includes for us. In God's perfect plan, we never conceived again. In this chapter we want to give you some practical ways to deal with your pain. We also want to warn you of the danger of not taking your thoughts captive and not relying totally on the Lord for HIS plan for your life. Remember Jeremiah 29:11? God's plan is for your welfare and not for calamity. Please write this verse out below:

## Day 2

Suzanne's story will give you a glimpse of God at work in the trials of infertility. Suzanne's love for God is evident as she faithfully serves Him even though her longing for a biological child goes unfulfilled.

*Since the time I was a young teenager, I have had a strong desire to be a mother. I have always loved being around children. Growing up I had many opportunities to learn how to care for children. I enjoyed babysitting by assisting my mother with a daycare in our home and working in our church nursery. Years later, my husband, Scott, told me that a specific quality that drew him to me was what he discerned to be the heart of a woman who would someday make a devoted, loving mother.*

*When Scott and I were married, he had just graduated from college and started a new job. A year later I also finished my degree and entered the workforce. We had "our" plan all figured out. We both felt strongly that I should be a stay-at-home mother. Our one-bedroom apartment, of course, did not have space for children. So, together we decided that I should work for a while to save up enough money for a down payment on a house; then I would quit working and we would start our family. I remember growing very impatient after three years; I was ready to change our plan.*

*After four years of marriage our "ready" point came. As we made plans to buy a house, we decided it was time to start our family. I remember being so excited. I also remember while we were driving together one afternoon Scott cautioned me, "Now, don't get too excited. This could take six months or so." And I thought, "Surely not, after all this time of waiting." One year later we had no pregnancy. We decided to ask my doctor, who had an interest in infertility, if there might be anything we should do differently. I just knew God had directed us to her. She ran the basic initial tests and put me on clomiphene, but did not find any problems and diagnosed us with "unexplained infertility." She suggested that we attempt inter-uterine insemination.*

*Over the next year and a half we underwent nine inseminations, each of which ended without a pregnancy. After the ninth unsuccessful attempt, I received a phone call from the doctor while I was at work saying, "I'm sorry. I've done everything I know to do. Your insurance company will not cover any more insemination attempts, and does not cover more advanced treatments. We will put you on an adoption waiting list." To put it mildly, I was devastated. What had we done to deserve this? Scott wanted to be a father as much as I wanted to be a mother, so why wouldn't God allow us to have children?*

*During this time, the only people who knew what we were going through were Scott, the doctor, and I. We had so anticipated sharing with friends and family the "good news" of expecting our first baby that we hesitated to share the disappointing details of our journey. But now we needed emotional support -- and had none. Still unwilling to verbalize our struggle, we remained silent and decided to continue trying to get pregnant on our own. What else could we do?*

*In the fall of that year, after another year of no success, we decided it was time to tell our parents about our repeated disappointments. By this time we had been married over seven years; they were probably wondering why we were childless. We told our parents and a few close friends.*

*The following year we were able to persuade our insurance company to give us a referral to a fertility center. On our initial visit to the fertility center, we were very impressed with the*

doctor. He wanted to “take control” of my cycle so that he would know exactly what was happening, and when. I got so excited when he told me I could “throw away the thermometer!” The doctor started me on clomiphine on my very next cycle, and performed an insemination when my eggs had grown to the right size. We can still remember the nurse calling us back into the hallway and announcing, “Well, it’s positive!” I was finally pregnant! We were thrilled beyond belief! We received our instructions to come back in two weeks for an ultrasound, and went home to call our families - and celebrate!

For the next two weeks we were ecstatic. We told everyone! Several weeks later we went in for the ultrasound. Scott had a videotape to place in the ultrasound machine to capture the first pictures of our baby. According to the medical chart, our baby would be due in December. But during the ultrasound, the look on our doctor’s face told us that something was terribly wrong. He explained that we had an “ectopic” pregnancy – our baby was in my right fallopian tube rather than in my womb, and there was no way for our baby to survive. He gave us two alternatives - have our baby removed by surgery, or by injections of methotrexate (a cancer drug); otherwise, my tube would rupture, endangering my life.

We could not believe what was happening. After all we had been through, we were going to lose our baby. We chose to have the surgery so as not to extend our baby’s suffering. The surgery was scheduled for the next day. Afterwards, the doctor reported that the surgery went well; he could find no blockages or other problems, so there was no reason not to try to get pregnant again.

While an ectopic pregnancy is considered a miscarriage, I had many confusing emotions about this “miscarriage.” I had lost a baby, but I had experienced no pain to signal something had been wrong. I wished there had been something I could have done differently to change the outcome. I felt deep disappointment that we would not know whether our baby was a boy or girl. We had not yet started purchasing furniture, clothing, or other items – for which I was grateful. Yet, as I considered all of these things, I realized that I did not have any physical reminder that we had a baby, even if for a short time.

Grieving the loss of our baby was so lonely for Scott and me. Our family and friends did not know how to minister to us, so many of them kept their distance. Our church did not reach out to help us. We did not know anyone who had experienced a miscarriage, let alone an ectopic pregnancy. Emotionally, we had only each other for support through this experience.

After a few months, during which my body healed from the surgery, we began working again with the staff at the fertility center. Over the next several months I had some cycles that were not conducive for insemination; other cycles, in which the doctor performed inseminations, ended with negative results. The doctor then decided to put me on Pergonol to boost my egg production for the next insemination. Soon after, a pregnancy test was positive! When Scott came home from work that evening, I greeted him at the door with “Hi, Daddy!” He was so surprised and so thrilled. We just sat together for a while, grateful that God had given us another baby. We called our parents and went out for dinner to celebrate. We had another two weeks of rejoicing, announcing, and planning, but with an unspoken air of caution about getting too excited. This baby was due near Christmas. It would be a busy holiday season!

We went in for an ultrasound, again with videotape in hand. And once again, we were informed that the pregnancy was ectopic, this time on my left side. But the surgery could not wait, the doctor advised us to end the pregnancy that same day. The post-surgery report was again positive; the doctor could find no blockages, and therefore no reason why our baby should

*not have dropped all the way into the womb. Again we faced a time of grief and uncertainty, not knowing where God was taking us.*

*Thankfully, our circle of support had grown. We had a few friends and co-workers, both believers and unbelievers, who helped with meals and listened when we needed to talk. But deep in my spirit, I wrestled with the same emotions and relived many of the same confusing thoughts that plagued me a year earlier. Although I can honestly say that we never “blamed” God or became bitter, we just couldn’t understand why God would allow these miscarriages to happen to us, especially when both Scott and I have such a strong desire to be parents. Even a year after our first miscarriage, we still had not connected with anyone with a similar experience with whom we could talk and receive spiritual guidance and encouragement. Again we felt very alone in our grieving.*

*A few years after our miscarriages, Scott and I sat under Biblical teaching in which we learned one of God’s principals for living – that God designed us the way He did for His glory. Although we do not understand why, we do understand that God allowed us to experience infertility and the loss of two babies that we might serve Him in a special way. We may never fully see what God has done or is doing through us, but we do know that one way He can use us is by helping others who travel this same, hard road. We want to apply 2 Corinthians 1:3-4:*

***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,  
who comforts us in all our affliction  
so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort  
with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”***

*I do not expect that anyone besides Scott and me remember the dates we found out we were pregnant; the dates our babies were due; or the dates we lost our babies. Each year when those anniversary dates come, we remember our babies with both fondness and grief. The grief is lessening with time, but we know that it will not completely vanish until we are together in Heaven with Christ. We rejoice that we have the hope of seeing them because of the blessed hope in Jesus Christ that God provides to those who know Him.*

1. What Bible truths comforted and sustained the couple in this story?

2. How were you encouraged by their faith?

3. How has God helped you with your deepest sorrow?

## Day 3

Where does true joy come from? What do you think would make you happy all the time? Are your circumstances keeping you from experiencing joy or making you unhappy? Have you found the joy of being rightly related to God? Looking for happiness to come from your ability to conceive is a trap for many couples. God means for your happiness to come from knowing Him and knowing that your sins have been forgiven rather than from the temporal blessings He gives or does not give. We live in an ever-changing world; only God never changes. “Jesus is the same yesterday and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). If your happiness is based on your circumstances or getting what you want, you will end up living on an emotional roller coaster. These emotional highs and lows make you “unstable in all your ways” because they are connected to doubts about God’s goodness and love for you (James 1:6-8). Stability and peace come from knowing God and trusting His purpose for your life. We are to find our happiness (our boast) in Him! Jeremiah 9:23-24 says,

**“Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom,  
and let not the mighty man boast of his might,  
let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this,  
that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises  
lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth;  
for I delight in these things,” says the Lord.**

Please let the following questions help you as you seek God in your loss and/or infertility. These questions are designed to help you look honestly at your circumstances and how you view God in those circumstances.

1. Suzanne talked about submitting to God’s plan and waiting on Him. Is this something you are willing to do? Are your thoughts submissive toward God or are you angry toward Him because of your circumstances? (Your honesty is important for you – God already knows your thoughts.)
2. Many couples feel very alone in their grief and pain. This is very normal but God never intended for us to walk this path alone. Would you be willing to be involved in a Bible study with other couples to learn and grow in your walk with God? If being in a group is too difficult, what older Christian couple might you meet with to share your burden?
3. How are you glorifying God in your situation? How does your life reflect your love for God as you endure difficult circumstances?

4. If God has allowed you to be infertile, what may He be trying to teach you?
  
5. What other options for having children have you considered? Service to the Lord through adoption? Foster parenting?

Jesus said that to follow Him would require setting your personal agenda aside to obey Him and be used of Him as He desires. Luke 9:23–24 says:

***“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself (his desires),  
and take up his cross daily (die to self),  
and follow Me.  
For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it,  
But whoever loses his life for My sake,  
he is the one who will save it.”***

Tomorrow we will look at Hannah’s struggle with infertility. If you are infertile, I know it is difficult for you to think about these things. Please know that I have been in a similar place and know something of your pain. Infertility can be one of life’s toughest heartaches. Infertility is a form of suffering that is a struggle for many marriages. Later in this chapter we will share some helpful tools for communication. **Jeremiah 31:3** says God loves you with an everlasting love and His grace is sufficient even for this.

## Day 4

Lets go back and look at the story of Hannah as she struggled with infertility. **Read through 1 Samuel 1:1-18.**

1. Who does verse 5 say is the source of Hannah's barrenness?
2. What three responses did Hannah have when her thoughts were drawn away from what God was doing to what she did not have? (vs 6-8)

It is easy for the infertile woman to be tempted to think that God's purpose in preventing her from conceiving is not a good thing. When you go to church or to the mall and see happy families, you may be tempted to think that God does not really care for you or love you. To go down that road of doubting God's love and His good purpose in your life leads to despair. To counter that kind of thinking, replace it with God's Word that says His plan for you is for your welfare (Jeremiah 29:11). By faith believe that God has a good purpose in having you where you are right now. In the big picture of what He wants to accomplish in your life, He has a perfect plan to work all of this together for your good. He has entrusted you with this trial to demonstrate His faithfulness to you as you run to Him for comfort and strength to endure. He wants you to trust Him as Jesus did when He faced His darkest hour. He said, "yet not my will, but Thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

We know from Psalm 139 that God is intimately acquainted with all of your ways. He has surrounded you and has His Hand upon you. He IS in control of the minutest details of your situation. His plans for you are for your welfare and not calamity. Believing this when your circumstances do not feel or appear this way is what **faith** is all about. This is what it means to believe in God's Word, and His character. This is what it means to submit to God's plan and to surrender your plan for your life to Him.

*"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and **follow Me.**" Luke 9:23*

3. Looking back at Hannah, how did her response to her circumstances affect her relationship with her husband? (1 Samuel 1:8)

Infertility tends to put great stress on a marriage. When you are totally consumed with having a baby, your relationships with God and with your spouse suffer. Your focus is distracted from living to please God and focused on accomplishing something that is out of your control. All of your energies are geared toward getting what you want rather than being a helper and companion to your husband. By continually drawing near to God through His Word and submitting to Him in your prayers of supplication, He will guide you to find balance and perspective in giving your desires to Him. You and your husband can then evaluate the options that lie before you in light of God's Word.

4. It seems as though Elkanah's questions to Hannah helped her to realize that her sinful anxiety and depression were affecting her marriage. When Hannah cleaned up her act, to whom did she turn (1 Samuel 1:9-10).
  
5. Hannah's bitterness of soul indicated a repentant heart and a willingness to accept God's plan. How did her vow to the Lord reveal her recognition that any child she might have came from God and belonged to Him? (vs 11)
  
6. Eli the Priest misunderstood Hannah's intense prayer. How did her response to him show her humble, submissive spirit? (vs 15-16) How did she describe her motive for praying as she did? (vs 16)
  
7. How did Eli show that he was immediately convinced of Hannah's sincerity? Note that his words were a blessing not a promise (vs 17)?
  
8. How could Hannah have peace even before she knew she would have a baby (vs 18)?
  
9. Have you given your passionate desire to have a baby to God?

We can see that God used Hannah's barrenness to bring her into a closer relationship of dependence upon Him. As she recognized her responsibility was to serve God with or without a child, she was at peace. She also acknowledged that any child God might give her would be a gift from the Lord and a stewardship from Him to be trained to serve and honor Him. So it is with the children that God gives to each of us by whatever means. For some God may allow you to conceive a child, for others He may provide a child through adoption as He did for Nancy and Mark.

***“Train up a child in the way he should go,  
Even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6***

## **Day 5**

The following story by Nancy is a modern-day story of a woman whose heart was opened up to embrace children that God provided through the womb of another woman. As Nancy and her husband struggled with infertility, the Lord changed their desires, fulfilled their desires and brought them to Himself.

*My life was moving along just as I had hoped. My husband and I were happily married and had decided to start our family. We were so excited when we found out we were pregnant. I remember the joy of sharing this news. My husband was so excited to tell his friends and co-workers. I loved waking up in the morning feeling so blessed to have a baby growing inside of me. I had dreamed of this time for so long.*

*Eleven weeks later that joy turned into despair. For the first time in my life I felt truly alone. Everything about the miscarriage and hospital experience seemed painful. The looks and comments from family and friends did little to comfort me. It was all a whirlwind of out-of-control emotions.*

*The pain and disappointment of my loss was overwhelming. It seemed that no one could understand the sadness and pain that I felt. I was hurt by the comments of friends who were trying to help. No one seemed to understand what it was like to have had this baby in my womb. I had loved and cherished my baby for the weeks I was pregnant. In one day all our hopes and dreams for that baby vanished. The pregnancy I had prayed for ended in physical and emotional pain.*

*The days and months since my miscarriage became 3 years. Throughout this very sad time in my life, I felt isolated from friends, family, and even acquaintances. I could not shake the disappointment that my plan for a family was not happening. The repeated tests, drugs, and inseminations were humiliating. Why did I have endometriosis? As I lay on a stretcher ready to*

*have my eggs extracted for in-vitro fertilization, I remember thinking about how medical and sterile this was for creating a precious baby.*

*I felt such sadness inside and wondered if God knew what I desired? As I dreaded another Christmas holiday without a baby, I wondered, "what if I never become pregnant again?" Was God punishing me for sins in my past? I felt so alone when friends and co-workers would happily announce their pregnancies. I cringed at the question, "When are you going to have children?" I kept trying to figure out what went wrong and was so disappointed that my life was not working out as I had planned. Why not? I had always been able to set a goal and work towards achieving that goal, but that wasn't working this time.*

*Looking back I can see what God was doing. He was drawing me to Himself in ways I did not recognize at the time. I questioned God, begged God, and cried to God. When I finally realized that I could not control any of this, I decided to give my burden to Him. We came to realize that our lives needed a new direction.*

*With this in mind, we stopped the infertility treatments and began to pursue adoption. As we searched for an adoption agency, I realized God was opening my heart to a family plan I never before considered. As we started to accept our infertility, we slowly let people in on our adoption plans. Many were skeptical, but we were confident that we should move ahead in this direction. Communicating through every step in the adoption process was essential for our marriage to remain healthy and for finding the baby God wanted us to have.*

*When we were matched with a birth mother, we felt a mixture of joy and fear. I realized that I had to rely completely on God to ease my fear and worry – His promises were my only hope. We could only marvel at God's awesome plan when our son was born. We were able to bring home a beautiful boy that a dear mom had entrusted to us. It only got better when we were able to adopt our daughter two years later. We could not have been happier with our two precious children. All my hopes and dreams for a family were fulfilled. I loved being the mother of a busy toddler and a newborn baby.*

*About a year later, we moved from our home in Florida to Charlotte, North Carolina. My world was turned upside down with this move to a new state. While my husband traveled for his work, I stayed home with our two small children. As a stay-at-home Mom with a loving husband, I had it ALL! So why was I struggling with discontent? I could not understand why I felt so lonely when I had the life I had dreamed of having for so long.*

*Shortly after we moved to Charlotte, a new friend invited me to a Bible study. I have to admit I was a little nervous. Although I had regularly attended church, I had NEVER studied the Bible. A remarkable thing happened at the Bible Study. I met kind women with questions and problems just like mine. We read God's Word and prayed for one another. I slowly began to read and understand God's message. The book of 1 John spoke directly to my heart. 1 John 1:8-10 says:*

***"If we claim to be without sin,  
we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.  
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.  
If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar  
and His Word has no place in our lives."***

*I finally knew what was missing. I realized I needed a Savior (Romans 3:23). As I prayed and confessed my sins to God, I was overwhelmed when I realized that Jesus Christ died on the cross for ALL my sins – past, present and future (John 3:16). I invited Jesus Christ into my life and turned away from my sins. The Bible says in Romans 10: 9-13:*

**“That if we confess with our mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.  
For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified,  
and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.  
As the Scripture says, everyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.  
For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-  
the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him.  
For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**

*My life began to change! I stopped worrying so much about myself. I began to think about God and how He wanted me to live. I had complete peace in my role as wife to my husband and mother to my children.*

*A year later at a men’s church function, my husband recognized that he was not a Christian. That night he became a Christian and his life has been different ever since.*

*God’s plan for me is so much grander than I could ever have imagined. Although infertility can be such a time of loneliness and despair, it opened the door to God for me. We can try to carry all the pain and burden ourselves or we can give it to the One who is in complete control of everything. Jeremiah 29:11-13 says:*

**“For I know the plans I have for you, “ declares the Lord,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.  
Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.  
You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.”**

*When I realized that having faith in Jesus Christ fulfilled the deepest longings of my heart, my life was complete. I searched no more. I knew God made me to be His child and to live by His Word. This began a much more enriching and meaningful life for me. My life with my husband and children became a way to love and serve God. Because He first loved me and saved me from my selfish desires, I could better love my husband and my children.*

*We joined a church that taught God’s Word where we could grow in Christ individually and as a couple. As a family, we eagerly look forward to worship in our church on Sunday and in our home throughout the week. Our children enjoy Sunday school and Kids Worship while my husband and I attend a Sunday school class. During the week, we share some time each night in family devotions to relate God’s Word to our everyday life. As the children get older, we can respond to the different questions and issues that come up. God’s Word never fails to provide the answers. Over the years we have grown to know God more as a family.*

*I know that part of God’s plan for me is to help other women who are going through the pain of infertility. I am involved in Caleb Ministries (read more info in the back of this book), which helps women who face these very issues. God has amazingly put me in a place where I can use the gift that He has given me – helping others with the love of Christ! It has been a*

*blessing to see the doors that God has opened for me to use what He has done in my life. My heart's desire is to be a willing vessel God can use to bring comfort to other women.*

***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-5***

*My husband and I always knew that we needed to be open with our children about their adoption into our family. When our daughter first asked if she could meet her birth mother, we acknowledged her desire, but never put much thought into it. Recently when she asked again, I knew it was time to put our thoughts into action.*

*If I listened to the world, I would hear things like, "That is too confusing for a six year old," or "Aren't you afraid her birth mother would want her back?" Some might even speculate that Lindsey would love her birth mother more than me. We had a decision to make. Do I listen to popular opinion or do I depend on our awesome God? The choice was simple. God had sovereignly placed our son and our daughter in our family. How could God's plan be "confusing" to our daughter? Tracy is the birth mother God used to bring us our daughter. Through the grace of God, she had the strength to carry our precious baby for nine months and deliver her into this world. Tracy chose Mark and me to love and raise her baby. Our lives have been forever blessed since that day. I contacted Tracy to find out if she would be open to meet us. "YES!" she said, "But how do you think Lindsey will react?" We truly did not know, but we decided to pray about this meeting. I truly believed this meeting would bring honor to God in the most loving way.*

*We drove to the town where Tracy lives and spent the night in a hotel. When the morning for our meeting arrived, Lindsey woke up and was very excited. Lindsey had a special photo album that she had created over the last two years to show her. She also made a sweet pen flowerpot to give to her birth mother. As we ate our breakfast in the hotel lobby, we waited for the clock to strike 9:00 am. Mark went out to the parking lot to meet Tracy and the kids quickly followed. A few moments later our son ran in shouting, "She's here!"*

*My heart jumped as I stood up and walked out the doors. I could see Tracy walking towards Lindsey with a loving smile on her face. I could see Lindsey walking briskly up to Tracy. Her little face looked up and her eyes were wide open with a smile on her face. I stood back to give them a moment. This was their moment. I prayed Psalm 29:11:*

***“The Lord gives strength to His people.  
The Lord blesses His people with peace.”***

*The peace that I had could only be explained by God's love. I then joined them and hugged Tracy. We all walked into the hotel and went up to our room.*

*There we visited for over an hour laughing and learning so much about and from each other. Tracy sat with Lindsey as they went through the photo album that Lindsey made. They had an easy and comfortable time talking and getting to know each other.*

*Tracy and I shared how God had worked in each of our lives. Our amazing God had been at work in the loneliness of her unplanned pregnancy and in the pain of our infertility. We both had become Christians. God granted us His strength, His love, and His peace as we sat there talking in sweet fellowship with one another. It was truly a time I will never forget. The mercy and love of God is SO BIG!*

*Just as God gave Tracy the strength to carry and deliver her baby, He gave her His selfless love for Lindsey when she gave her baby to us. Tracy received such joy in knowing Lindsey is loved and being raised to serve our Lord. God gave me the strength to open my heart to adoption. He showered me with love to give my son and my daughter. God has given me strength in accepting the fact that I will not conceive and carry a baby to term. The plans He has for me were different than I had planned. His plans are best!*

*When it was time to leave our hotel, our visit was over. We walked out to the parking lot together and said good-bye to Tracy. Lindsey gave her a hug and jumped into our van. I walked up to Tracy and gave her a hug. How could I ever thank this woman who so selflessly gave us this wonderful bundle of joy? My heart overflowed with gratitude and love for my Savior who was so evident in our time together.*

*After our visit with Lindsey's birth mother, Justin had a few questions about his birth mother. "Why don't I hear from Jenni?" he asked. We had received Christmas cards from her but never a note specifically for Justin. We listened to his concerns and we prayed. One week before Justin and Lindsey's birthdays, I asked my ladies Bible study group to pray for their birth mothers. Justin had an awesome birthday! When I brought in the mail, there was a card for Justin from his birth mother. Praise God! Justin opened the letter, read the kind note, and laid it down saying, "Cool!" Like his sister, I think Justin wanted to know that his birth mother thought of him. We are always amazed to see how our God cares for such small details in answer to our prayers! We prayed and Jenni decided to buy a card and write a nice note to the precious baby boy she had delivered and entrusted in our care 9 years earlier.*

*As we look forward to the future with hope, we know our lives are in God's hands. It is the desire of my heart to depend fully on the love of Christ Jesus and let Him lead our path as only He can do. Our hope is based on the sure foundation of God's promise of eternal salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

***"Thou wilt make known to me the path of life;  
in Thy presence is fullness of joy;  
in Thy right hand are pleasures forever."  
Psalm 16:11***

As Nancy looks back she can see how God used her barrenness to bring her to Himself and she has learned to trust God with her fears and pain. Communication played an important role in keeping Nancy and Mark from becoming bitter or angry towards God or one another. Throughout their story, they remained in this together. Here are some practical suggestions for maintaining open communication:

- Speak honestly with one another – share your feelings so you can support one another. Ephesians 4:15 encourages us to speak the truth in love. Describe how honest

communication about your infertility has helped your marriage OR ways you need to change how you communicate.

- Spend time praying together. Plan a specific time each day to pray together about your heartaches as a couple and to thank God that He knows, cares and has a wise plan for your lives. When will this be?
  
- Share your burden with your Pastor and some trusted friends for support and encouragement. This will help your Pastor know how to pray for and minister to you. If you know a couple who has gone through similar struggles, open sharing with them could provide the understanding support and concern that will help you to persevere in this trial. What will be your next step? If you are having serious marital problems, be sure to seek counsel from your Pastor or a Biblical Counselor immediately.
  
- Take a weekend away for a change of atmosphere. Plan a special time and place where you can be alone together. Spend time reminiscing about how you met, how God brought you together, what attracted you to each other, what qualities you saw in each other that drew you together, maybe have a special gift you could give each other. Where and when will you get away? How will you make your time special?

- Remember as you communicate:
  - 1) It is not wrong to desire a baby. God places these desires upon your heart. It is wrong for you to be totally consumed in trying to conceive – seek a good balance (Read Proverbs 3:5-6). Where are you at right now? How does this verse speak to your heart?
  
  - 2) Your husband is not your enemy – you are NOT infertile in and of yourself, you are infertile as a couple – be kind and forgiving toward each other (Ephesians 4:25-32). Take the time and memorize Ephesians 4:32;
  
  - 3) God’s plan for you is good – your infertility is NOT a punishment to either of you (Jeremiah 29:11 and Lamentation 3:32-33). Write out Lamentations 3:32-33.
  
  - 4) Seek to know God through this trial and to surrender to His perfect plan. Read Psalm 27:13-14 and meditate on God’s goodness and His faithfulness.