

Questions Without Answers

By Doug Irving & Gary Randolph



Theme and Purpose

I remember a few years ago when a close friend died of cancer – a young friend for whom many Christians had been praying. It made no sense – a person so full of life struck down before her life could even really begin.

When grief and loss strike, Christians leap to pat answers that hold their faith together. Is our faith so fragile? Perhaps we need to spend more time with the questions. God does not fear questions. He actually put the toughest ones in His book. Job asked, "Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you?" David and even Jesus cried out, "My God, why have you forsaken me?"

I remember mowing my yard one day soon after my friend's death. I kept singing Rich Mullin's *Hard to Get* over and over. I never really found the answers to my questions. But eventually I found Jesus standing beside me, crying with me.

This sketch is offered with credit to Rich Mullins and C.S. Lewis whose work suggested several of these lines.

Cast list	Jef - Husband Sandy - Wife Both are in best clothes, dressed for a funeral
Approximate Running Time	Approximately 5 minutes
Scene Description	Grown child's room.
Prop List	
Other Production Notes	Could be after a child was lost in combat, or after an auto accident, or after a death from cancer
Related Scriptures	Psalm 22; Psalm 34:18; Psalm 147:3; Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Job 7:20-21; John 11:35
Song Suggestions	Hard to Get (Rich Mullins), Blessed Be Your Name, When the Rain Comes (Third Day)

One parent enters followed soon after by the other. If death was in combat, Sandy could carry a folded flag that she places on bed. Sandy sits on bed and looks around. Jeff stands and watches her silently.

Sandy: *(withdrawn)*

It was a lovely service.

Jeff: *(trying to reach her and finding he can't)*

Yes. The music. The sermon... *(his voice trails off)*

Sandy:

Such a beautiful day, too.

Jeff and Sandy: *(simultaneously, but not together)*

Jim would have loved... *(they break off when they realize they are both saying the same thing)*

Jeff:

He would have loved a day like today.

Sandy:

He loved the sunshine. Summer and winter. *(after a pause)*
So what do we do next?

Jeff:

I have no idea.

Sandy:

Continue on with life I suppose. But... I think I've forgotten how. Or why.

Jeff: *(a tinge of anger rising)*

I'm full of "why's". Why did this happen? Why is it that a parent can bury a son? Why did God allow this? I just don't understand. I prayed every day. What was the point? Why even pray?

Sandy:

Would knowing the answers make it hurt any less?

Jeff: *(sitting on the bed or a chair)*

It was just - what? - a month or two ago we were celebrating in church how the Hurley boy had a remission. Why for every story of faith and deliverance is there another story of faith and loss? And *(nearly breaking)* why is ours the one with the loss? How does God decide when to intervene and when to just sit back and watch the show?

Sandy: *(going to Jeff and placing an arm on his shoulder)*
Those questions don't have any answers.

Jeff: *(relaxing into her touch)*

You know, I've yelled at God and thrown my Bible across the room, and strangely I've never felt Him closer.

Sandy: *(pulling back)*

You do? Because... I don't. All those times of feeling God's presence in worship. And now, I just can't break through. I try to pray, and can't. It's almost as if I hear the door of heaven slamming shut.

Jeff stands and takes her hand.

Jeff:

Maybe our pain and hurt smothers us in a blanket of our own grief. Maybe in time God will find a way to break through.

Sandy:

Maybe He kind of already has - through everyone in the church.

Jeff:

None of them know what to say. *(laughs)* The next person who quotes Romans 8:28... Though in fairness, I don't even know what I would want them to say.

Sandy:

The best ones are the ones who don't say anything, who just hold your hand or come over and clean up the kitchen.

Jeff:

Yeah. Though these last couple of days it's picking up and puttering in the garage that gives me something to do that nearly makes sense.

Sandy walks to a table that holds a picture of a little boy with a dog and picks it up.

Sandy:

Remember when this was taken? Boswell. Those two were inseparable.

Jeff:

Do you remember that cowboy birthday party? Jimmy was five, I think.

Sandy:

Six. He made a paper saddle to put on Boswell to dress him up like a horse. Boswell chewed it off right after I put it on him.

Jeff:

Yeah. I repaired it with tape, but Boswell almost bit me when I tried to put it back on him. Jim just said, "Now, Boswell, hold still." And he did. That dog let Jim put that saddle on him and wore it all day.

They share a moment of laughter before Jim slips into tears and drops to the bed.

Jeff:

I remember the day Boswell died. I found Jim in here crying. I folded my arms around him, and he cried into my chest. And then he just started hitting me - hitting me with his fists again and again. I knew he didn't really blame me. But, after all, I was his daddy. I was supposed to protect him and provide for him. He just needed to vent his frustration and pain. He was old enough to hit me hard. But I remember thinking, if in each punch I could take his pain... So I just held on to him and took the punches and cried with him until his tears were spent.

Sandy:

I think after that day he loved you and trusted you more.

Jeff:

I hope that's the way that works.

Sandy sighs and walks over to him, takes him by the hand, and begins leading him offstage.

Sandy:

Come on. I need to clean up the kitchen.

Fade to black

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