

'In My Valley'

By Rev. Harold "Butch" Schwert

On March 11, 2015, I began my valley experience. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." On that day I had congestive heart failure. For one week I was in Toledo Hospital and started my valley experience.

On March 19, 2015, I was transferred to Elmwood at the Springs in Green Springs, Ohio. By that time I had lost all of my strength and couldn't do anything on my own. This started my two-month stay in Elmwood; and at that time, God brought some of the best and some of the not so good people into my life. Some nights I prayed and cried myself to sleep. I would ask God 'Why?' and God said, "I had to take you through the valley to make you." In the valley is where we grow, pray more, and seek the will of God. I had things in my life that had to go.

One day I felt so alone away from all of my Christian friends and the church. I missed being with Julia. I was feeling so alone, and as I walked through the valley, I saw the most beautiful lily growing in my path. The Lord said, "I am the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star." Then He let me know that He was there all the time walking through the valley with me. It is in the valley where all the plants and flowers grow, because the ground in the valley is moist and fertile—that is where everything grows. The mountain has stone, rocks, and little dirt; and it is hard for things to grow. So we can't always live on the mountain. We have mountain-top experiences, but in the valley is where we grow.

The Lord took me through a lot of things from March through August: congestive heart failure, cancer on my nose with three surgeries, eye surgery, getting diabetes under control, dealing with occupational therapy and physical therapy to get my strength back, and heart surgery. The physical therapists worked with me every

day to get me to where I am today. I had the best people to encourage me, push me, and when I felt like giving up, they would say, "You can do it!"

'Got any mountains you think are uncrossable? God specializes in things called impossible.' I would sing this song over and over along with – 'I just feel like something good is about to happen. I just feel like something good is on its way. I just feel like something good is about to happen, and this is that very day!' God's children have always had mountains and giants in their way. Remember, God's children coming out of Egypt came to the Red Sea. Egyptian soldiers were behind them; the Red Sea was in front of them. Moses probably said, "I just feel like something good is about to happen" and took his rod and stretched it out. The Red Sea opened up and they walked across on **DRY LAND!**

Remember David and the giant? The giant made fun of him. David stood his ground. David probably said to himself, "I just feel like something good is about to happen and this is that very day," and the giant was defeated. Got any giants in your life? Just say, "I Just feel like something good is about to happen, and **this is** that very day!" **Nothing** is too hard for **God!** Thank God for the mountains! Thank God for the valleys. Thank Him for the storms He brought **me** through. For if I never had a problem, I wouldn't know that God could solve them. I wouldn't know what faith in God could do.

I told Julia that I was getting out of this place (Elmwood at the Springs) by May first for the conference. I got out on April 30 and never missed any of the conference! Praise God! **God is GOOD!** I'm doing good, getting better every day, and by faith I will be walking all the time soon. God is so good. I am so glad I had a wonderful wife to help me walk through the valley. I couldn't have done it without her being by my side and pushing me along. All the wonderful therapists that worked with me and became friends – I can never thank them enough for what each one

of them did for me. I also will never forget all the prayers that my church family said on my behalf. Thank you so very much for holding me up; I never could have done it by myself. I am forever grateful to my family at Rivers of Living Water!