

# On a Hill Far Away

April 20, 2020



Few songs have words of such intensity as these written by George Bennard: "On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame." As our mind's eye catches a glimpse of Calvary, we see the great cost at which our salvation came.

Here is a story that brought tears to my eyes. The author is Tim Miller from Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania (related in *Leadership* magazine).

"My nine-year-old daughter Jennifer was looking forward to our family's mini-vacation. But when our vacation arrived, she became ill, and a long-anticipated day at Sea World was replaced by an all-night series of CAT scans, X-rays, and blood work at a hospital.

As morning approached, the doctors told my exhausted little girl that she needed to have one more test, a spinal tap. The procedure would be painful, they said. The doctor then asked me if I planned to stay in the room. I nodded my head, knowing I could not leave Jennifer alone during the ordeal.

The doctors gently asked Jennifer to remove all her clothing. She looked at me with childlike modesty as if to ask if that were all right. Then they had her curl into a tiny ball. I moved my face as close to hers as I could and hugged her.

When the needle went in, Jennifer cried. As the searing pain increased, she sobbed and cried repeatedly, "Daddy, Daddy, Daddy," her voice becoming more earnest with each word. It was as if she was saying, "Oh, Daddy, this hurts soooo bad. Please, can't you do something?"

My tears mingled with hers. My heart was broken. I felt

nauseated. Because I loved her, I was allowing her to go through the most agonizing experience of her life, and I could hardly stand it. (We later learned that Jennifer's illness was not serious.)

In the middle of the spinal tap, my thoughts went to the cross of Christ. What unspeakable pain both the Son and the Father went through at the cross for our sakes (2 Corinthians 9:15)."

We owe a debt that can never be fully paid—the best we can do is give ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1–2).

**—Garvis Semore**