

**“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.” Psalm 34:18**

This past weekend my daughter, Kirstin, and her hubby, Andrew had to end the life of their beloved 17 year . 2 month old cat due to multiple health issues.

On Facebook Andrew writes,

*“Having experienced the loss of a parent, relatives and my mother in law in the last few years- our family has been no stranger to grief. It’s been 18 years since I had to say goodbye to my childhood pet, and because I was already away at college at the time- I wasn’t there to directly experience it. I’ve watched countless friends and family members go through losing a pet- and all I can say is that a loss is a loss.*

*Although we can’t always say as much of our human connections, our relationships with our pets are unconditional. This cat was a daily piece of my entire adult life. My wife Kirstin and son Grayson miss him tremendously- and I’m sad that our little girl Sofia won’t really remember him- although she knows he’s not around today. As all pets are, he was a member of our family.”*

I am convinced that God not only did bring two of each animal of the world into the ark for pro-creation purposes but also for companionship. I love to watch our dogs play and laugh when the cat chase one of them. It is adorable when all three of my animals nap together! Life is great when you have this kind of companionship. I think God gave us animals as a part of demonstrating God being present with us.

I know there are people who love to live alone and love the silence in their life. I am now one of them, since the loss of my spouse, Carol. When people like me get lonely, we tend to talk to our animals. My youngest dog, Cody, is now my best friend. He is a great listener. There is a wonderful little book that I was reminded of this past week that I shared with a friend who is also leaning on her dog as a companion. This book is called “God and Dog.” It is a book that plays with the concept that God spelled backward is dog. The book describes the commonalities between God and dogs. For example: Both just wait for us and dance with glee at our return. And they love us...no matter what. And God

forgives, while dogs wag their tail. At the end of the book the author states, "God thought up and made the DOG to reflect a part of God. "

At the same time, I also spend a lot of time talking to God directly. Thank God we know God is always with us! We are designed to be in relationship with others and with God. Even Jesus spent his time being with others and took them with him to pray.

Yes, Randell was a great cat. Now, I hope they will rely on God to help them through the tough times in their days.

Peace,

Pastor Tony

