

**Secret Survivors**  
**By Megan Hutchinson and Jen Howver**

**Where Was God in the Midst of My Secret?**

When I was in college, I went to a Christian conference with my soon-to-be husband. I decided to go to a workshop that I thought would really help me in my healing process. Instead, it opened up a whole new world of questions and struggles for me.

In the midst of this workshop, we were told to close our eyes, and replay in our minds the traumatic event we had experienced. Reluctantly, I took a deep breath and mentally went to a place I had not intentionally revisited for years. After doing this once, the instructor had us open our eyes, reminding us God was there—even in the midst of our horrific experience. I took another deep breath. Then, they told us to close our eyes again, and replay the events—but this time – actually *look* for Jesus.

I remember doing this, and seeing Jesus sitting in the corner of the room crying. At first, I found some comfort in the idea that Jesus was there with me. But then I thought about it some more. He just sat there! He didn't get up and stop what was happening. He didn't cause lightning to come in and strike my uncle. He didn't do anything but cry. My whole view of God was changed. He no longer seemed like a powerful being. He seemed weak and inactive. I still think about that image and wonder...why didn't he do anything to stop what happened?

Everyone who has experienced something painful has asked that question at some point in his or her journey to healing. Why would God allow this to happen? Why did he just sit there? There is no easy answer.

We're not going to give you a bunch of Bible verses and then tell you that God was there and that he has a plan for your pain (even though those things are true). Those things don't help when the pain is eating you up inside. But we are going to give you an opportunity to work through some of your own pain, frustration, and questions for God. Use these next few pages to write or draw your responses to the questions or prompts. Allow your true feelings and thoughts to come out—don't worry about hurting God's feelings. You are allowed to be angry with God. You're allowed to question his actions (or his inaction). He is big enough to handle how you feel.

Remember...be honest. Let your feelings come through on the following pages, and pour your heart out.

\*Before your secret changed your life, how did you view God?

\*After your secret came into play, how did you view God?

\*Where do you think God was in the midst of your painful experience?

\*How do you feel about the fact that God allowed your pain to happen in the first place?

\*What do you want to say to God? Remember, you can't hurt his feelings, so be honest.

\*What do you wish God knew about the pain you're feeling now?

\*What do you need God to do in your life in order for you to see him differently again?

\*What would an answer to that prayer look like?

\*Does it help you to know that God was there in the midst of your painful experience? Why or why not?

\*What do you wish God would have done?

\*If you were God, what would you have done differently in your situation?

\*What prayer do you scream in your heart on a regular basis?

\*Are you willing to ask him to heal you from your hurt? Why or why not?

\*Write that prayer on a separate piece of paper and put it someplace where you'll see it every day. Pray it every day for the next month and then come back and answer these questions again. Do you feel the same way about God after a month of praying your heart's prayer? What has changed in your heart? How has God changed for you?