

# MY BELIEFS HAVE CHANGED A LOT

## A widow's journey

Mary Lee's 73-year-old husband Neville died from small cell lung cancer in 2013

BY MARY LEE CLAFLIN, adapted from the book,  
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## Self care articles for the bereaved

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### God is always with me

I worked for a church for seventeen years. Had I lost Neville while living in Houston, I like to think they would have been there for me. But after the first few months, the calls ended. Emails ended. Then after a couple years they must have felt guilty as sometimes around Christmas they will send me an email.

Once Neville and I moved to Georgetown we never really connected with a church. We were attending a small Methodist church just before Neville got sick. I called the pastor to let him know Neville was in the hospital. He came to see Neville there and then once at our home. The women's prayer group made a lap blanket called a prayer blanket as they prayed over it. That was all the contact we had with them in the thirteen months Neville was sick. Unfortunately, having worked at a church, I know the inside and out of how and why things are done the way they are.

As far as my faith, this will seem strange to some people but not to others. I have read so many books since Neville died and one, in particular, hit home. They said in this book that church is a way to guide people and teach them. I believe

this and I no longer feel I need the church. My beliefs have changed a lot since Neville died.

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**I think of myself as being  
spiritual rather than religious,  
and feel God is always  
with me.**

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I do think there are people out there who need the church during a death, and after. There should be a support group for people to attend before and after the death, just like attending Sunday school on a regular basis. More education is needed in the church about death.

My faith has never changed. I never blamed God for my husband's death. He did not choose to take my loved one from me. If that were the case, it would say to me that my God chooses one over the other, and I don't believe he does.

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**Some things happen that  
can't be explained and just  
need to be accepted.**

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