FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   Contact: Kelly Hughes, 312-280-8126
                                                        kelly@dechanthughes.com

Bestselling Author Philip Yancey Returns to the Problem of Suffering in His New Book *The Question That Never Goes Away*

Bestselling author Philip Yancey, whose books have sold more than 15 million copies worldwide, is known for grappling with the question of why suffering exists—and what good is faith in the face of it. His first book, written at age 27, is an enduring classic of the genre: *Where Is God When It Hurts*? Ever since, people have turned to him to address the big issues that swirl around tragic events. "The question, though, never goes away—not for me, not for anybody. We keep groping toward light while living in darkness," Yancey writes in his new book, *The Question That Never Goes Away* (Zondervan, January 7, 2014).

"I could write about the question in any given year, for we live on a fragile planet, marred by disease, floods, droughts, earthquakes, wars, and acts of violence and terrorism," Yancey says. "Catastrophic or commonplace, suffering always lurks nearby. What is God up to in such a world?"

Yancey recounts his travels to speak to people in the world's heartbroken places: Newtown after the school massacre; war-torn Bosnia; Japan after the tsunami; Virginia Tech after the shootings there; and Mumbai after the terrorist attacks. Meeting people in the "land of suffering," he has developed new insights into how to respond. He crosses boundaries of circumstance, culture, and belief to reach those traumatized by pain and loss, and who may be questioning their faith in God—with good news that pierces the darkness of despair with hope and promise.

"It does not help to quantify suffering. All suffering is suffering. There are simply individual people who hurt and who wonder why God permits it." That "why" echoes through human history, yet as Yancey says, "we have no more definitive answer than the biblical patriarch Job got."

In December, 2013, Yancey spoke at two community-wide meetings in a church neighboring Newton, Connecticut after the Sandy Hook school shootings. Standing before the close-knit, grieving community, Yancey reflected on the outpouring of compassion, generosity, and selflessness: "I've seen demonstrated a deep belief that the people who died *mattered*, that something of inestimable worth was snuffed out on December 14."

"The death of death itself is a message that Newtown, and the world, needs to hear once more," he writes.

"Christians have only the stubborn hope that the story of Jesus, which includes both death and resurrection, gives a bright clue to what God will do for the entire planet," Yancey writes. "Christian hope promises that creation will be transformed. Until then God evidently prefers not to intervene in every instance of evil or natural disaster. Rather, God has commissioned us as agents of intervention in the midst of a hostile and broken world."

Yancey offers two important ways to respond to a universe that holds so much evil and pain:
- Find meaning in the midst of suffering.
- Offer real and practical help to those in need.

Though he is often asked, Yancey says he avoids trying to answer the "why" question. "Any attempt will inevitably fall short and may even rub salt in an open wound. As Jesus-followers, we can instead offer a loving, sympathetic presence that may bind wounds and heal broken hearts."

"I am well aware that no book can 'solve' the problem of pain," Yancey says. "Yet I feel compelled to pass along what I have learned....If Christians have good news to share, some message of hope or comfort for a wounded world, it must begin here."

Philip Yancey (http://www.philipyancey.com/), a journalist by profession, is a bestselling writer and speaker. His books include bestsellers such as *What's So Amazing About Grace?, Where Is God When It Hurts?, What Good Is God? Soul Survivor,* and *Prayer: Does It Matter?* He is known for his honest, thoughtful explorations of Christian faith, particularly in areas of questions, struggles, and mystery.

# # #