

“I remember I would have discussions with people who knew Matthew. And they’d say like, ‘What do you think that kid ... what do you think he’s going to do someday? What’s he going to do with his life?’ And we’d all say, ‘Whatever it is, it’ll be extraordinary.’ This kid was so, so talented.”

Think about someone you’ve lost.
How do you remember that person?

“If there’s anything I’ve learned, or I’m learning, it’s that whatever you’re feeling in that moment, it’s okay. It’s okay, it’s okay to feel numb, and for me it’s like anger, shock, denial, it’s okay. Or just that feeling like you don’t feel anything at all, and that’s okay too. It’s okay to have no answers, and no explanations, and maybe even no words.”

How would you describe the way you’re feeling about your loss?

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

[John 11:33 \(NIV\)](#)

“We can’t avoid our responses to things and think they’ll go away. If we stuff it, then it’s in there somewhere, and it will come out. Maybe you lost somebody a long time ago and you never properly grieved. Then it’s still in there somewhere. If the Son of God needs to let it out, if Jesus wept, then we do too.”

What do you think it means to “properly grieve”?
Have you let the full force of your loss hit you?

Jesus wept.

[John 11:35 \(KJV\)](#)

“I don’t know how long ago, or if it was just the other day, but I’m so sorry. I’m so sorry for your loss.”

“You and I have choices about the kinds of people we are and the kinds of people we’re becoming. We have a choice whether or not we’re going to become bitter.”

Why is it so easy to become bitter when we lose someone we love?

Have you chosen not to be bitter?

“Maybe you had that sense of guilt that comes with it;
'If only I would've done this, that wouldn't have happened,'
or 'If only I would've been this way – if I would've done something differently.'
And so we can become racked with guilt.
And it like seeps in and it becomes a part of us and we're not even aware of it.
Don't, don't let it happen.”

Is guilt keeping your heart from recovering?

Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again;
from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.

[Psalm 71:20 \(NIV\)](#)

“It's easy, when we suffer loss, for whatever it is that we lost to become the center of our life.
We had them, and now they're gone.
And so there's this giant hole where they once were and it becomes all we can think about.
And what happens in the process is our whole life becomes what we don't have
and we lose out on what we do have.”

Think about who you do have.

“The first Christians spoke about a day in the future when God would restore everything – you, me,
everything in heaven and on earth. I find great hope in that.”

Do you trust that God will someday restore everything?
Do you believe that includes being reunited with the people you love?

He [Jesus] must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything,
as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

[Acts 3:21 \(NIV\)](#)

“May you realize that Jesus wept.
And may you come to see that whatever you're feeling, it's okay.
May you make the choice not to become bitter and closed, but open.
And may you realize that God is sitting shivah with you, fully present, grieving your loss ... but also restoring.
And in that, may we find hope.”

In memory of Matthew Winfield Diederich 1977 – 2004.

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