

Dear Friends,

This past week, I experienced a distressing occurrence in my life. My good friend and neighbor for the past 17 years went to heaven after battling an aggressive form of brain cancer. My distress is nothing compared to that of his wonderful wife and two high school-aged children. However, in a recent conversation, his wife said to me, "If God is not going to heal him, I hope God saves his healing for another person who might need it more". This statement describes her profoundly deep faith.

The theme of loss has been a frequent one in my interactions lately. Just a few days ago, I attended the funeral of a beloved former NU faculty member. Recently, I had conversations with one young lady who lost her mother, and another who lost her grandparent. The season of college often brings with it our first significant losses, as those we love begin to age. My first family loss occurred when I was a sophomore at NU, and I can still remember my emotional turmoil during that time.

The late Eugene Peterson said, "When disaster strikes, understanding of God is at risk. It is the task of the prophet to stand up at such moments of catastrophe and clarify who God is and how he acts." I do not claim to be a prophet, but I do want to make a statement about who God is. We serve a God of hope. When we turn to God seeking forgiveness, there is no longer any fear of his judgment. There are so many people I am looking forward to seeing again in heaven because I know they had this hope. Perhaps this truth doesn't comfort you, because you are unsure if the one you lost knew God's forgiveness. Can I encourage you to think forward? Live your life today in such a way that *your* loved ones will know the hope of God through his son, Jesus.

Paul uses powerful imagery in the New Testament to celebrate Jesus conquering death. He says, "We will all be changed, in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will all be changed... Death has been swallowed up in victory...Thanks be to God! He gives the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:51-57, NIV).

Father, Thank you for sending Jesus to be the sacrifice that brings hope to humanity. When I think about the world we live in and the pain we often experience, it is reassuring to have an unchanging foundation built on hope. It is humbling to realize that Jesus willingly laid down his life for us. Holy Spirit, bring that truth to the forefront of our minds in the middle of our difficult moments. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

COMING UP THIS WEEK

- Mon, Nov 5** | Chapel: Peter Carlson | Butterfield Chapel Balcony, 10 & 11:20am
- Mon, Nov 5** | Acoustic Pursuit | Butterfield Chapel, 8:30pm
- Tues, Nov 6** | Multilingual Worship Night | Pecota Lounge, 7pm
- Wed, Nov 7** | Chapel: Sarah Jobson | Butterfield Chapel, 10 & 11:20am
- Thurs, Nov 8** | Global Missions Info Night | Pecota Lounge, 7:30pm
- Fri, Nov 9** | Chapel: Nick Steinloski | Butterfield Chapel, 10 & 11:20am



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