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Remembering, Re-living and Redemption

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Today's the day, exactly four years ago, that the man I married and my daughter's daddy went to heaven.

March 11, 2011. A day etched in my memory and containing the miracle of a man being called home.

A miracle I'll always remember, along with all the heart aching details leading up to it.

...a day that would set a new stage for my little family's scene

...that would suddenly define me differently, as a single mom with a world of new roles and emotional tolls

...a day that would begin my weary walk as a young widow

But here's the thing: Today is also Kevin's heaven day!

....a day that would mark the beginning of his eternal perfection

....a day that would leave his legacy of love for the Lord in his earthly life's wake

....a day that would satisfy his sanctification all because of the sacrifice his Savior made for him!

And there's nothing really sad or somber about any of that!

So, how do I rectify what's happened here and his heavenly celebration?

Simple. I don't. In many ways, it's a tough truth to swallow and even harder to say....but, *I'll never need rectification when God's made it worth it and Kevin's got redemption!*

While the gravity of grief has been the biggest burden I've carried, some of my biggest blessings have come up alongside it proving the purpose in it all. My heart is heavy with hurt for what was lost, especially for my two little loves who now linger in a world without daily love from a daddy.

Sadly, in this world of sin, God never promised perfection this side of heaven's gates. But He does promise His grace and mercy, His love and comfort to all those who lean on Him. So, I've claimed those promises and I sit at the foot of the cross making Jesus mine: my meaning, my salvation, my hope and my happiness.

Kevin cashed his in, four years ago today. I can honestly say, I believe it's all been done God's way. And, while maybe I won't ever understand His sovereign ways, I trust His goodness and His work for the greater good.

~That's right, I think sometimes we struggle as He weaves a greater good in and through us.~

Because you see, in these four short years (when at times have felt like my own earthly eternity), I've felt exhaustion and excruciating pain. I've been back and forth between exhilaration and emotionally drained. I've dragged my feet and I've dug myself holes so deep that even my lightest hour still breathed darkness into the air around me.

But I've also learned to live again, to grow back the limbs I'd lost and linger in this life with a new set of eyes***. I've learned to live on the new stage, embrace the life He's leading me in and cup the face of the blessings He's filling my heart with.***

I know what His strength in my weakness feels like. I love deeper. I try harder. I long to live life fully for Him and I've felt the warmth of His faithfulness!

Scars still surface and the rawness of death's wounds reappear when no one else is around. But, somehow I can now welcome them as God's reminders that ***this is not my home***. He's simply

preparing me, carving me out and molding me down into who He wants me to be by the time I reach eternity.

Yeah, March 11 will always hold heart ache as my soul recalls what my mind doesn't mean to. Unconsciously, I relive those last days as morsels of memories piece themselves together in my un-intending mind.

But, the reliving is different now. ***It's a reminder of who I am and Whose I am***. It's the knowing that if God gave me the journey, I'm to live it for Him!! It's the gratitude for what He's done with all of it. He's softened my heart once hardened with grief and woven a new will into the fabric of my life!

When I read the sweet encouragements from friends and when I see the generous perceptions of what others might see in me or read in the words I write, I accept them as blessings and simply release them back to Him ***with hope my life can somehow sing sweet nothings into my Savior's ears***.

And it's all because of the loss of the life I once lived. So, you see, it's only in loss that I've gained. Yes, I lost a precious love in my life. But I also learned to empty my life of myself so I could be filled with Him.

If there was only one prayer I have for all of this, it's that ***His purpose is on the pedestal and not my own intentions!*** So, I re-live it and retell it with reverence for how my life might humbly serve some small purpose in His vast plan.

I simply stand on the sidelines where God's got my hand and my heart teaching me to love again and designing my life differently. And you know what? When we keep our eyes on Him, ***His bonuses are always better than before!*** Because with God, we never go backwards. For as long as I live or as many times as I re-live March memories, I'll always look forward to His face, ever re-surrendering my life to Him.

So, today as I again remember and re-surrender, as I feel the many blessings up alongside the burdens, I also pray my life's lessons of loss somehow, in even a small way, fill your life with His love. That would be the biggest blessing of all!

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