

Seven

Beautiful Sorrow

“Why’d you have to wait? Where were you? Where were you?”

—The Fray¹

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

—Revelation 21:4 KJV

In Bethany, about two miles east of Jerusalem, there lived a small family made up of Lazarus—the head of the house—and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. What made these three unique was that they were close friends of Jesus. Powerful company to keep! And then:

While Jesus was about a day’s journey away from Bethany, Lazarus became very ill—sick to the point of death. Mary and Martha hurriedly dispatched a messenger to Friend Jesus: “Lord, the one you love is sick,” they told him (John 11:3). Surely he who healed the blind and deaf and lame and more, surely he who loved his confidant and friend, surely he for whom compassion was commonplace—that Lord Jesus would come quickly to the aid of Lazarus, right?

Well, wrong.

Jesus refused to come, all the while knowing that any delay was deadly. And while Christ was away, Lazarus died. Days later, with Lazarus long gone and buried, Christ finally pulled up his entourage in Bethany. Too late. Much too late.

Now, if you've read your Bible or even attended Sunday School as a child, you know what comes next is an awe-inspiring, miraculous happy ending. Jesus rights all wrongs, stands in front of Lazarus' tomb and commands the dead man back to life. Joy to all!

Except...when I witness this vision of God's power and compassion I can't help getting hung up on what happened *before* the miracle.

For four long days before Christ arrived, four choking, hopeless days spent waiting while Jesus dawdled nearby, Mary, Martha, and anyone who loved Lazarus was plunged into deep despair. Look, Jesus wasn't just late; he was deliberately tardy. Jesus didn't just let death happen; he made sure it happened.

Our sisters had dutifully trusted in Christ, hoped in him, placed their brother's life in his hands, literally begged for his presence in the midst of their tragedy.

But Jesus didn't come.

How's that for disappointment with God?

The Open Secret: You are Destined for Sorrow

I read recently about a political polling firm that asked people to give an "approval rating" for God. Apparently the Big Guy's got reason for concern, because barely half (52 percent) of American voters approve of his "overall dealings" with people.² Were Mary and Martha a part of that poll's results, my guess is that they'd have fallen in with the 49 percent who have marked reservations about how God handles things in this fine universe of his.

I'd be willing to bet that you too have, at times, not approved of God's dealings in your life. I know that's been true of me. How could it not be that way? This world hurts, and when sorrow grips the day, regardless of the truth of any situation, it often feels as though God is

deliberately late, that he's simply decided not to care, not to help, not even to make his presence known.

Why does Christ allow (and perhaps insist?) that his followers, his *friends*, endure suffering. Were I a more capable thinker, maybe I could give you a solid, theological, comforting answer to that question.³ But I'm going to be honest with you: I don't know why we're required to live through sorrows in this life, and I'm not going to pretend that I do. My editor tells me I should at least offer up a thought or two on this, so maybe it's an issue of growth, a way to prepare us for eternity. Maybe it's simply a long-lasting, awful consequence of sin. Maybe it's that you and I just deserve worse and fail to see God's mercy in our pain.

Whatever the reason, let's just admit the obvious, shall we?

Just like Mary and Martha and even Lazarus, you and I are destined for sorrow.

There is no exemption for heartbreak in the human race. Grief defines us, it hovers over and behind every moment of life. No, of course we aren't constantly grieving the death of a loved one, but we grieve more than simply loss of life. We grieve loss of hope, loss of opportunity, loss of security, loss of innocence, loss of relationship, and much more. Sometimes we grieve when we just wake up and feel, for no good reason, that something has gone from life that we loved but can never recapture.

One of my favorite movies is Steve Carell's underappreciated gem, *Dan in Real Life*. What I like best from the whole film is the first fifteen seconds of Carell's performance as the title character.

The movie opens on Dan sleeping. He wakes up alone and in silence, surrounded by the detritus of unfinished, overwhelming obligations from yesterday. In the empty bedroom, Dan

shrugs off the bedcovers and sits up, feet on the floor. And there he pauses; head down; shoulders bowed; hands gripping his knees.

A deep breath. A sigh of resignation. A summoning once more of just enough courage to face another day.

“Okay,” he says finally.

Then he stands, walks off scene and into the rest of the film. Many things happen from that point on, but whenever I see him after that, I always see in his eyes *that* Dan—the guy who needs everything within him just to get out of bed in the morning.⁴

Been there. Done that.

How ‘bout you?

C. S. Lewis apparently knew that feeling well. In 1959, as his wife (ironically named Joy) was suffering from the debilitating cancer that would eventually kill her, he wrote to a friend asking for redoubled prayer. “The dreadful thing, as you know,” he confessed helplessly, “is the waking each morning—the moment at which it all flows back on one.”⁵

I suspect that, when Lazarus’ illness worsened and then turned to death, Mary and Martha knew intimately what Dan and C. S. Lewis and you and I have all experienced: The cold, pale light of morning filled with loss of hope and theft of joy. In reality, Mary and Martha likely entered that phase barely hours after sending to Jesus for help.

On day one, the timetable seems to indicate, the messenger is sent and Lazarus dies. Day two, Jesus dawdles, deliberately putting off action, despite the urgency of the call. Day three, Jesus finally starts walking toward Bethany. Day four, he arrives late in the day and is informed of what he already knew: Lazarus is dead, and has been for four full days.⁶

And for each of those four days, Mary and Martha were forced to live with the crushing disappointment of being overlooked by God, to awake from restless, exhausted sleep and experience once more that “moment at which it all flows back on one.”

My brother is dead.

My Savior didn't come.

I am alone and bereft in this world.

It is No Sin to Feel Sad

When C. S. Lewis' wife, Joy, finally passed away in 1960, it was not just the beginning of Lewis' grief but the peak of it. Lewis' stepson, Douglas Gresham, explains in the introduction to *A Grief Observed*, “When Jack [C. S. Lewis's nickname] was racked with the emotional pain of his bereavement, he also suffered the mental anguish resulting from three years of living in constant fear...and the sheer exhaustion of spending those last few weeks in constant caring for his dying wife.”⁷

In the days and weeks following Joy's death, Jack took to writing down his pain as a means of survival, never intending that anyone other than himself would read it. The result was four short manuscript books filled with Lewis' agony and redemption. Those handwritten notes were beautifully raw and difficult and honest, something that Gresham called “a man emotionally naked in his own Gethsemane.”⁸

“No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear,” Lewis began his first journal.

I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing...

Meanwhile, where is God? This is one of the most disquieting symptoms. When you are happy, so happy that you have no sense of needing Him, so happy that you are tempted to feel His claims upon you as an interruption, if you remember yourself and turn to Him with gratitude and praise, you will be—or so it feels—welcomed with open arms. But go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence. You may as well turn away. The longer you wait, the more emphatic the silence will become... Why is He so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent in times of trouble?⁹

I have known those who would frown at C. S. Lewis and his honesty here.

“God works all things for good,” they’d say—and they are right (Romans 8:28). But knowing that doesn’t make pain easier to endure, not at first anyway.

I’ve known those who would chide Lewis tell him to buck up, who would point out that people have died throughout human history, that he had known for years that his wife’s illness would kill her, and that Joy’s death was all part of God’s eternal plan. They would judge him as immature, as ungrateful for choosing to focus on his sorrow instead of the blessing Joy had been in his life.

I don’t know about you, but I often feel like smacking those kinds of people.

I’ve known folks who would be mildly embarrassed by the naked display of sorrow in Jack’s intimate journal, who would suggest that he hurry his way through grief so he could get

back to “normal” and move on with his life. I’m embarrassed to say that, on occasion, I’ve been that kind of person.

Thank God that Jack Lewis knew something that Lazarus’ sisters also figured out a few millennia ago: It is no sin to feel sadness.

It’s not wrong to express honest disappointment with your Savior. It is not wrong to be naked and helpless in his sight. It’s not wrong to tell him what he already knows about the way you feel.

When Tardy Jesus finally showed up in Bethany, the response of Lazarus’ sisters is, well, both heartbreaking and beautiful.

At home, in the company of friends sharing their grief, Mary and Martha hear that Jesus is just outside, a little ways up the road, heading to their home. Martha immediately rushes out to meet him; Mary stays behind. Why? Maybe she’s angry. Maybe she’s hurt by Christ’s delay. Maybe she simply can’t face him right now...and thinking that maybe that serves him right. I’ve felt that way toward God at times, tried to give him a silent treatment of sorts. It didn’t do me much good, but I can’t deny I felt it.

Meanwhile, Martha meets Jesus in the road, and her first words to him are words of sorrow and accusation of complicity: “Lord,” she says, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died” (John 11:21).

It’s interesting that Jesus never rebukes her for this sorrow, or for her accusation that he had failed. Instead, he reaches into her grief with a promise, “Your brother will rise again,” and then gently points her back to faith: “I am the resurrection and the life...the one who believes in me will live, even though they die”. (John 11:23, 25). Basically, “In spite of your brother’s death, do you still trust me?”

Why didn't Jesus rebuke her for lack of faith? Tell her to stop blubbing and to start living? Why didn't he frown and tell her to get 'hold of herself? I'd guess it's because God's not intimidated or threatened by honest emotion; because it was no sin for Martha to feel sad at the loss of her brother—even when that sadness was multiplied by a perception that God had let her down.

I have a friend, let's call him Clark, who sometimes struggles with bouts of depression. He wrote to me once to ask my advice about that. Clark was on an emotional loop that went something like this: "I feel sad, sometimes for a reason, sometimes for no reason at all. And then, I worry because I can't make myself stop feeling sad, and I can't tell anyone about it because depression isn't something polite people talk about. And then I get even more depressed because I can't stop being depressed...and so I feel sad."

I'm no psychologist. I don't know the ins and outs of medical treatment for depression. But I do know this: sometimes I feel sad too, and no amount of telling myself not to feel sad helps me not feel sad. So you know what I do? I tell Jesus, "Lord, I'm depressed. Do something about it." And then I get on with my life.

Do I stop being depressed right away? Nope, not usually. But I refuse to let depression be the thing that stops me from trusting God's faithfulness, or from loving my wife, or from putting in a good day's work, or from hanging out and playing games with my son and his family, or from going to the movies with my nieces, or whatever. So that's what I told my friend. Go ahead and feel sad, but don't let that sadness keep you from living, or from finding joy in the little happinesses of life.

When I got Clark's return e-mail, I could almost hear the relief in his voice. "I feel so much better!" he said to me, "just knowing that it's okay to feel bad sometimes."

So let me tell you now, just in case you didn't know it: it's okay to feel bad sometimes, to be depressed, to feel overwhelmed and like giving up.

It's okay to turn to Jesus and say, "Lord, if you had been here, my husband would never have left me...I wouldn't have this chronic illness...the terrorist attack would have been prevented," and so on.

As I see it, the only real problems with sorrow are when you allow it to prevent you from *living*, or when you use it as punishment either for yourself or for someone else. For instance, grief as penance for guilt is unhealthy, but you need to deal with your guilt before you can deal with your grief. Grief as an excuse to opt out of relationships or as a means of controlling them is a problem. You don't need to punish yourself with sorrow, but you must allow yourself to experience sorrow—simply because it's going to be present in some way in just about every day of your life.

Listen to how Lewis described that: "As to how I take sorrow, the answer is 'in nearly all the possible ways.' Because, as you probably know, it isn't a state, but a process. It keeps on changing—like a winding road with quite a new landscape at each bend."¹⁰

And that leads me to something we must learn to admit about our Lord:

Jesus is a Man of Sorrows

Isaiah gave this prophetic description of Jesus Christ: "He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3 ESV).

Perhaps that's why Jesus didn't rebuke Martha when she poured out her grief on him. And when Mary later came to him weeping, accusing, he didn't reprimand her either. Do you know what he did instead?

He cried with her (John 11:32–35).

I've always had trouble with that. Why did Jesus cry? He wasn't surprised by the loss of Lazarus. He knew Lazarus was dead before he ever set out to visit Bethany, and planned ahead to work that miracle of resurrection. "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep," he told his disciples plainly, "but I am going there to wake him up" (John 11:11).

So why the tears?

The creator of life was clearly not overwhelmed by the death of Lazarus. He knew the endgame. He fully intended, in just moments, to change all tears to laughter. With one simple command, he was going to bring Lazarus stumbling back from the grave. Yet he cried anyway. Why? Scripture gives a few clues. First:

"He was...a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief..." (Isaiah 53:3 ESV).

Christ alone has experienced the fullness of grief both as limitless deity and as limited man. Thus Christ alone has perfect empathy for those of us who also find ourselves wrapped up in sorrow. Why did Jesus cry? Maybe it was just because Mary was crying. Because he understood perfectly what the apostle Paul would later mean when he said, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15 HCSB).

Second, "Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!'" (John 11:35–36).

In *A Grief Observed*, Lewis suggests that bereavement is an inherent part of the experience of love, as natural as summer giving way to autumn.¹¹ If this is true, then only love truly has the power to grieve, because only love can care enough to feel the loss of an object of love. In that respect, it can honestly be said that in some intangible way and to some intangible degree, sorrow is evidence of love—or at least of the capacity to love.

For instance, I will tell you now that four years ago my aged dog died. Does that last sentence cause you feelings of sorrow? Does it make your throat feel tight, cause you to take a deep breath, make your eyes redden and threaten a new headache from holding back tears? Of course not. You neither knew nor loved my little dog. But just thinking of that animal's passing—more than four years ago!—still causes very real pangs of sorrow in my heart. Why? Because I loved that dog, and my love still grieves his loss.

“See how he loved him!” they said when Jesus wept. And that, it seems, is a clue for us. Jesus wept because he loved.

Knowing that a miracle was to come didn't prevent Christ from experiencing love and its correlating grief on behalf of Mary and Martha. Jesus' empathetic sorrow reveals his great capacity for love in the in-between moments, in the underneath places where sadness fills the cracks. Yes, very soon he will work a miracle, but until then, he is still a man of sorrows, filled with great love for those who mourn.

And so, because he loves, he weeps.

I admire what Mary did here. No, not the petulant part where she hid herself from Jesus out of anger or grief or whatever. I love that at last, she did what you and I would always do if we were anything but selfish, shortsighted creatures.

She literally laid her sorrow at Jesus' feet.

“When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him,” John reports, “she fell at his feet and said, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died’” (John 11:33).

Earlier I told you a hard truth, didn't I? You are destined for sorrow. Well, let me admit now that I told you only part of that truth. Here it is in full: you are destined for sorrow, but you never have to face any sadness alone.

In the heart of every sorrow, in the hidden moments of greatest grief, Jesus is always ready and willing to weep with you. And it is our unfathomable privilege to lay every ounce of sadness directly at his feet. He will always receive it, and like a faithful friend, he will always help to bear the unyielding burden it lays upon us, no matter how long it must be borne, or how often we return to his feet with our pain. Perhaps that's why the apostle Paul could say with such confidence, "We are pressured in every way but not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are struck down but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8–9 HCSB).

Remember my friend Clark that I told you about earlier? The one who sometimes struggles with depression? He himself has been an expression of this Friend Jesus in my life more than once, especially when I myself was living underneath the shade of sorrow. I remember one time specifically when I was a young man. I went to Clark because, as usual, a beautiful girl had broken my heart. He listened while I wailed, until I finally shuttered myself into silent tears. Then he did the craziest, most wonderful thing.

Without saying a word, Clark stood up and wrapped me in a hug. We stood there, me crying, him hugging, neither speaking. And then he let go and we both just sat in silence for awhile. And somewhere in the silence of Clark's presence, I heard the whisper of Jesus reminding me that I was not alone—and I never would be, no matter what sorrows would come into my life.

At the exact moment I needed it, Christ, in his great love, had made sure I had a friend who would be more loyal to me than a faithful wind. And as the days and weeks and years have gone by, I've found the **Man of Sorrows** whispering comfort to me again and again in the

silences of suffering. And slowly, slowly, I am learning to follow Mary's example, to drop myself at Jesus' feet and pour out my tears upon him.

“When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved...”(John 11:33).¹²

Why did Jesus cry? Because he loved Mary. Because the **Man of Sorrows** knew her grief. Because he refused to let her grieve alone, even for the precious few moments it would take until he worked a miracle that would turn her weeping into shouts of joy.

It's a beautiful picture, isn't it, to think that God has no need of weeping for you, but still loves enough to weep with you anyway?

And that hints at a mystery we sometimes miss when we're buried under the weight of depression and discouragement.

Sorrow Adds Texture to Beauty

Shortly after their marriage, Charles and Kate Dickens found themselves the guardians for Kate's younger sister, Mary Hogarth. Charles grew to love his young sister-in-law as if she were his own daughter, forging a deep familial friendship with her. He later declared that she was “the dear girl whom I loved, after my wife, more deeply and fervently than anyone on earth.”

On Saturday night, May 6, 1837, the family happily attended the production of one of Charles' plays at the St. James Theatre. They came home in good spirits and then seventeen-year-old Mary fell suddenly, unexpectedly ill. Kate and Charles rushed to her side. The next day she was dead—she literally died in Charles' arms, “in such a calm and gentle sleep,” Dickens

later mourned, “that although I had held her in my arms for some time before, when she was certainly living (for she swallowed a little brandy from my hand) I continued to support her lifeless form, long after her soul had fled to Heaven.”

The death of his sister-in-law transformed Charles Dickens—and his writing. For the rest of his life, he wore her ring on his own finger as a memory of her. And, biographer Edgar Johnson reports,

Out of his imagination [Mary] never died. Throughout almost his entire literary career his novels continue to reveal glimpses of now one and now another aspect of her shining image. Mary’s gaiety and tenderness animate loving, laughing Ruth Pinch in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. His vision of her nobler qualities recurs again and again, in Florence Dombey’s devotion to her brother and father, in David Copperfield’s serene and perhaps too perfect Agnes, in the sacrificial spirit of Little Dorrit...It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of this early love and early sorrow for Dickens.¹³

It is tragic that Mary Hogarth died a young woman, that Charles Dickens mourned that loss for the rest of his life. And yet, that deep sorrow also became ineradicable texture behind Dickens’ enduring works of art, lending beauty and depth to nearly every effort. This is not to say that Mary’s death was an acceptable price to pay for the literary result! But it is to say that there was beauty to be found in the sorrow that death created. Dickens found it, and we are all just a little bit better for it.

Mark Twain also was no stranger to sorrow. In 1858, “Mark Twain” was still just Samuel Clemens, a young steamship pilot working on the Mississippi River in a boat called the *Pennsylvania*. Thanks to Samuel’s influence, the steamship hired his little brother, Henry, to work as a “mud clerk” (errand boy) on the boat.

During the Henry’s sixth round-trip between St. Louis and New Orleans, an altercation broke out. Samuel, defending his brother, smacked their boss over the head with a heavy stool and threw in a few extra punches for good measure. When the boat docked in New Orleans, Samuel was kicked off the *Pennsylvania* and barred from ever returning. So Samuel and Henry made plans to take separate ships back to St. Louis, where they would reunite and find new work. Henry would finish out his duties on the *Pennsylvania*, and Samuel would follow two days later on a different boat.

Midway home, about sixty miles south of Memphis, an accidental explosion ripped through the *Pennsylvania*, fatally wounding Henry Clemens. He was taken to Memphis where, shortly after, Samuel stood vigil by his brother’s side. On June 18, Samuel wrote a friend these words, “Long before this reaches you, my poor Henry,—my darling, my pride, my glory, my all, will have finished his blameless career and the light of my life will have gone out in utter darkness. Oh God! this is hard to bear.” On June 21, 1858, Henry Clemens was dead.

Biographer Jerome Loving writes:

The tragedy, only the first in a series of calamities to rain down upon this otherwise singularly successful American life, had a long-lasting impact on Sam Clemens and Mark Twain. Not only did Twain wait to use his river background in his fiction, but Clemens never returned to the river as a pilot after 1861. He often said that he wanted to return and that piloting

for him would have been the most satisfying career in the world, but he no more wanted to return to the river.¹⁴

Out of Samuel Clemens' unspeakable grief came more than just a career change from steamship pilot to literary icon. That heartbreaking experience colored the rest of his life—and his work. Twain's stories of life on the Mississippi River are all populated and textured by the author's memories of sailing that river with his brother Henry. And in those stories we've gained breathtaking glimpses of Americana, of muddled **heroes** and **heroic** humanity, of timeless joy and beautiful sorrow. Like Dickens, Mark Twain found beauty in his suffering, and generations have shared in the benefit.

Sorrow is Prelude to Joy

Jesus wept.

Do you see the tears in his eyes? Do you feel the compassion of his words, the comfort of his presence?

Yes, it's tragic that Lazarus died, that Mary and Martha were left to grieve for four full days before Christ came with a miracle of life. And yet the deep sorrow of those two sisters has also become more than simple sadness. Those tears have become texture behind the beauty of our Christ and of our understanding of God throughout history ever since.

Jesus wept. And that's just beautiful. Then, in the midst of the weeping, in the firm grasp of sorrow, Jesus did the unthinkable: he brought forth joy.

Standing in front of the tomb, he called out in a loud voice: “Lazarus, come out!” And do you know what happened? “The dead man came out” (John 11:43–44).

Can you imagine the unfiltered joy that followed Lazarus’ postmortem appearance?

Can you see Martha’s jaw drop, Mary’s face transform with wide-eyed wonder?

Can you hear the cheers and shouts, the sobs of happiness?

Can you feel the trembling strength in the hugs the sisters place on their dearly departed, dearly returned brother?

Incomprehensible, indefensible joy.

And a reminder that, miracle or no, all of today’s sorrows are at worst a shadowy prelude to tomorrow’s joy. Even in our darkest moments we can experience mirrored reflections of that joy here and now. Ah, but when eternity finally comes? We will embrace it in *full*.

Somebody say amen!

Now, unlike Mary and Martha, I’ve not been present for the rapturous delight of a resurrection—but I have sampled a small taste of that kind of joy, of the laughter that somehow miraculously followed my tears. This hurtful, hateful world is not the end of me; there’s better waiting on the horizon. And here’s my little secret:

I’ve an inkling of what’s coming.

It happened when I was a freshman in college, visiting my grandfather on a quick trip home. We sat in his living room, and my grandfather was laughing so hard that tears streamed down his face like little rivers of joy staining his cheeks.

It was hard to believe he had buried his mother just a few hours earlier.

But that was my grandfather, a man we called “Jidee,” and a man who chose to mix a little joy into the drink we called grief.

They'd been close, Jidee and my great-grandmother. He'd cared for her for many years, faithfully stopping by her home each day to see that she was warm and fed. He planned each day around seeing his mother. She lived a long, full life.

When the day came for her to leave this earth, my grandfather called me at college. "Please come home for the funeral," he said. "I'll pay for your plane ticket." I came, and my sisters and I all cried tears of sorrow during the service.

Later, exhausted, we retreated to Jidee's house. As we sat in somber silence, a smile flickered on my grandfather's face. He was remembering those special times a mother shares with her son. Curious, we begged him to tell us about growing up as an immigrant in the early nineteen hundreds.

For the next two hours he regaled us with stories of his mother, his brother, his aunts and uncles. We laughed and cried and shouted and sighed and mourned and rejoiced all at the same time. And it was a beautiful kind of sorrow, an image I've never forgotten and never gotten over.

A few decades later, I sat in that same living room preparing for my beloved Jidee's funeral. In my head, I began telling my own stories about growing up with my grandfather, and through them all, through the funeral and long afterward, I kept seeing his face—the one I'd seen at my great-grandmother's funeral.

Laughing and crying. Mourning death and rejoicing life at the same time.

That's the picture of my grandfather that stays with me today, that moment when he taught me irreparably that there is joy to be found even in the midst of sorrow.

Take heart. The words of the psalmist are true. My grandfather smiled it. Mary and Martha testified to it. Jesus incredibly lived it. And I've even seen it with my own eyes.

[[begin sense lines]]

Weeping may endure for a night,

But joy cometh in the morning! (Psalm 30:5 KJV, emphasis added)

[[end sense lines]]

¹ The Fray, vocal performance of “You Found Me,” by [[songwriter]], on *The Fray*, Epic, 2009, CD.

² Jack Jenkins, “Poll: God's Approval Rating Barely Breaks 50 Percent,” *Huffington Post*, July 27, 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/27/god-congress-approval-rating_n_911220.html.

³ One mind I admire who has recently attempted a thoughtful exploration of suffering is Dinesh D’Souza. I recommend highly his work *Godforsaken* (Tyndale House, 2012). And, of course, C. S. Lewis’ book, *The Problem of Pain* (HarperOne, 1940, 1996) is required reading for anyone with serious intellectual curiosity about the topic.

⁴ “Dan in Real Life,” *Dan in Real Life*, directed by Peter Hedges, written by Pierce Gardner and Peter Hedges (2008; [[city, state]]: Focus Features / Touchstone Home Entertainment, 2008), DVD.

⁵ C. S. Lewis, *Letters to an American Lady*, ed. Clyde S. Kilby (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 85.

⁶ Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll’s New Testament Insights: Insights on John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 198.

⁷ C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1961, 1994), 11–12.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 19, 21–22,

¹⁰ Lewis, *Letters to an American Lady*, 89.

¹¹ Lewis, *A Grief Observed*, 68.

¹² John 11:33 **[[FOR SOME REASON THIS WOULDN’T DELETE. OMIT THIS NOTE—IT IS IN THE TEXT]]**

¹³ Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph* Revised and Abridged (New York: The Viking Press, 1952, 1977), 125–126, 128.

¹⁴ Jerome Loving, *Mark Twain: The Adventures of Samuel L. Clemens* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 62–66.

Chapter 8