

12. LOSS

WHEN MARY CAME WHERE JESUS WAS AND SAW HIM, SHE KNELT AT HIS FEET AND SAID TO HIM, "LORD, IF YOU HAD BEEN HERE, MY BROTHER WOULD NOT HAVE DIED." WHEN JESUS SAW HER WEeping, AND THE JEWS WHO CAME WITH HER ALSO WEeping, HE WAS GREATLY DISTURBED IN SPIRIT AND DEEPLY MOVED... JESUS WEPT.

JOHN 11:32-35

Called Through Grief and Loss

Do you hear them? So many questions! And the questions we throw at God come fast and furious when we are gripped by loss and grief. Why cancer? Why divorce? Why miscarriage or addiction or loss? The list goes on and on... And, often, we don't get the answers we hope for. But what if, when we ask our questions, we're really summoning the courage to invite Jesus into our darkness? What if, like Mary in this encounter, when we go to Jesus with our "where were you" grievances we experience the Spirit of Jesus weeping with us?

Mary, her brother dead in the tomb, basically asks Jesus, Where were you? Likewise, Meg has asked this very question (and so many others) in the moments, days, months, and years since her mom's suicide... Where were you, Jesus?

Our questions call us to the heart of God through our grief and loss—the God who made us longs for a deep, intimate relationship with us, and our raw questions obliterate the distance we keep from Him.

This poem by Jan Richardson, "Blessing the Questions," invites our authenticity...

Let them come: The questions that storm through the crack in the world.	that arrive with breathtaking speed, the questions that never entirely leave,
Let them come: the questions that crawl through the whole heart.	the questions that bring more questions still.
Let them come: the questions in anguish, the questions in tears.	Let them come: the questions that haunt you in shadowy hours, the questions that visit
Let them come: the questions in rage, the questions in fear.	in deepest night, the questions that draw you into rest, into dream,
Let them come: the questions that whisper themselves so slow, the questions	the questions that stir the wakening World.

Exploration Questions

- What resonated or moved you in Meg's story of the loss of her mother?
- What losses in your life have drawn you closer to God, and what losses have pushed you away? Explain.
- Mary sat with Jesus, released what was raw inside, and then wept together with Him—what do you need to "release to Jesus" right now, and why?