

I JUST MISS YOU

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I have confidence with all of my capacity, to believe that there is life after death. I believe that all of the hints and promises about what comes next, the glimpses gifted

by God are true. I believe that I will see my Mamaw and side by side worship and love and laugh like we rarely had the chance to do on this side of forever. **I believe there are depths of beauty our eyes have never beheld, a peace our war struck world could never possibly offer, and a richer love than any we have ever known.** I believe God gives us hints about what is coming, and if we were paying attention and lingering over these hopes, we would live differently — we would not marginalize the eternal, and we would gaze upon those who are dying with a glorious anticipation.

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." — Philippians 1:21

But even so... death is hard. I'd be lying if I said that even under the best of circumstances (trusting Christ and on the cusp of heaven) it wasn't *very* hard and *very* sad. I guess because it seems like such an uncompromising, violent interruption of life as we know it while also taking from us proximity with our people. **I don't think we are meant for death. And so we feel it.** It scrapes our soft hearts because we were meant for life at its fullest. It seems like a thief, stealing people and denying the intimacy of interaction.

Right now, my people are sad — because my Papaw was placed in hospice and has only days left — and they are hard days. We're confident in where he will be, and with only 3 months since we buried my Mamaw; his wife of 72 years, it only seems right that they would be together. But right now I just want to kiss his cheek and tell him that I will just miss him. This life might be a blink of an eye, but when all you know is this pace, Heaven feels far away.

"...the righteous one is swept away from the presence of evil. He will enter into peace...they will rest... everyone who lives uprightly." — Isaiah 57:1-2

I also realize that there are so many who have faced death by proximity, or are facing it now, by diagnosis, and you are not 94 years old with a beautiful life behind you. And I am so sorry. I am sorry for the pain you are handling. I am sorry for the hurt that might be yours for a long time. I will not downplay the vacancy in your world, and I refuse to ignore the fact that hope is hard to hang onto when you are broken. But my prayer is that you would know this... *this is not it*. There is more. **This life is certainly what we know, but it isn't what is best, it's going to be so much better.**

"Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere." — Psalm 84:10

"But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who

will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body..." — Philippians 3:20

There is more.

So, if the words, "I just miss you," are lingering on your lips... know that there is one who knows grief, and who knows you. And there is one who loves you, who forsake his throne and who knows the taste of death. And who rose again. And he longs to show you and the ones you love life at its fullest. He longs to know you in his courts — and if you chose him, death will have no victory, it will have lost its sting. The thief leaves empty handed.