

WHEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND

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There are some things I do not understand. Some experiences that supersede our capacity to hold them. Storms that really do challenge the foundation we stand on and our very rooting feels vulnerable. Some truths both beautiful and severe that somehow coexist, and I struggle to wrap my brain around it. There are moments in these lives we embody that challenge our perceptions and fall far beyond our ability to lean on our own understanding in any way that gives contrived comfort. When life plates us with the palpable, this doesn't seem so hard. Not to understand the gifts we're frequently claiming doesn't throw us to our knees, but when our hearts are throttled, we tend to stop and say... wait... what just happened?

When life throws us things we don't understand, sometimes it's helpful to linger over what we do know.

I know that God is good. I know that he is brilliant. *Brilliant*. I know that he has eyes to see things we are not privy to. That he creates and restores, has plans and pursues. I also know that terrible tragedies and severe mercies exist. I know that while God has great plans for us, he also allows painful circumstances to play out. And somehow all

of this can be true *at the same time*. Even though sometimes I don't understand what his plans are, or why he allows it. He makes us able to stand.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight." — Proverbs 3:5-6

My people are in the throws of grief. There are things I do not understand right now. Not yet. And I am so glad that **I don't have to understand everything to know it is handled by his brilliance**. I don't have to understand to trust him. I don't have to understand to run to him as my refuge. I don't have to even have to understand to obey what he asks me to do next. Because his character has been made clear. *Because this life isn't it*. Thank God, this life isn't it. Because there will be a moment when tears are wiped from our faces, and one day in his presence will make all the rest feel like a shadow resemblance of the kind of joy we were made for and offered. His throne is secure, his foundation is firm.

"He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away." — Revelation 21:4

He will personally wipe tears. Not hand us a Kleenex and smile quietly... he will gently hold our faces and wipe his fingers over the tears that have leaked out of our eyes, and they will be no more.

I also don't understand how with a breath the world was created.

How with a seed a soul can be formed within my womb.

I don't understand how the stars are set, how the moon moves the waves, how pearls are crushed into beauty.

What's True

Sweet friends, we are allowed to weep and lament, to cry out and to question. But in the midst of our aches, in the deeps of our grief, we must remember that *everything he said is true*. His promises stand. His faithfulness does not hinge on our ability to hold ourselves upright when we feel like crumbling. His faithfulness may be his grace poured out on us in such a way that we can know peace that surpasses

understanding. Laughter when we thought it impossible. He out-gives every ache. Not by replacing, that would be impossible. But in remaining true to his word that his mercies are new every morning, that his church will never fail. That being in community matters, and that where two or more are gathered in his name, there he is with them. He can place words in our mouths when people ask hard questions, he can meet needs you never thought of by whispering nudges into the ears of those around you. He is more than capable of taking a heart that has been struck down and keep it from being destroyed... but even more, he can take that heart and transform it into something new and glorious.

I believe this, even though I do not understand all of his ways. Even though winds still blow and waves still pummel. I believe that eternity will change everything. Because he is brilliant. Brilliant in ways I am not... and so I worship him, and I wait with hopeful expectation.