

## When Loss Overcomes Us

I woke up this morning early with tears in my eyes. I had another bad dream. The dream was about my son Mic and how I miss him. The dreams are vivid and full of emotion. When these events occur, I struggle with the loss of someone so dear, and I'm overcome with pain and brokenness. My mind kicks into neutral, and I begin to drown in a pool of regret and sorrow. These are the times that make life seem thin and full of despair. When will it ever end? Sure, there are the good times. In fact, many good times, but they are quickly forgotten. Just like turning off the light switch and having darkness fill the room – that fast and that dark. I feel worn out. Like the light switch being turned on and off, on and off, over and over. It's one extreme to the next. It makes me so tired. I just want to find a pile of soft cotton balls and stumble into them to rest and drift off into a night of restful bliss, but it doesn't come.

When days like this happen to me, I have to be deliberate in changing the course of this runaway train. That in itself is hard. Being deliberate is the last thing I want to do, but it's the action that is spurred on by desperation. Like a drowning swimmer grasping for the safety of a rescue swimmer as he provides safety and hope. Something has to throw the switch of this runaway train and get it back on the right track. If not, well ....

Being deliberate is the action and mechanism that throws the switch and redirects the train onto a new track. A track that is heading in a positive direction. Being deliberate is just doing something. It helps pull the mind out of a quagmire of mud. It doesn't matter at first what direction I'm being pulled in. Just get me out of the mud. Just like the locomotive that gets started with a slip of the wheels and then traction ... slip of the wheels and a little more traction . . . the momentum builds and I begin planning the direction. But until then just get me out of the mud. I hate it when I can't move out of my mire.

The second thing I do is realize that there are many like me. It doesn't have to be the loss of a child, although it is by far one of the hardest and deepest mud pits to climb out of. But these mud pits exist in all of our lives. Some deeper and stinkier than others. None the less, they are painful and relative. The point is that we are in this together. This road is common to all men. Some seem to travel a road that has less bogs in them, but still they have them. So, I'm not being singled out, which adds some comfort.

The third thing I do is remember that my life is a tapestry that God is continuing to weave. God weaves into our lives many great things. Like the two remaining children that I have. Sometimes I forget as I'm drowning in brokenness that I have two incredible children that mean the world to me. I need them. They need me. I need to live and celebrate their lives. They truly are amazing. These are two major chords that God has woven into my life. And then as I stand back and look at the tapestry, I see more strands that are major. My wife, my parents, my extended family, my fellow believers, my friends and my freedom. All of this is because my God is weaving my life with His own hands. So, I will be deliberate about God. I will deliberately serve Him. Then deliberately God sets my locomotion on the right track.

God has told us that He will never leave us or forsake us. The life line for a person stuck in life's bog. So, I write to you as a witness of God's steadfastness. By writing this and processing it, and being deliberate, I have pulled myself out of today's mud hole. I was deliberate and blessed to have family and friends like you, and by being deliberate with God. I hope this might shed some light on helping you getting out of life's mud pits. The more deliberate I am about God, the quicker I get pulled out of the pits. So be deliberate.

In Christ,  
Pastor Mike.