

Before I left Stephanie's apartment yesterday afternoon Diana wanted to tell me about her cat. Well, one of her cats; I found out they have four cats over there. Anyway, over the weekend one of the cats ran out the open door and didn't come back. D.D., what was the name of that cat? I forgot. Well, the apartment was new to the cats as well as to the people who were living there. And Diana was afraid that the cat got lost because hours went by and she didn't return. But then later in the day Mary Lee opened up a bag of cat food and while she was pouring it into a bowl, the lost cat jumped into the kitchen.

We laughed about that silly cat, but you know that story also reminds me about how nervous we get when something or somebody we love goes away. And I don't care how old you are, that's always real hard.

I don't know what you all are feeling today. Nervous. Sad. Angry. Maybe you're mad at Tim or mad at God. Maybe you think this is such a waste. Maybe you feel relieved that Tim's at peace. You might feel none of those things, you might feel all of them. You might feel one of them today, and you'll feel a different one next week. It's like we've all moved into a strange apartment where the cat has disappeared.

Tim's present situation is so different from ours, and it's not just death and life different. His pain is over, ours has just begun. He's at peace and we're left confused. The hurt that one man used to feel alone is now shared by so many more.

I'm sure it was like this for the apostles when Jesus died; the untimely death of one young man profoundly grieved those who loved him. And when Jesus hinted at all this, Thomas asked him a desperate question: "Master, we don't know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Two thousand years after Jesus died, when grief rocks our fragile hearts, we still ask him the same question, "Where are you going, Lord? Where are you trying to lead us? How can we know the way?"

His answer to Thomas still rings true, "I am the way," he said. "You come to me, you'll come to the Father." We expect him to make that way clear, but too often it's like Brookside and Main--by the time you come to 59th St. you may not know what way you're on any more. No the way of Christ is the way of the cross. But it's not a way that imposes a cross, it's a way that overcomes a cross. We want a way that obliterates the cross, but Christ wants a way that redeems the cross. We want a way that will bring Tim back, but he offers us a way that will help us go on, a way of faith that believes Christ overcomes death. *even for the survivors.*

Jesus said his Father's mansion has many dwelling places, where he's prepared a place for us all. I'm sure when he prepared Tim's ^{own} place, he left the screen door open.

Yeah, a new apartment is a scary thing no matter who you are. But the way to the door is the way of Christ, and his table is always laden with food to welcome his people home.