

Losing Dad and Trusting God

When my father died unexpectedly, our family worried about the future. But we also trusted that Heavenly Father had a plan for us.

By Emma Antonucci

I can still remember the sound of Mom banging on my bedroom door, screaming for me to unlock the front door for the paramedics. They were there for my dad.

This kind of thing had happened before, and at first I didn't think much of it. Dad had struggled with uncontrolled diabetes for years. But I'd never seen my mother as frantic as she was on this cold November morning. The paramedics did all they could. The emergency room staff did all they could. After their efforts were exhausted, it became clear that my dad would leave this life earlier than we ever expected.

Plagued with Uncertainty

The weeks that followed were excruciating. I'd dealt with

uncertainty before— whenever my dad lost a job, or whenever we moved to a new city—but this kind of uncertainty bordered on complete desperation. Dad had been our sole provider, and now he was gone. Mom, heartbroken and with three children still at home during the day, desperately looked for work.

For a brief time, I thought we'd be homeless.

But I held on to the faith that Heavenly Father would take care of us. I didn't know how or when, but I knew that He would in His own time (see Proverbs 3:5–6). Over the following months, we experienced miracles. Friends stepped in and helped us. And after months of searching, my mom finally got a job.

Blessings and Grief

Looking back, I can see so many instances of the Lord's mercy that I

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couldn't begin to count or explain them all. People often ask me if I'm angry at God for taking my dad when He did. Truthfully, I'm not. Instead, I'm thankful to Heavenly Father for the blessings that have been mine: a dad who blessed my life for 18 years; a caring boyfriend who listened to and comforted me; friends (many of whom have also lost parents) who helped guide me in my new life without my dad. And most importantly, I have been blessed with the strongest mother on earth.

And that list doesn't even include all of the other spiritual blessings I continue to receive through the Savior and His Atonement! Both these blessings and the devastating and life-altering event of losing my dad are part of my mortal experience, and in God's perfect fairness, eventually it will all be made right.

Choosing Light and Trust

I want others to feel Christ's light and know of Heavenly Father's plan



for them. So I've decided to serve a mission. When I met with my stake president as part of the application process, he said, "When people are faced with grief, they are also faced with a decision. They can choose to cling to Christ or to turn away from Him." I realized that losing my dad had prompted me to cling to the Savior as tightly as I could.

I know life will continue to be hard. There are challenges that I have not yet faced, sorrows I cannot yet comprehend. But Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have promised to hold my hand and guide me through the darkness (see Matthew 11:28–30). Their light will direct me to a future They are preparing for me.

The Savior is our beacon of hope. His light, if we choose to follow it, will guide us safely home to our Heavenly Father. ■



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