

Thanks for the introduction, Nick. Tonight, I'd like to talk about three people that matter a lot to me.

When I was 7 years old, my friend Becky's little sister Emily was born. Becky and Emily lived across the street from me. When I was 10, Emily came trick-or-treating to our house dressed as Minnie Mouse. We didn't have any candy because it was still the afternoon, so I ran into my room and found a tootsie roll for her. She was so happy to have that tootsie roll. 6 months later, Emily was on a road trip with her family when she got tangled in her seatbelt. They pulled over, but her father couldn't free her. Emily was strangled by her seatbelt and died at age 4. A week after she died, her little pink bike was still in their driveway.

A week into sophomore year, I met a freshman named Andy.. He was quiet and awkward, so I found it difficult to talk to him, but he always came to basketball when I invited him, so I hung out with him a lot. Walking to basketball, I got to know him pretty well. His favorite movie is "Jeff Who Lives at Home." He thinks Rio Ferdinand isn't very good at soccer. He can see himself being like Timothy from the bible. As time went on, he came out of his shell more and more and made a bunch of his own friends. Then he got quad-ed, so I didn't get to see him as much, but we still played basketball semi-frequently and he was still like my little brother. Early in the morning of April 6, 2014; while I was probably either playing a video game or sleeping, Andy jumped off an 8-story parking garage in Boston. He died the next morning. 4 months later, I coincidentally found myself at that same parking garage. I took a walk around the garage to look for evidence of where he did it, but nothing looked out of place and there weren't any bloodstains on the cement.

Over this last winter break, my dad and I were walking and he stumbled. But he stumbled like an old man. It reminded me of the time that I saw an 80-year-old man stumble and fall flat on his face. It turned out he had dementia and when my sister and I ran over to him, there was blood all over his face and he was so confused. Over winter break, my dad reminded me of that man. Someday, my dad will fall and he won't just hop right back up. Someday, my dad will die. Because of that, my kids' kids' kids' may not even know his name. and because he'll die, they definitely won't know how he used to do this giant goofy grin after he'd make *another* corny physics pun.

Death has dominion over our lives. Every single person that we know is going to die and I absolutely hate that. I hate that death destroys the hope and future that Emily could have had. I hate that death destroyed any chance I'll have to play basketball at the MAC with Andy. I hate that death threatens to destroy any memory of my father and any connection I have with him. I hate that death has dominion over the people I love.

A couple days after Andy's death, my friend overheard the following in a dhall: "I went to the memorial service in Pfoho. It was really...weird. There were a ton of Christians in HCFA who were, like, really happy Andy was dead." While we, Christians, are by no means happy, we have hope because Andy's story doesn't end with death.

God loved us so much that he became a human, suffered, and died. Then in roughly 33 A.D., somewhere in Palestine, he literally came back to life. In this way, he conquered death. He has promised that one day he will destroy death—meaning that death will be no more. We have hope because we believe he can and he will.

But that day has yet to come. I woke up this morning and it was a beautiful day. And Emily was still dead. And Andy was still dead. And my dad is still going to die. Death is still here and that sucks. I wait so eagerly for the day that death is no more.

On that day, Emily's bike will be in her yard because she's going to be riding it tomorrow.

On that day, Andy's blood won't be on the cement because it will be in him.

And on that day, I'll get to see my dad and introduce him to my kids' kids' kids.

Thanks.