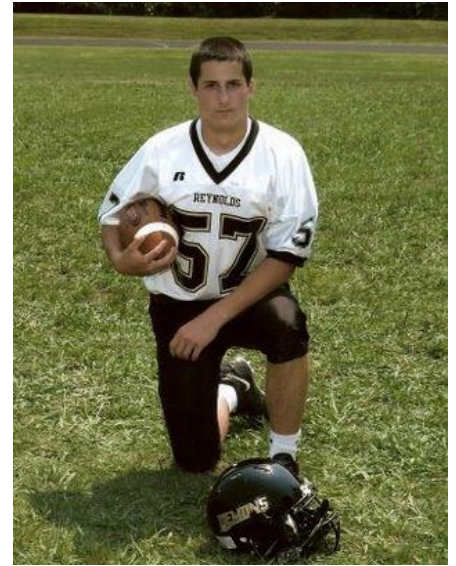


I Won't Let You Down

The speaker at the YMCA's recent prayer breakfast was Bob Gfeller, father of the late Matt Gfeller. At the young age of 15, Matt tragically lost his life in a high school football game. Earlier in the game Matt had confidentially reassured his teammates, "I won't let you down." He inspired his teammates in the huddle. As a linebacker his job was to fill the gaps created by the blocking of the other team's offensive line. Late in the game Matt made a tackle and never moved after the play was over.

Our Heavenly Father won't let you down either. He knows the plays called by Satan, and He fills in the gaps in our lives. We know we can depend on Him. He will never fail us. *The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged (Deuteronomy 31:8).*

After Matt's passing, the family adopted the pro-active response of "What now?" They wanted to help other families avoid experiencing what they had. Matthew Gfeller's family rallied around him and re-focused on a new life purpose. They started the Matthew Gfeller Foundation to provide the highest level of care to athletes suffering from sports-related brain injuries and to research how to make sports safer. In addition, Mr. Gfeller also heads up the Childress Institute for Pediatric Trauma. Thanks to Mr. Gfeller's tireless efforts, just 8 years later, every state in our nation now has concussion protocols in youth sports.



God transforms tragic situations into something with a positive spin. God cries with us in our sorrow but then helps us to think ahead of "What now?" He provides us opportunities where we can be of service and an inspiration for others. The Gfellers clearly are both.

Can you imagine the hurt God was feeling as He watched His own son on the cross? He knows what we are feeling in our time of crisis. But with God, a tragic event isn't the end of the story. Jesus overcame death on the cross, which allows us to be forgiven of our sins and have hope for eternal life. Matt's tragic passing has resulted in efforts to improve safety in youth sports. If you face a tragedy, ask God "What now?" Ask Him to be your comfort in time of sorrow and your motivator to find a new purpose in life. Matt may not be in the huddle anymore but his legacy has never let people down. With God at your side, He will never let you down.



Scripture: *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze (Isaiah 43:2).*

Question: How has the Lord rallied around you, enabling you to live with purpose and commitment?

Prayer: Dear Lord. Accidents happen. Be with our friends, the Gfeller family, as they grieve the passing of Matt. We thank you for the Gfeller family's untiring commitment to help others avoid serious head trauma. Just as Matt didn't let his teammates down, we know you are with us always and you will never let us down. Amen.