

So many of us are plagued by ghosts—not the kind portrayed in the 1984 film, [Ghostbusters](#), but remnants of the pasts that we grieve over, haven't begun to grieve over, or haven't finished grieving over. It was 1990 during a morning train commute when my mother asked a man dressed in all black to take off his sunglasses. I didn't know it then, but that Times Square interaction in a tunnel would be the first and last time that I can remember seeing my dad. I was 11 years old.

Ghosts. I don't have a picture. I don't have any relatives to reach out to—nothing. And yet they are real, nonetheless. It's painful to process because the pain almost feels unjustified—grieving over someone I never knew. Who does that? Me. What's more is that my mother and brother saw him again. It wasn't a fluke. The man from whom I have a portion of my appearance, personality, and genetic makeup was alive, and yet he never reached out to call—my mother gave him our number.

Ghosts. I never received a call, although the option was always there for him to make it. It's at this point that I wish(?) I could say that my personal relationship with Jesus banished all ghosts, and my earthly father's absence was replaced by my Heavenly Father's presence—true story, but only partial. The ghosts remain, I've just learned to live with them. I want to believe that that makes me more approachable, that having my pain buried not too far below the surface makes me more effective when I'm speaking to people who have their own pain, pasts, and experiences that won't seem to leave them alone.

It's so easy in this medicated world—at least here in the West—to in the interest of making the pain go away, forget that some pain is normal. Some pain is part of our personal alarm system hardwired into our bodies to let us know that the healing process has begun. Pain also enables us to know when something needs additional attention. Imagine seeing someone walking on a leg that was clearly broken without any indication that they were in pain? There's a name for that. Shock. The pain allows us to take better care of ourselves or at least gives us a choice of whether or not we do.

Even [Jesus](#) after rising from the dead chose to keep signs of his pain on the cross in view—[his nail scarred hands](#). Am I better? The nail scarred hands weren't for Christ—He knew what He went through!!! They were for his friends to remember the story right; sometimes when people are too healed they can forget—along with their friends—that they actually got delivered from something. I'm not advocating here for broken people to stay broken, but at the least they should take pictures of their journey along the way. I don't have any of my dad. Ghosts.

### **The Temple Takeaway:**

I defined ghosts to be remnants of the pasts that we grieve over, haven't begun to grieve over, or haven't finished grieving over. I have found therapy to be a ghostbuster; a therapist who asks good questions and gets you to talk is probably a keeper. I am grateful that my therapist has a personal relationship with [Jesus](#)—He guides her in supernatural ways!