

To those here tonight,

Some people think when they sit down to watch The Laramie Project that they are going to see a play about Laramie, Wyoming. In fact, what many people realize is that they are seeing a play about their own hometown. Laramie was a town forever changed by an event, by the choices of a few people. Every time I hear that there is a new production of The Laramie Project I think about how your lives, the lives of the audience member, or cast member will be changed.

So many times people have asked me how I had the courage to do the things I have done in my life. To stand up to the Fred Phelps' and the bigotry. I laugh a little because none of my actions were done out of bravery, but out of a simple truth that I lead my life by. I simply try to do the right thing when given the chance.

Before Matthew died he taught me the most important lesson I have ever learned. And I remember laughing at him as he told me about his dreams to change the world. To make it a better place for all people to live. Thinking how can one person really do all that? He told me that he didn't care what his role in creating that change was as long as he was doing his part. To him that meant taking a homeless man out for lunch, studying political affairs so he may one day grow up to be a diplomat. He was always kind to strangers and left out all judgment when talking to a new person. He knew that he could make a difference. I don't think anyone can argue that Matthew has changed the world. His path led him to a fence and his eventual death.

My friend Matthew created more change in his death than he may have ever achieved in his life. He was one man. One man that knew he could change the world. He serves as a reminder to all of us that as one person we too can create a change in our community and schools.

As one person I decided that someone needed to stand up against hate and that is why with the help a few good friends Angel Action was formed. We had no idea that it would effect people in the way that it has. Now Angel Action has been seen across the country and it started with just one person.

Take a moment to thank the people that put together this production of The Laramie Project, because just by doing this show they have caused a change in the hearts and minds of many of you. Each of us has a role, just as Matthew had, and as I have to make the world a better place. My question to you is, when you leave today what will YOU do to make the world a better place? What is your role?

Thank you

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