

Grief Recovery

Living at Peace with Loss

Why are people so drawn to Jesus . . . especially when their hearts have lost all hope? Why do they assume He will sympathize with their sorrows? Why would He grieve over their griefs? The answer is simple: Jesus was no stranger to [grief](#). He was slandered and scourged, belittled and beaten, criticized and crucified. Yet the Bible says,

[1 Peter 2:23](#)

When you see someone being insulted, when you hear someone being slandered, when you watch someone [suffering](#), you know that person not only *understands grief*, but also *feels grief*. When Jesus lived on earth, His onlookers saw the unjust insults hurled at Him . . . heard the unjust [slander](#) spoken of Him . . . watched the unjust [suffering](#) imposed on Him. Therefore, they knew He was one who could both understand their [grief](#) and care about their [grief](#).

If you feel, "No one cares about my pain,"—Jesus cares!

If you think, "No one cares about my sorrow,"—Jesus cares!

If you believe, "No one cares about my [grief](#),"—Jesus cares!

[1 Peter 5:7](#)

People are drawn to Jesus because Jesus cares, and that is why you too can turn to Him.

Hebrews 4:15-17

DEFINITIONS

Who has not questioned the reason for pain and [suffering](#) in the world? Certainly some people have become hardened by their losses, while others have become softened—God used their [grief](#) to cultivate in them tender, understanding hearts. Only days before His own [death](#), Jesus traveled to the grave of Lazarus to comfort his two sisters in their loss. Jesus was not only *deeply moved in His Spirit*, but He was also weeping with Mary and Martha. It may seem paradoxical that Jesus—the Son of God, the one who turned water into wine, the one who multiplied the loaves and the fishes, the one who raised Lazarus from the dead—could not avoid [grief](#) in His own life. But the prophet Isaiah foretold that Christ, the coming Messiah, would be a man who would understand [grief](#) well for, indeed, He was . . .

[Isa 53:3](#)

A. What Is Grief?

- **Grief** is the painful *emotion* of sorrow caused by the loss or impending loss of anyone or anything that has deep meaning to you.

Ps 31:9

- **Grief** begins in your heart as a natural response to a significant, unwanted loss.
- **Grief** is a God-given emotion that increases with knowledge about the sorrows of life. The wiser you are about the grief that people experience, the more you yourself will grieve.¹

Eccl 1:18

- In the New Testament, the Greek word *lupe* means "pain of body or mind."² When Jesus told His disciples He would soon be betrayed and killed, they were *filled with* grief.

Matt 17:23

B. What Is Mourning?

- **Mourning** is the process of working through the pain of sorrow that follows a significant loss.

Lam 5:15

- **Mourning** (also called grieving), is a normal, healthy process that lasts for a period of time. God uses mourning in order to produce the ultimate healing of deep distress and sorrow.

Ps 30:11

- **Mourning** evokes compassion and expressions of comfort from others. When Lazarus died, Jesus and many others came to comfort Mary and Martha.

John 11:19

- In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word *abal* means "to mourn or lament."³ Jacob's favorite son was Joseph. When Joseph's brothers told their father, Jacob, that his favored son had been killed by a ferocious animal, Jacob went into deep *mourning* for days . . . and ultimately years.

Gen 37:34

C. What Is Chronic Grief?

While we are grieving, a prevalent problem may be that we don't want to talk about our [grief](#) or let others see our sadness. We don't want to appear weak . . . so we mask our emotions! Yet if we delay sharing our sorrow, our healing will also be delayed. If we are going to be "authentically human," we need to be able to share the truth about the heaviness in our hearts. If we have chronic [grief](#), we are emotionally stuck, and we need to be set free. That is why Jesus' words about truth are so freeing . . . even when applied to grieving.

John 8:32

- **Chronic grief** is an unresolved, emotional sorrow experienced over a long period of time as the result of not accepting a significant loss or not experiencing closure of that loss.⁴

Ps 25:17

- **Chronic grief** (or incomplete [grief](#)) can also be an unresolved, deep sorrow experienced

over a long period of time and characterized by ***misconceptions*** that result in a failure to move through a grief process.

Misconception:

"My grief will never end."

Correction:

You will mourn for a season, and then your grief will end.

Eccl 3:4

Misconception:

"If I cry, I'm not strong."

Correction:

Jesus was strong, yet He wept after Lazarus died.

John 11:35

King David was strong, yet he and his men wept after Saul and Jonathan died.

2 Sam 1:12

Misconception:

"If I feel deep sorrow, I must not be trusting God."

Correction:

Christ, the Messiah, never failed to trust God, the Father, yet He was called "*a man of sorrows*."

Isa 53:3

D. What Is Repressed Grief?

Have you seen someone smiling, yet within the smile you recognized sadness? Have you heard someone

laughing, though you knew the heart was not healed?
This is a picture of "repressed [grief](#)."

[Prov 14:13](#)

- **Repressed grief** occurs when a person has reason to grieve and needs to grieve, but does not grieve.⁵
 - The person with *repressed grief* exhibits negative lifestyle patterns but does not know why. (Examples may be distancing from others, playing the clown, using mood-altering substances like alcohol or drugs, engaging in mood-altering behaviors like gambling or compulsive spending).
 - Only by facing the truth of your painful losses in life and by going through genuine [grief](#) will you have emotional healing.

In the Bible, the Psalmist prayed this [prayer](#) . . .

[Ps 43:3](#)

- **Repressed grief** can be overcome and grieving can begin when a person takes The Timeline Test.⁶

The Timeline Test

- **Draw** a long, horizontal line representing your life.
- **Divide** the timeline into three sections—childhood, youth, and adulthood.
- **Denote** the major changes in your life. Draw short lines extending from the timeline and

write short phrases by each line that describe all significant events, such as . . .

- birth of siblings
- change of school
- death of loved ones/pets
- lost friendships
- abuse (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual)
- broken engagement
- abortion
- marriage
- relocation
- miscarriage
- childlessness, infertility
- "empty nest," children leaving the home or marriage of children
- separation/divorce
- job loss/new job
- illnesses/injuries
- financial loss
- retirement
- **Determine** whether there are any sad experiences or significant losses and hurts over which you have never grieved or have never finished grieving, such as . . .
 - abandonment
 - divorce of parents
 - failures

- false accusations
- rejection
- thwarted goals
- unjust [criticism](#)
- unrealized dreams
- **Discover** the source of your masked pain through earnest [prayer](#).

Prayer for Discovery

"Oh, Father, I come to You as Your child for help. Calm my heart. Enable me to see what I need to see. Make me aware of my need for healing and show me Your truth. Bring to my mind any buried pain. . . . Surface any hidden hurt and the exact circumstances that caused it. I ask You to help my wounded heart to heal. I know You have the power to make me whole. I am willing to face whatever You want me to face so that I can be set free.

In Your holy name, I pray, Amen."

- **Define** the painful events over which you need to grieve by using specific statements.
 - "I am grieving over"
 - "I was so embarrassed when"
 - "I felt abandoned by"
 - "I was really hurt when"
 - "I've been determined to never let () happen again."

- **Decide** *now* to allow deep genuine grieving over your losses.

[Jer 17:14](#)

- **Defuse** the power these events have over your emotions by sharing your feelings with a trusted person and with God.

[Eccl 3:1,7](#)

- **Deepen** your dependence on the Lord to set you emotionally free.

[Ps 118:5](#)

My Timeline



E. What Is "Grief Work"?

Do you feel that your [grief](#) will never end . . . that your loss is a continual source of sorrow? Moving through the [grief](#) process takes time and commitment to "stay the course" until the goal of [grief](#) is accomplished. Working through your [grief](#) is not an easy task; it is a difficult task that involves dedication. Be assured, God has a plan for you during this season of pain, and God will give you the strength to persevere through the pain.

[Heb 10:36](#)

- **Grief work** involves a step-by-step process through which a grieving person walks in order to reach a place of emotional healing.⁷

Ps 138:7

- Healthy **grief work** will culminate in . . .⁸
 - **accepting** that the past will always be in the past
 - **accepting** that the present offers stability and significance
 - **accepting** that the future holds new and promising hope

In the end you can say, along with the apostle Paul,

Rom 5:3-5

CHARACTERISTICS

"We don't want to hear it! We don't believe it! We won't accept it!" While Jesus' disciples didn't speak these words literally, these sentiments resounded in the hearts of His followers—especially Peter. The shock, confusion, and fear of Christ's impending death seemed too great to comprehend. In John 16:18 they protested, "*We don't understand what he is saying.*" Despite their grief, Jesus persisted in telling them the truth. He loved His disciples too much to enable their denial.

Grief over the death of a significant person in your life doesn't just go away in a few days, weeks, or months. Healthy grieving can last for one, two, or even five years.⁹ This is especially true with the loss of a beloved child, parent, or mate. Everyone grieves differently, but

everyone must grieve in order to heal. As you entrust yourself to the Lord, your grieving gradually lessens and He restores joy to your heart. And, someday, if not in this life, then in the life to come—like the disciples—you will understand how God can take even the most unspeakable losses and turn them to joy.

[John 16:20](#)

A. How Do You know If You are Grieving?

When we initially experience a significant loss, we can plunge into depths of [grief](#) and have difficulty coming up for air. Then eventually, after we surface, we are simply treading water, not swimming toward a real destination. The reason is called [grief](#). When you feel engulfed with [grief](#), realize that you have a Deliverer who will keep you from drowning in the depths of despair.

[Ps 18:16](#)

Do you feel alone and isolated?

Do you feel that you are mechanically going through the motions of life?

Do you feel resentful toward God for allowing your loss?

Do you ask, "Why?" over and over again?

Do you feel overwhelmed, not knowing what to do or where to turn?

Do you feel emotionally distraught because of your loss?

Do you have frequent daydreams about your loss?

Do you feel angry or bitter over your loss?

Do you have difficulty forgiving those who caused your loss?

Do you frequently dream at night about your loss?

Do you see life as an empty struggle without much reward?

Do you feel helpless knowing how much others must also be [suffering](#)?

Do you wonder what kind of God would allow your loss?

Do you view God as uninvolved and lacking [compassion](#)?

Regardless of your view of God right now, the Bible says,

[Nah 1:7](#)

B. What Are Characteristics of Chronic Grief?

Allowing yourself to be open and honest about your intense sorrow takes great courage.¹⁰ For some, the reality of personal pain has been buried so deeply that the ability to experience real [grief](#) is blocked. People do many things to camouflage or ignore their [grief](#) so that they don't have to acknowledge and [work](#) through it. As a result, they have unhealthy, chronic [grief](#), which is a barrier to emotional [maturity](#). This unresolved sorrow blocks the comfort that Christ wants to give us. In the Beatitudes Jesus said,

Matt 5:4

- **Inhibited** grief—denial of [grief](#)

"This is not really happening to me."

- **Isolated** grief—selective remembering

"I refuse to think about that car accident again."

- **Insulated** grief—reduced emotional involvement

"I'm not going to open myself up to be hurt this way again."

- **Intellectualized** grief—rationally explaining events

"It could have been worse."

- **Inverted** grief—returning to immature ways of responding

"I can't believe it! I just had a temper tantrum like one I had when I was five years old."

- **Immortalized** grief—inability to let go of the loss

"He will always be a part of everything in my life."

C. What Are the Stages of Healthy Grieving?

Emotional complications occur when we block the natural process of grieving.¹¹ Have you ever told yourself, *I need to get my act together. I've got to snap out of it. I should be handling this better!* These self-incriminating thoughts reveal unrealistic expectations about grieving and a [failure](#) to understand the [grief](#)

process and the slow journey of restoration. While "stages" of [grief](#) do exist, they are not "stair-step" stages that you walk through in a specific order. In truth, people do not go through all the stages in a predictable fashion. People are unique in their individual grieving. Some stages may be experienced with varying degrees of intensity, some may be missed, and some stages may be repeated. Give yourself permission to experience the inconsistent stages of grieving . . . trusting God to bring new life again.

[Ps 71:20](#)

Crisis Stage

. . . can last from two days to two weeks. In this stage of [grief](#), you are mechanically going through daily activities. You will experience many of the following characteristics:

- [anxiety/fear](#)
- appetite/sleep loss
- concentration limited
- confusion
- crying uncontrollably
- denial
- disturbing dreams
- exhaustion
- feeling trapped
- shock/numbness

[Lam 3:49](#)

Crucible Stage

. . . can last up to a year or two or more, perhaps even until death if grief is not resolved. This time of sorrow will be accompanied by many of the following characteristics:

- anger/resentment
- anguish
- appetite/sleep loss
- bargaining with God
- depression/sadness
- guilt/false guilt
- helplessness/lethargy
- judgment impaired
- loneliness/isolation
- low self-worth
- self-pity/victim mentality
- intense yearning

Ps 6:3

Contentment Stage

. . . accepts the loss, leaving it in the past. This stage not only accepts that the present offers stability, but also accepts that the future offers new and promising hope. As this time approaches, the following characteristics will become more and more apparent.

- experiencing greater compassion toward others
- experiencing greater acceptance of others
- experiencing greater appreciation of others
- experiencing greater humility before others
- experiencing greater dependence on the Lord
- experiencing new ability to leave the loss behind
- experiencing new patterns for living
- experiencing new purpose in life
- experiencing new hope for the future
- experiencing new contentment in all circumstances

Phil 3:13; 4:11

D. What Are the Side Effects of Severe Grief?

When your heart breaks over a great loss, intense grief will touch every aspect of your life—your body, soul, and spirit. The effects of this intense grief will vary in degree, ranging from mild to severe, depending on where you are in the grieving process. While you will not experience all the effects, everyone will experience some of them. Realize that these effects are common to everyone who grieves and are temporary . . . as long as you face the pain of your loss and work through the grief process. In the Psalms, David recounts both the

bitterness of his [grief](#) and the assurance of God's presence.

[Ps 73:21-24](#)

GRIEF RECOVERY

- **Physical effects:**
 - exhaustion
 - headaches
 - inability to sleep
 - indigestion
 - loss of appetite
 - stress-induced illnesses
- **Emotional/mental effects:**
 - [depression](#) and [anxiety](#)
 - dreams about the deceased
 - forgetfulness and disorganization
 - [guilt](#) and [anger](#)
 - [loneliness](#) and withdrawal
 - threats of self-destruction/[suicide](#)
- **Social effects:**
 - antisocial behavior
 - awkwardness
 - escape behaviors (excessive drinking, drugs, travel, gambling, sex)
 - excessive busyness
 - tensions in existing relationships

- withdrawal
- **Spiritual effects:**
 - [anger](#) at God
 - doubting the [love](#), fairness, and faithfulness of God
 - [fear](#) of God and dread about the future
 - inability to pray or read the Bible
 - withdrawal from spiritual activities
 - questions about why God allowed the loss

[Job 3:23-26](#)

CAUSES OF GRIEF

Imagine if there had been a number of heartless murders of multiple newborn babies, infants, and toddlers in your hometown. . . . How would you feel? Imagine that you knew many of their parents. . . . Would they not be [grief](#) stricken? Would their hearts not be crushed and their dreams shattered? Now, imagine that throughout your life you knew that *you were the baby targeted for destruction*—not the others . . . yet you escaped ([Matt 2](#)). No wonder Jesus had great [compassion](#) for those who grieved! No wonder He could sympathize with their sorrows.

When King Herod heard the wise men ask about the newborn King of the Jews ([Matt 2:2](#)), he reacted in [fear](#) that this up-and-coming king would be a threat to his throne. As a result, Herod plotted to kill all the baby boys in Judea . . . and kill them he did! But Herod's plan did not trump God's plan. For indeed, King Herod died,

while King Jesus lived. And today, in spite of your deepest [trials](#) and trouble, if you are an authentic believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, He lives in your heart to give you His peace. Jesus said,

[John 16:33](#)

A. Why Do Losses Generate Such Grief?

Everyone has been created with three God-given inner needs—the needs for [love](#), for significance, and for security.¹² When one or more of these needs is no longer being met, we naturally feel a sense of loss, which in turn causes [grief](#).

Unmet need—Sense of loss—Feeling of grief

Throughout our lives we will incur numerous losses. Although we need to feel the pain of our losses, we do not need to be controlled by our losses. Instead we must rely on God's promise that He will meet **our deepest inner needs**. The Bible says,

[Phil 4:19](#)

Loss of Love

- loss of significant family member (spouse, [parent](#), unborn baby, child)
- loss of an endeared pet
- loss of a romantic [relationship](#)
- loss of ability to have children (childlessness, [infertility](#))
- loss of a close [friend](#)

- loss of an admired mentor or role model

Great Trial:

"I'm still in agony over the [death](#) of my husband, and I feel like I'm only half a person."

God's Truth:

Take comfort in this. Although your loss is severe and even though you have no earthly husband, the Lord says He will be your husband—He will be your Provider and Protector.

[Isa 54:5](#)

Loss of Significance

- loss of [employment](#)
- loss of hopes and dreams
- loss of [freedom](#)
- loss of achievement
- loss of respect/reputation
- loss of purpose

Great Trial:

"I've lost everything that gives my life purpose, and I feel such a sense of loss."

God's Truth:

Take comfort in this. As long as you are alive, your life has purpose.

[Ps 138:8](#)

Loss of Security

- loss of companionship
- loss of health (physical abilities)
- loss of finances
- loss of home
- loss of justice
- loss of family environment

Great Trial:

"I've just experienced the greatest rejection of my life, and I feel overwhelmed with [grief](#)."

God's Truth:

Take comfort in this. While people reject people, the Lord will not reject you. He says,

[*Isa 41:9-10*](#)

B. What are Causes of Chronic Grief?

Like favorite folk remedies for a winter cold, solutions for overcoming [grief](#) are numerous and seem to be offered by everyone. When grieving a loss, you can expect to receive plenty of advice . . . especially from well-intentioned family and friends valiantly seeking to help you overcome your pain. Unfortunately, the advice is often as conflicting as it is plentiful and may leave you feeling as though you will never find a way to lessen your pain. However, even when your heart seems heaviest, God promises to be your light, breaking through the darkest night of your soul with tender comfort. If you entrust your life to the Lord, He will instruct you, teach you, and guide you every step of the way.

[Ps 25:4-5](#)

Common Misconceptions about Mourning¹³

Fallacy:

"Mourners need to become busy and laugh a lot in order to keep from thinking about their loss."

Fact:

While it is helpful for those who are grieving to be productive in mental and physical activities and to laugh when it is natural, ignoring their loss is counterproductive. They need both to face and to feel their [grief](#). The Bible illustrates this point graphically.

[Prov 25:20](#)

Fallacy:

"Mourners need to move to a new home as soon as possible and focus on finding pleasure."

Fact:

Following the [death](#) of a loved one who lived at home, consider this as a general rule: make no major changes for one to two years. Moving to a different home may be appropriate, but only for the right reason at the right time. Before making a major decision like moving, ask the Lord for [wisdom](#)—He will provide.

[James 1:5](#)

Fallacy:

"Mourners should keep their [grief](#) to themselves."

Fact:

Keeping your [grief](#) away from others is like keeping the sick away from medical aid—it keeps those grieving

away from those who could give comfort, help, and healing. The Bible says we are to . . .

[Rom 12:15](#)

Fallacy:

Mourning is primarily relegated to women, not to men."

Fact:

While all cultures have their own male and female stereotypes, grief is not related to gender, but rather to people. Grief impacts men and women alike, although they may express their grief in different ways. Certainly men grieve too. For example, when Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned to death, the Bible says, Acts 8:2

Fallacy:

"If you love someone, you should grieve forever."

Fact:

You can love forever, but you don't have to grieve forever. How honorably you live, not how long you grieve, gives the greatest tribute to your loved one. Grieving has a definite beginning, and through God, it can have a definite ending. In a poetic way, David described how his grieving came to an end.

Ps 116:8

Fallacy:

"Mourners need a major change in their lifestyles."

Fact:

Self-imposed, radical changes will only add to present stress and cause greater insecurity. In time, the desire for certain changes will come and beneficial change will take place . . . when the time is right.

Eccl 8:6

C. HOW DOES GOD USE GRIEF AND SUFFERING?

Sometimes God allows you to experience deep grief and suffering as a means of bringing about godly results in your life.

Deut 32:39

- **In His sovereignty, God allows evil, grief, and suffering through . . .**
 - **The free will of every human being** (to make choices, which in turn, can cause suffering)

Gal 6:7-8

- **The acts of nature** (earthquakes and other natural disasters)

1 Kings 19:11

- **In His sovereignty, God can use grief and suffering to . . .¹⁴**
 - **Produce perseverance, character, and hope in you**

Rom 5:3-5

- **Save souls**

Gen 50:20

- **Develop dependence on Him**

1 Tim 5:5

— Cause crying out to Him

Ps 142:1-3

— Humble your heart

Deut 8:2

— Further your faith

1 Peter 1:7

— Show His strength in your weaknesses

2 Cor 12:10

— Cause you to share Christ's sufferings

1 Peter 4:12-13

— Reveal His heart

Job 36:15

— Teach and train

Heb 12:11

— Conform you to Christlikeness

1 Peter 2:19-21

— Extend Christ's comfort

2 Cor 1:4

D.HOW DOES GUILT PRODUCE GRIEF?

So many times [grief](#) and [guilt](#) walk hand in hand. When we are in the throes of [guilt](#), it is not uncommon for us to lament, *If only I had I should have Why didn't I . . . !* The problem is that sometimes we can't distinguish whether we are grappling with false [guilt](#) or true [guilt](#). We need to be able to discern the difference.

False Guilt

The following question is an [example](#) of a situation in which a grieving person found herself unknowingly feeling *false* guilt:

Q "My sister died unexpectedly of a heart attack. How can I ever forgive myself for not being there for her in her time of need?"

Obviously, you would have done everything in your power to have saved your sister's life. But saving her life was not in your power. In truth, you are struggling with false [guilt](#).

- False [guilt](#) arises when you blame yourself, even though you have committed no wrong, or when you continue to blame yourself after you have confessed and turned from your [sin](#).
- False [guilt](#) is resolved by recognizing the lie you have believed and by refusing to accept it. Then acknowledge the truth and accept it instead.

In His sovereignty, God has numbered each of our days, and you were not granted power to alter His plan. Clearly, you have a God ordained season of grieving

before you, but don't grieve because of the pain of false [guilt](#). Grieve because of the loss of your beloved sister.

[Job 14:5](#)

True Guilt

The following question is an [example](#) of a situation in which a grieving person found himself genuinely feeling *true* [guilt](#):

Q "I'm truly grieving. I made a series of bad choices that involved placing money as a higher priority than my wife. Now she has left me. What can I do?"

When you know you've been in the [habit](#) of "majoring on the minors," you have choices. Typically, we learn *painful* lessons well! Because you have *brought this grief upon yourself*, plan now to change your priorities. Replace your bad decisions with these good decisions.

- Evaluate what you did wrong.
- Genuinely repent.
- Admit to her that you were wrong and ask for her [forgiveness](#).
- Then live your life "majoring on the majors."

Do not pressure her. She will see for herself whether you have really changed from focusing on [money](#) to focusing on [maturity](#).

[1 Tim 6:10](#)

E. HOW DO YOU RESOLVE THE GRIEF CAUSED BY TRUE GUILT?

We've all been wrong. We've all been guilty. We've all violated the will of God, going against what His Word tells us.

God created us with an innate need to have a loving [relationship](#) with Him. But when we go against His will, a wall is erected between us and God—a spiritual barricade. This wall is called [sin](#). [Sin](#) is choosing to go our own way instead of God's way and, therefore, results in true [guilt](#).

[Ezra 9:15](#)

How Can You Find God's Forgiveness and Live Guilt-Free?

The Four Points of God's Plan

You can understand God's solution for you by reading His Word. His plan can be spelled out in four simple points.

#1 God's Purpose for You . . . is *Salvation*.

- What was God's motive in sending Christ to earth? To condemn you? No . . . to express His [love](#) for you by saving you!

[John 3:16-17](#)

- What was Jesus' purpose in coming to earth? To make everything perfect and to remove all [sin](#), [guilt](#), and [grief](#)? No . . . to forgive your sins, empower you to have victory over

sin, and enable you to live a fulfilled life without the grief of guilt!

John 10:10

#2 Your Problem . . . is Sin.

- What exactly is sin? Sin is living *independently* of God's standard—knowing what is right, but choosing wrong.

James 4:17

- What is the major consequence of sin? Spiritual death, which is spiritual separation from God.

Rom 6:23

#3 God's Provision for You . . . is the Savior.

- Can anything remove the penalty for sin? Yes. Jesus died on the cross to personally pay the penalty for your sins.

Rom 5:8

- What is the solution to being separated from God? Acknowledging and believing in Jesus Christ as the only way to God the Father.

John 14:6

#4 Your Part . . . is Surrender.

- Place your faith in (rely on) Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior and reject your "good works" as a means of gaining God's approval.

Eph 2:8-9

- Give Christ control of your life, entrusting yourself to Him.

Matt 16:24-26

If you choose to believe in Him—place your [faith](#) in Him—*He will enable you to live the full, guilt-free life God desires for you.* If you want to be fully forgiven by God—if you want to experience His mercy and [grace](#) by accepting Him as your personal Lord and Savior—you can tell Him in a simple, heartfelt [prayer](#) like this:

Prayer of Salvation

"God, I want a real relationship with You. I admit that many times I've chosen to go my own way instead of Your way. I am genuinely grieved over my sins and deeply regret them. Jesus, thank You for dying on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. Come into my life to be my Lord and my Savior. Make me the person You created me to be. In Your holy name I pray. Amen."

What Can You Expect Now?

If you sincerely prayed the [prayer](#) of [salvation](#), listen to what God says!

Rom 5:1

Having "*peace with God*" means that you have been brought into a good [relationship](#) with Him and you no longer need to grieve over your [guilt](#) because you are now forgiven.

F. Root Cause of Failure to Process Grief

Wrong Beliefs:

- **Repressed Grief:**

"I should be able to handle the losses in my life without having to experience and work through deep pain and grief."

- **Chronic Grief:**

"My grief is more than I can bear. If I give in to it, I'm afraid it will consume me.

Right Belief:

Grief is a normal process that I must experience in order to grow emotionally and spiritually and to resolve my losses in life. My hope is in God, my Savior, who provides the strength for me to grieve deeply and honestly.

Ps 73:26

STEPS TO SOLUTION

Each of us has experienced the grief of betrayal. Nothing wounds the heart more deeply than the betrayal of a trusted friend. Jesus understood the grief of betrayal . . . not just by one of his closest friends, but by two—Judas and Peter. These two disciples provide a vivid contrast between *godly sorrow* and *worldly sorrow*.

Both Judas and Peter grieved over the sickening reality of betraying Jesus. But Judas' betrayal resulted in further wrong choices. Overwhelmed with grief, Judas rushed headlong into *worldly sorrow*, and he ultimately committed suicide.

On the other hand, Peter's betrayal resulted in a *godly sorrow*. Rather than hardening his heart, Peter's godly sorrow led him to sincere [repentance](#). This God-honoring [repentance](#), in turn, led to Peter's complete [reconciliation](#) with Christ, and to a humble, yet powerful life that would forever impact the world.

Judas and Peter . . . each had a choice. One chose [death](#)—the other chose life. As you face your season of [grief](#), what will your choice be?

[2 Cor 7:10](#)

A. Key Verse to Memorize

[Ps 57:1](#)

B. Key Passage to Read and Reread

Jeremiah, known as "*the weeping prophet*," authored the Book of Lamentations, in which he lamented ("cried aloud") over the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the enemy. Jeremiah's lament is followed by his [hope](#), which can be your [hope](#) when you feel like you are drowning in a sea of [grief](#).

When Drowning in Grief

[Lam 3:19-26](#)

- God lifts me out of the sea of my downcast soul.—[Lam 3:19-21](#)
- God's great [love](#) and [compassion](#) never fail.—[Lam 3:22](#)
- God's faithfulness comforts me daily.—[Lam 3:23](#)

- God is all I need. . . . I will wait for Him.—[Lam 3:24](#)
- God wants all my [hope](#) to be placed only in Him.—[Lam 3:25](#)
- God is good to me when I seek Him.—[Lam 3:25](#)
- God brings healing as I wait for His deliverance.—[Lam 3:26](#)

C. Acceptance—a place of healing and hope

Working through your [grief](#) will involve both your mind and your emotions.¹⁵ Intellectually, you can know that a loss has occurred, but you can still emotionally refuse to accept how your life will be different because of that loss. The [work](#) of *accepting the reality* of your unwanted loss may consume all your energy, but your efforts will succeed when you have the right focus. Rather than trying to feel what others want you to feel, focus on the Lord God. Pray, "Whatever You want me to feel and whatever You want me to do is my desire. My commitment is to be the person You want me to be through this season of sorrow."

[Col 3:23](#)

Accept Your Past

- Accept that the past will always be in the past.
— **Pray**—Seek God's help in embracing your [grief](#).

[Ps 34:17-18](#)

— **Recall**—Think back on your loss, then write and finish these sentences.

a. "I remember these significant events and memories. . . ." (List both good and bad.)

b. "I look at these photographs and recall" (List memories, good and bad.)

c. "I am grieving over" (List all.)

[Ps 51:6](#)

— **Weep** —Allow yourself to have tears.

[Ps 30:5](#)

— **Complete**—As you review, beside each event on your list, write the word *past*, which confirms, "I will be content to leave the past in the past."

[1 Tim 6:6](#)

— **Memorize**—Write down these verses to memorize.

[Ps 119:28](#)

[Ps 119:50](#)

[Ps 119:107](#)

[Ps 119:156](#)

— **Give thanks**—Thank God for all that He has taught you from the past and how He will use your past in the future. Pray, "God, Thank You for all that You have taught me from my past pain and how you will use that time of [grief](#) in my future."

1 Thess 5:18

Accept Your Present

- The present offers stability and significance.
 - **Choose** to live one day at a time.

Matt 6:34

- **Put** the Lord at the center of your life.

Matt 16:24

- **Go** to God with your specific questions.
(Make a list.)

James 1:5

- **Thank** God for providing everything you need for life.

2 Peter 1:3

- **Praise** God that though your situation has changed, He will never leave you.

Heb 13:5

- **Focus** on the joy and satisfaction of helping others. (Make a list.)

Gal 6:2

Accept Your Future

- The future affords new opportunities.
 - **Hope** in the plans that God has for your future.

Jer 29:11

- **Know** that your sorrow and grief will not be wasted.

Ps 119:71

- **Put** all your hope in God.

Ps 62:5

- **Have** faith in God, whom you cannot see.

2 Cor 4:18

- **Know** that God will fill the void in your life.

Isa 43:18-19

D.Guidelines for Healthy Grieving

Since grieving impacts us emotionally, physically, and spiritually, all three of these areas need to be considered when we go through the grieving process. If the following guidelines are taken to heart, the potentially harmful effects of grieving can be minimized, and the benefits can be maximized.

Prov 27:12

Emotional Guidelines:

- **Have a strong, sensitive support system.**

Having people around you who genuinely care about you is essential—people who accept you wherever you are in the grieving process and who encourage you to share your feelings with them.

Prov 27:17

- **Have the freedom to cry.**

Expressing emotions honestly, openly, and as frequently as needed is vital in order to walk through [grief](#) in a healthy, productive way.

[Ps 126:5](#)

- **Have a plan for socializing regularly.**

One of the helpful factors to feeling good about life, even while [mourning](#), is attending social activities and interacting with others on a regular basis.

[Heb 10:25](#)

- **Have a trustworthy, honest confidante.**

Being able to be yourself with someone and share your struggles, your troubled thoughts, and swinging emotions—and then still to be accepted and affirmed—is healing to the soul.

[Eccl 4:9-10](#)

- **Have your resentment released.**

If you have unresolved issues, [anger](#), or hostile feelings regarding your loss, take the time to list your resentments along with their causes. Journaling can bring to the surface buried emotions. Then release into the hands of God each offender and the pain of each offense.

"Lord, You know the pain I have felt over (situations). I release all that pain into Your hands and, as an act of my will, I choose to forgive (or release) (person's name). Thank You, Lord Jesus, for setting me FREE."

[Eph 4:32](#)

Physical Guidelines:

Biblical Illustration:

Imagine a very real [death](#) threat on your life! Jezebel's edict had Elijah fleeing for his life, and he eventually collapsed beneath a tree. With intense [grief](#) over the possible loss of his own life, this godly prophet prayed that he would die. But God sent an angel with food and water. After Elijah ate and drank, he lay down again and rested. Later, the angel awakened him with more food and drink. With increased strength, Elijah was once again able to go on his way. (See I Kings 19:3-8.)

- **Get a sufficient amount of rest.**

Since grieving often disturbs regular sleep patterns and disrupts prolonged periods of sleeping, getting sufficient rest during the grieving process is often a challenge—but doing so is critically important to the body.

- **Get a generous intake of fluid.**

Because the sense of thirst is frequently unnoticed/undetected during the grieving process, drinking non-alcoholic and caffeine-free fluids is particularly important. Drinks with no alcohol and no caffeine are needed to carry away your body's toxic waste and to maintain appropriate electrolyte balance.

- **Get a balanced nutritional diet.**

Eat daily portions of food from each of the four basic food groups and avoid skipping meals. Don't become dependent on eating "junk" foods, smoking, or drinking alcohol.

- **Get into a daily exercise routine.**

Regular exercise is a natural deterrent to feeling depressed and a natural means to feeling a sense of well-being. Exercise carries oxygen to the blood and promotes overall good health.

- **Get big doses of sunshine.**

Taking a walk in the sunshine is another natural way to fight [depression](#). Light coming in through the eyes stimulates the brain to send a message to the body to release antidepressant endorphins.

[Eccl 11:7](#)

Spiritual Guidelines:

- **Develop a purposeful prayer life.**

The grieving process provides a strong impetus for "getting down to business" with God. Have candid conversations with Him about your thoughts and feelings. Listen to Him and lean on Him for comfort and reassurance.

[Ps 119:26](#)

- **Develop a yearning for eternity.**

One of the most helpful, hopeful, and healing truths to realize is that this present life is being lived in a temporal body, but a permanent body is waiting for you. In that body you will live throughout all eternity. Grasp God's promise of living eternally!

[2 Cor 4:16-18](#)

- **Develop a positive, practical perspective.**

Maintaining a positive mental [attitude](#) based on the practical application of spiritual truths during the grieving process will carry you to victory through the darkest valley and the deepest loss.

[Phil 4:8](#)

- **Develop a sense of peace about the past.**

Resolve any unfinished business regarding the past by asking [forgiveness](#) of God for any failures on your part and by extending [forgiveness](#) for any failures on the part of others. Then let the past go and embrace the present and the future God has planned for you.

[1 John 1:9](#)

- **Develop a Scripture memorization method.**

God spoke the world into existence, and His written Word, the Bible, is powerful enough to create new life in you and to restore joy to your heart, peace to your mind, and [hope](#) for your future.

[2 Tim 3:16-17](#)

E. Letting Go and Saying Goodbye

The prophet Samuel apparently had difficulty letting go of his [grief](#) over his beloved King Saul after Saul had violated God's directives so grievously that God rejected him as king.

[1 Sam 15:35; 16:1](#)

Many who are grieving never get over the final hurdle of letting go of the pain and saying goodbye. One method of accomplishing this task is to place an empty chair in front of you and imagine in the chair is whatever or whoever was lost to you, ready to hear and accept whatever you need to say.

- For the woman grieving over the [childhood sexual abuse](#) in her past, this may mean imagining her abuser across from her and then verbalizing her feelings about what was done

to her and coming to some resolve regarding those feelings, forgiving the offender, releasing her pain to God, and moving her focus from the past to the present.

- For the man who has lost his wife, this may mean verbalizing to her any unresolved feelings about her life or her [death](#). By expressing his feelings as well as his need to move on with his life, he then says a final farewell to her and to their [marriage](#). This act may need to be repeated until there is true relief through letting go, saying goodbye, and embracing the future as a whole person again.

[Ps 147:3](#)

Letting Go

- Look back and verbally reflect on the history you have shared with that which is lost. Acknowledge that history as a permanent part of your past but no longer a part of your present.
- Express any unfinished business regarding the past and resolve any remaining issues or feelings (such as regrets or resentments), emptying them out and bringing them to closure.
- Choose to forgive whatever grievances you may still be harboring and let go of any thoughts of [revenge](#).
- Release the past to the past and commit to cease trying to make it a part of your present and your future. Relegate the past to the past,

letting it go and leaving it there. Allow these words from the Book of Job to reflect the disposition of your heart.

[Job 11:16](#)

Saying Goodbye

- Look back and reflect on the significance of the history you have shared with that which has been lost, exploring and expressing the depth and breadth of your feelings (such as [love](#), appreciation, [anger](#), and [guilt](#)).
- Acknowledge the impact your history has had on you as a person. Accept the fact that it will always be a part of who you are. But affirm also that it is time for you to move on with your life and become the person God is making of you *now*.
- State that you cannot live in the past and that you have present needs that God plans to meet in new ways. Acknowledge that you need to embrace all that God has for you.
- Say goodbye to the past and to the pain and to all that has been lost. Express your final sentiments that need to be said and say, "Goodbye." Then turn your focus to the present and to the future that God has already planned for you, embracing your life now and your life as it will be in the future. Realize that you are ever in process and, therefore, ever changing. Say hello to Jesus and hello to whatever He has for your life now.

[John 14:27](#)

F. Finding Comfort

How true the saying, "All sunshine makes a desert." God knows that if you never experience the storms of life—if the rain clouds never release their water—you will never see flower gardens grow. You need to blossom in the areas of sympathy, empathy, and [compassion](#) . . . understanding, perspective, and [wisdom](#). Our God is the God of the second chance. Whatever is in the past can be used for God's glory. The storms of sorrow should never be wasted. By God's design, [grief](#) will better your heart and life. . . . [Grief](#) will make you grow.

[Eccl 7:3](#)

Come to the God of all comfort.

[2 Cor 1:3](#)

Open your heart to the reality of pain.

[2 Cor 1:9](#)

Maintain a clear conscience by confessing past sins and offenses.

[Prov 28:13](#)

Find the positive in your [grief](#) process.

[2 Cor 7:11](#)

Obtain comfort from those whom God will send to you.

[2 Cor 7:6](#)

Reinforce your faith by giving comfort to others.

2 Cor 1:4

Trust in the strength of Christ in you for the power to rebuild your life.

Phil 4:13

Just as the farther you are from a flower, the smaller it seems to your eyes; so, the farther your distance from grief, the smaller your sadness in sorrow. Time indeed is a healer—a gift of comfort from the God of all comfort.

—June Hunt

G. Questions and Answers Regarding Grief

Grieving over Loss of a Godly Parent

Q "Ever since the death of my godly dad, I've been angry with God and have turned away from the church. How can I get over my grief and face the future without my father?"

The loss of a godly parent can be severely painful. Instead of focusing solely on how much you miss him . . .

- Focus on what would bring honor to his memory.

- Ask yourself, "If my dad were still alive, what would give him the greatest joy?"

Based on the Bible, your dad's greatest joy would be for you to follow in his footsteps, to live a Christlike life and to grow in the truths of God.

[3 John 4](#)

Grieving over Unforgiveness

Q "Someone close to me died, and now it is too late for me to ask forgiveness for what I did wrong. What can I do about my heavy guilt?"

You do not have to live with [guilt](#) even though the person you wronged is no longer available to you.

Realize that God is available to you.

- Write down every wrong [attitude](#) and action and then [confess](#) your [sin](#) to Him.
- Ask God's [forgiveness](#), realizing that all sins (even against others) are sins against God because He has told us how we are to treat one another.
- Write a letter to the one you wronged, read it aloud, and ask God to forgive you on behalf of the other person.

God knows your heart, and He can forgive your sins and restore to you a clear [conscience](#).

[Ps 51:10,17](#)

Grieving: Life Not Back to Normal

Q "I have experienced a devastating death in my family, and nothing feels the same. Everyone keeps telling me that things will get back to normal, but are they right?"

When [death](#) takes someone dear to your heart, your life will not "get back to normal." However, you will need to establish a "*new normal*." When your life is forever changed by a life-altering loss, your "*old normal*" vanishes forever. Yet, as you settle into a *new routine* with a *new mindset*, you will develop a *new normal*—and over time, your comfort level will increase. During this process, remember that . . .

- God made you to be resilient by equipping you to adapt mentally, emotionally, and spiritually to new situations.
- Life itself consists of never-ending change from the moment of conception to the moment of [death](#).
- We are forever changing and being given the opportunity to grow in [maturity](#) with each new change.

[Trust](#) the Lord, who created you, and lean on Him as you find your "new normal."

[Prov 3:5-6](#)

Grieving: Dealing with Anger toward God

Q "I have immense anger toward God for taking my child from me when she was the

joy and the delight of my life. Why did God take her?"

Any significant loss results in [grief](#). However, one of the most severe losses is the loss of a child. The natural order in life deems that children outlive their parents, not the reverse. Certainly God understands your anguish, and He can shoulder your [anger](#). In order to overcome your [anger](#) at God . . .

- Honestly share your feelings with Him.
- Ask Him to give you insight into His heart for you and His plan now for your life.
- Realize the heavenly Father is also a [parent](#) and that He has the heart of a [parent](#) toward you.
- [Trust](#) that God is perfect in His [love](#) for you and for your cherished daughter.
- Thank God for every moment He allowed you to spend with your daughter.
- Realize that your daughter has not been lost to you forever—she will spend eternity with you after God's time for you here on earth is complete.
- Focus on what will honor your daughter's memory as you live your life.

This [grief](#) in your life has not come from a heart of stone, but from a heart of [love](#) and [compassion](#). While you may not see it now, God does not find pleasure in bringing [grief](#) to His beloved children, but He does what He does from His position as the sovereign, all-knowing, all-loving God.

[Lam 3:32-33](#)

Grieving: Dealing with Anniversary Depression

Q "Every year for the past several years I have become depressed during the time of the year when my husband died. Why is it happening, and what can I do to stop it?"

You are experiencing what is commonly referred to as "Anniversary [Depression](#)," a yearly recurring reaction to a past loss or trauma. This involuntary [depression](#) correlates to the anniversary date of your loss and lasts for a limited period of time. Since you know the time period of your recurring [depression](#), you might plan ahead a time to process some of your [grief](#) with a wise, caring [friend](#) or counselor. And, since the [depression](#) is triggered by conscious or unconscious memories, you can choose to create new memories around that date, such as these:

- planning a trip with someone special around the time of the anniversary
- going to a [Christian](#) seminar or workshop to help keep your focus on the Lord and on His healing Word
- attending a social event so you will not be alone or inviting loved ones for dinner at your home
- giving loved ones a special remembrance in your husband's honor (a poem, a picture, or a possession that belonged to him)
- initiating a project in honor of his life

[Prov 10:7](#)

Grieving: Feeling Guilty because of Tears

Q "I have had a major loss in my life but I should be over it by now. Why can't I stop crying and, at times, why do I cry for no apparent reason? I feel so guilty about my tears."

There is no timetable for when you should be "over" grieving a significant loss. Losses are not to be "gotten over." Our losses should be accepted, and our lives should be adjusted to accommodate our losses in such a way that the quality of our lives is not lessened, but is instead enriched. This can be a reality for you because God promises to use all things for good in the lives of those who [love](#) Him ([Rom 8:28](#)). As you go through the [grief](#) process, remember . . .

- Tears may come sporadically for years after your loss whenever something consciously or unconsciously reminds you of your loss.
- A smell, a place, a song, a person, or any number of things can trigger stored unconscious memories.
- Rather than trying to control your reactions, let them come freely, and you will find that by experiencing them they will dissipate over time.
- Tears are for a reason, and they are for a season. They are the body's way of releasing deep emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual

pain. When the pain is released, the tears subside.

Those who [love](#) deeply, cry freely at the loss of the object of their [love](#). Good for you for loving deeply! You are like God in that way, for He loves deeply too.

[Jer 31:3](#)

Grieving: Dealing with a Most Difficult Time

Q "It has been almost six months since my loved one died, and instead of getting better, I seem to be getting worse. What is wrong with me?"

The truth is nothing is wrong with you. Your grieving is right on schedule. Although many people are not aware of it, the sixth month after the loss of a loved one is generally the worst period of time. It is like an unexpected second tidal wave has struck you and sent you reeling right when you thought you might be getting somewhat of a handle on your [grief](#). As you deal with this second wave of [grief](#), realize . . .

- What happens at six months is that reality sets in on a much deeper level and opens up more of your soul to acknowledge and accept the significance of your loss.
- God does much of His [work](#) in us through a period of time rather than instantaneously.

You are in the [grief](#) process. While you are presently experiencing great sorrow, that sorrow will complete its [work](#) in you, and you will find that it has carved out

within you a deep well that God, in His time, will fill with joy and peace and [contentment](#).

[Rom 15:13](#)

Grieving: Dealing with Decisions

Q "I recently lost my husband, and I feel like I am in a dense, heavy fog and cannot see my way out of it. I know there are some major decisions I need to make about what to do with the house and whether I should stay in it or sell it and move somewhere else. What should I do?"

Your feelings are completely normal and totally understandable given your situation. The [death](#) of a spouse is highly distressing and generally leaves the survivor in a state of shock for days or weeks and disoriented for months. Therefore, the most commonly given advice to recent widows and widowers is that no major decisions or changes should be made for at least a year. Consider . . .

- The task of going through the [grief](#) process is a big enough job during that first year and maybe even longer.
- Unless you are under some time constraints, delay making any major decisions and any significant life changes for another year or so—a time when you will be less stressed and better able to think clearly about the pros and cons of such decisions.

- Right now you don't know where you will want to live in a year or two or what you will want to pursue.

The bottom line is that waiting to make a big decision until you know that you will not regret it later is the best thing to do.

[Ps 32:8](#)

Grieving: Reaching Out to Others

Q "People keep asking me to socialize with them, but I don't want to be around anyone —I don't want to try to have fun or make conversation. Why can't people understand that in my grief, I just want to be left alone?"

People do understand your desire for isolation, and that is precisely why they are concerned about your being alone too much. Becoming self-absorbed, losing interest in socializing, and desiring to isolate yourself from others are common when you are in the [grief](#) process. However, there is also potential danger of becoming a recluse to the point that you become stuck in your [grief](#) and fail to reach out to others in an effort to stay connected to life apart from sorrow. One of the most effective ways to help your own healing is to reach out to others who are grieving.

Identify with the [grief](#) of others.

- Be available as someone who can understand how they feel.

- Send a card, prepare a meal, bring a flower, run an errand.
- Make periodic phone calls to say, "I care."

Remember that isolating from others only curtails your own healing. Instead, reaching out will help bring healing to others and, in turn, to yourself.

[Prov 11:25](#)

Grieving the Holy Spirit

Q "I feel horrible guilt and huge grief. Although I'm a Christian, I've gone against God, and now the damage has been done. Can I ever have peace again with God?"

When you have unresolved [sin](#), you *should* feel unresolved [grief](#). Why? Because you have actually *grieved the Holy Spirit*! Realize that, because you are an authentic [Christian](#), the Spirit of God resides within you. Therefore . . .

- When you are in the will of God, you have peace with God (one aspect of the "fruit of the Spirit").
- When you are not in the will of God, you will not have peace with God. The reason the [Holy Spirit](#) removed His peace from you was to convict you of [sin](#) so that you would correct your course. Do what pleases God, and you will have the peace of God.

[Eph 4:30](#)

H. Building Up the Bereaved

When someone experiences a devastating loss, God most often uses the comfort and encouragement of others to bring healing. As you reach out to others with the compassion of Christ, consider the following helpful hints for building others up when they are in the midst of grief.

- Acknowledge their loss immediately.
- Accept all emotional or verbal responses without judging them.
- Hug with tender affection.
- Expect tears and emotional extremes.
- Find helpful things to do without being asked.
- Give the one grieving many opportunities to talk about the loss.

1 Thess 5:11

Death of a child

Don't say, "You can always have another child."

Do say . . . "I appreciated your special qualities as a mother to your child."

Death of a spouse

Don't say, "A lot of people remarry at your age."

Do say . . . "I valued his/her (character trait or ability)."

Death after a long illness

Don't say, "She's so much better off now."

Do say . . . "I admire the way you encouraged and helped her."

Divorce or Separation

Don't say, "He was never good enough for you."

Do say . . . "The Lord is here for you, and I will also be here for you."

Disabled Child

Don't say, "Was there something you did to cause the handicap?"

Do say . . . "I noticed your child's (sweet disposition, nice smile)."

Loss of Job

Don't say, "You'll find a better job within a week."

Do say . . . "I feel for you and will pray with you during this time."

Loss of Limb

Don't say, "Be thankful—you could have died."

Do say . . . "The adjustment will be difficult, but you can do it. . . . Count on me to be of help."

Loss of House

Don't say, "At least you're still alive."

Do say . . . "I know you have many memories in your home. I remember"

Loss of Pet

Don't say, "You can always get another pet."

Do say . . . "You were so good to your dog."

Loss of Friend

Don't say, "You'll make other good friends."

Do say . . . "A [friend](#) is a treasure. I know you will miss each other."

Loss As a Result of Any Tragedy

Don't say, "All things [work](#) together for good!"
(even though that is ultimately true)

Do say . . . "Although I don't know why this happened to you, I do know the Lord will stay close to you. One particular Scripture that helped me is [Ps 34:18](#).

[Prov 25:11](#)

NOTES

1. John A. Larson, "Grief," in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, 2d ed., ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 519.
2. James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1986), 45.
3. Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 7.
4. See Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*, rev. ed. (Dallas: Word, 1988), 352-53; H. Norman Wright, *Crisis Counseling: What to Do and Say During the First 72 Hours*, updated and expanded ed. (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1993), 154-56; H. Norman Wright,

- Recovering from the Losses of Life* (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1991), 53-61.
5. See Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 352-53; Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 154-56; Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 53-61.
 6. See Charlotte A. Greeson, Mary Hollingsworth, and Michael Washburn, *The Grief Adjustment Guide: A Pathway through Pain*, Faire & Hale Planner (Sisters, OR: Questar, 1990), 200-2.
 7. See Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 158-59.
 8. Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 159-61.
 9. Greeson, Hollingsworth, and Washburn, *The Grief Adjustment Guide*, 73; Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 165.
 10. See Collins, *Christian Counseling*, 352-53; Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 154-56; Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 53-61.
 11. See Haddon W. Robinson, *Grief: Comfort for Those Who Grieve and Those Who Want to Help* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1996), 11-16.
 12. On the three God-given inner needs, see Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr., *Understanding People: Deep Longings for Relationship*, Ministry Resources Library (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 15-16; Robert S. McGee, *The Search for Significance*, 2nd ed. (Houston, TX: Rapha, 1990), 27-30.
 13. Adapted from Glen W. Davidson, *Understanding Mourning: A Guide For Those Who Grieve* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 15-19.

14. Joel A. Freeman, *God Is Not Fair* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life, 1987), 130-34.
15. See Wright, *Crisis Counseling*, 159.

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