

Good Grief!

Grief.

What is it? Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes grief as ‘deep and poignant distress by bereavement... unfortunate outcome / disaster.’

Anything that results in pain or loss can result in grief.

What losses have resulted in grief for you?:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a loved one or friend through death. | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of work or occupation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a relationship with a friend or loved one. | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of health or abilities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of money or material possessions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a sense of purpose or meaning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of reputation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of identity. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a dream, hope or expectation. |

How may we handle pain and grief poorly; “Bad Grief”?

- 1) Deny and ignore the pain and loss. We may bury it by finding ways to distract from the pain with drugs, sex, entertainment, busy activities, work, money and other habits or addictions.
- 2) We deny God’s goodness and that He is accomplishing something for our greater good.
- 3) We become angry and bitter towards God and others. (see Ephesians 4:26-27)
- 4) We are destroyed from the inside and Satan gets another victory! (see 1 Peter 5:6-11)

How can we better handle it when we experience grief; “Good Grief”?

- 1) Acknowledge the loss and need to grieve. Someone once said that much mental illness, stress, depression and anxiety, are not **from** pain and loss, but the **AVOIDANCE** of pain and loss.
- 2) Meet the pain and loss head on. We do this by confessing it, discussing and processing it. (What is God doing with me and for me, or others, to allow the pain and loss I am experiencing?)
- 3) Ask the question: “Do I believe that God sees my pain and sorrow, is with me in it, and is in complete control? And, is God good and has my best interest in mind?
✧ Is this true: **God is more interested in my character than my “comfort,”** yet He is the God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)
- 4) Allow yourself to grieve and mourn (Ecclesiastes 3:4). This includes the grief felt during birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. Forms of the word “mourn” are found in the Bible 136 times. We are blessed when we allow grieving and mourning (Matthew 5:4).
- 5) You will be forever changed; for better or for worse! In our pain and grief, if we allow Him, God shapes and molds us into His likeness. Embracing the pain and loss while trusting God allows Him to work in us, and our grief will turn to joy (John 16:20). Otherwise, it often results in the poison of bitterness and resentment.
- 6) Comfort others in their grief from God’s comfort of us (2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Romans 12:15).
- 7) Believe God’s promise that mourning, grief and pain will someday be removed (Revelation 21:4).

Some final questions:

- 1) **What are some signs that you are struggling with “bad grief?”**
[Feelings of anger, bitterness, depression, anxiety, stress, hopelessness, guilt, shame, no meaning or purpose, very negative attitude, irresponsible or hurtful behavior, chronic failure and self-punishment, doubting or blaming God, using “self medication” such as entertainment, drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, money and material possessions!]
- 2) **What are some things you can and should do to become free from not grieving well?**
[Hint: start over following the process of “good grief” above]
- 3) **Once you are free from the hold your grief has had on you, how may God use it to be healing and a comfort to others?**