

HOPE WEEKEND

A time to mourn

“Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted”

--Jesus, in Matthew 5:4

1. In our culture **TRAGEDY** and **LOSS** are often trivialized/politicized.

2. There are even popular brands of Christianity that promote a spiritualized version of **PAIN-AVOIDANCE**.

3. Our greatest examples in the Bible allowed themselves to **PAY ATTENTION** to pain and **DEEPLY MOURN** their losses.

... David

... Jeremiah

... Abraham, Moses, Ruth, Mary, Peter.

... JESUS!

4. In the wake of experiencing painful loss, we are invited to look to our Loving, Compassionate, Good, and Faithful God for **COMFORT, HOPE**, and **SALVATION**.

*Lamentations 3:19 I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. ²⁰ I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. ²¹ **Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:** ²² Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ²⁴ I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore, I will wait for Him." ²⁵ The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks Him. ²⁶ It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD."*

GRIEF MINISTRY 101:

Responding well to those who are mourning

1. Care much, inquire gently, and listen well
2. Ask if you can pray with them and for them
3. Be WITH them ... to the extent that you are a blessing
4. Don't offer advice (like Job's friends)
5. Refrain from correcting their theology while they are overwhelmed with grief – we all question God during those times. Don't feel the need to say anything. If you do, perhaps, "Yes, God's ways are difficult to understand, for sure."
6. Don't feel like you have to FIX them by trying to lift them out
7. of their pit of despair with trite platitudes.
8. Resist the urge to try and IDENTIFY with them – even if you can. By shifting the focus back to yourself you lose ministry focus.
9. Support them practically with hugs, meals, prayers, offers to help.

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