

ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.” Isaiah 53:1-4

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# Grief is real

- ▣ Can we find the “peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,” even in the midst of grief?
- ▣ How can we allow God to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows?
- ▣ I believe God has revealed that He can and will and reveals how!

# Understand that Grief is the common lot of every human being

- ▣ Not “if,” but “when” we will suffer grief.
- ▣ Job, Joseph, Peter, Paul, Jesus.
- ▣ Death, disease, accidents, disappointments in events and people, loss of friendship, divorce – The list goes on.
- ▣ No two people handle grief in the same way – your grief is your own.

# There are things we know about grief

- ▣ Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, who pioneered the Hospice Program for the dying, identified 5 stages of grief.
- ▣ We will look at these stages, though there is no ready-made script for all.
- ▣ Jesus has shown us the way – note: Hebrews 2:9-18, 4:15, and 5:8.

# Denial (this isn't happening to me)

- ▣ Reality returns quickly for most people, there are exceptions.
- ▣ Sometimes people try to bargain with God.
- ▣ Funeral customs, presence of friends and loved ones
  - Galatians 6:2 “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”
- ▣ There are practical things to do and not do.
- ▣ Jesus: “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.” Matthew 8:22

# Anger (why is this happening to me?)

- ▣ Why, why, why? Angry at God – why did He allow this to happen to me?
- ▣ Job had to deal with his lack of understanding – came close to accusing God of unfairness.
- ▣ Sometimes people build their lives around a tragedy.
- ▣ Notice Jesus actions following the news of the death of John the Baptist. – Mark 6



# Depression (I just don't care anymore)

- ▣ One definition: “Overwhelming hopelessness and resignation”
- ▣ Mentally, one can just give up!
- ▣ The sons of Korah wrote, “O Lord, the God of my salvation, I have cried out by day and in the night before Thee...For my soul has had enough troubles...I have become like a man without strength, forsaken among the dead...Thou hast put me in the lowest pit, in dark places, in the depths” (Ps 88:1-6).
- ▣ It is easy for others to give advice.
- ▣ Elijah – 1 Kings 19 – is an example for us.

# How did Elijah get into this situation?

- ▣ He stopped thinking clearly – verse 4.
- ▣ He separated himself from his friends.
- ▣ He fell into the trap of self pity.
- ▣ God prescribed rest and food – verse 5.
- ▣ God communicated gently – verses 11-13.
  - Made Elijah feel needed again
  - Gave a new friend

# Jesus offers rest, peace, and resolve to us in dealing with grief

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30