



## Grief and Mourning

The world teaches us that grief and mourning is a painful emotional experience. We are told that each individual is different; and that there is no set rule for grieving. One should expect to feel the raw emotion of pain, sometimes for a year or two and, for some, on and off forever.

The most commonly referred to thesis on the subject is Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's book called "On Death and Dying". In this book Kubler-Ross suggests that there is a process that one must go through involving the following steps:

- Step # 1 – Denial – This isn't happening to me.
- Step # 2 – Anger – Why is this happening to me?
- Step # 3 – Bargaining – I promise I'll be a better person if .....
- Step # 4 – Depression – I don't care anymore.
- Step # 5 – Acceptance – I am ready for whatever comes.

The implication of this theory is that you need to go through all these stages of grieving and if you do not, then you can't properly get to acceptance. The result of this thinking is a belief that a person will experience years, if not a lifetime, of feeling pain when you think of the individual who has been lost. Culturally, some widows would wear black clothing forever and, as described in Camus' book "The Stranger", if you don't grieve "properly", then you can even be ostracized.

Dr. Roberta Temes has written a book called "Living With An Empty Chair – A Guide Through Grief" which describes three types of behaviour that simplify Kubler- Ross's theory. The three types of behaviour are:

- Type # 1 – Numbness
- Type # 2 – Disorganization – the pain of loss
- Type # 3 – Reorganization – re-entry into a more social life

Psychology's prescription is to get in touch with your emotions, feel your pain, try to understand why you feel a certain way, talk to someone about your feelings and, if there are some unresolved issues causing emotional pain, work through them with a therapist. One psychologist even suggested the need to forgive self and to forgive others as part of resolving the pain. (It appears that psychology is starting to introduce the Christian concept of forgiveness into the healing process.)

It is interesting to note that Jesus Christ is not involved in either of the above processes. Scripture tells us something different:

Matthew 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted."

Isaiah 61:1-3 "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort all who mourn, to bestow the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.



In the Christ-Centered Inner Healing work that I have done with my clients, I have noticed that Jesus really does comfort His people. One of the ways that He helps is by taking the pain away, so that the individual can remember the person who has been lost with joy and celebration of life, instead of pain and despair of death.

In other words, when Jesus Christ, the Healer, is involved in the process, it just may be possible that the transition from numbness and disorganization to re-organization may not take as long as one might think. Conversely, when a person relies on his/her own strength and resources to grieve, maybe the experience will be one of denial, anger, bargaining and depression to be able to get to acceptance.

Is it possible that Satan wants us to be burdened by the pain of grief and mourning? Is it possible that it does not need to take years and possibly forever for the pain to go away?

For pain free, anger free and depression free remembrance, allow Jesus to help heal your broken heart.

Galatians 5:1 "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

### **Inviting Jesus Into The Pain**

How does this removing the pain from memories work? I encourage the hurting person to choose, with his/her free will, to invite Jesus to come into the memory or memories that hold the pain. I then lead the person in prayer where the person asks Jesus, the Healer, to replace the pain of loss with His healing touch and truth. I then quietly wait while Jesus transforms the memory and changes the person's perspective. When the pain is gone, I ask the person to share what Jesus did to remove the pain.

### **Celebrating Life**

When the pain is gone, we talk about how to remember the life of the one who has passed. One idea is to create a memory book with pictures and stories, which capture some of the great memories of the person's life. This process of remembering involves the telling and sharing of these good memories. Instead of trying to forget the person, to avoid pain, now the remembrance of the person's life can become a positive part of the ongoing story because the pain is gone.