

## **Dear Church: Good Grief Part 5**

### **Grieving the Loss of a Loved One to Suicide**

#### **A Bible study for individuals, groups or classes**

Guest: Stephen Willis

#### **Podcast Sections:**

- 01:50 Use of hypnotherapy with grief over someone's suicide
- 03:24 When is grief no longer appropriate?
- 06:10 Healthy ways to deal with grief
- 07:36 How is the grief from suicide different from other types of grief?
- 11:57 State of soul with those that commit suicide
- 12:44 Stephen's response to the state of the soul for those that commit suicide
- 14:28 Comparing one's suffering to another isn't relevant
- 17:03 Teenager's brain not fully developed
- 18:19 Those coming out of depression more likely to consider suicide
- 19:30 What do you say to those considering suicide?
- 20:34 Are there common threads among those contemplating suicide?
- 21:47 A theory that childhood is when some people become prone towards suicide
- 23:20 When one grieving is upset that the person committing suicide never came to them
- 26:01 How to handle guilt over a suicide
- 27:23 We sometimes deflect our guilt onto others
- 30:23 Signs that someone is considering suicide
- 31:55 How common are suicide notes?

#### **Discussion questions:**

1. Stephen recommends a ceremony a year after the death of a loved one (06:38). What are your thoughts on this idea?
2. Stephen says that grief can be different when suicide is involved because of feelings of guilt (07:36). Have you seen this? How can people get past this guilt?
3. Stephen says that guilt over a death can result in deflecting blame onto others (27:23). Have you seen deaths result in divorces or ending of relationships? Was blame part of the reason for the breakups?
4. Stephen mentions Samson (Judges 16:27-30, below). Samson is also mentioned as a great man of faith in Hebrews 11 (below). Discuss the idea that a man who killed himself is considered a hero of faith.

#### **Scriptures related to this study**

Judges 16:27-30

<sup>27</sup> Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

<sup>28</sup> Then Samson called to the Lord and said, “O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.” <sup>29</sup> And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. <sup>30</sup> And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines.” Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life.

Hebrews 11:32-34

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Philippians 4:11-13

<sup>11</sup> Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup> I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

II Corinthians 1:8-10

<sup>8</sup> For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, regarding the affliction that happened to us in the province of Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of living. <sup>9</sup> Indeed we felt as if the sentence of death had been passed against us, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup> He delivered us from so great a risk of death, and he will deliver us. We have set our hope on him that he will deliver us yet again,