

Dear Church: Good Grief Part 3

Grieving the Loss of a Child / Grieving with God

A Bible study for individuals, groups or classes

Guest: Michael Whitworth

Background scripture:

Lamentations 3:17, 18

¹⁷ my soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is;

¹⁸ so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the Lord."

Podcast Sections:

02:22 Michael talks about the loss of his son

04:37 The aftermath of the loss – losing a son not like losing a parent

05:42 The second year was harder than the first

06:20 "Time heals all wounds" – you never get over the loss of a child

07:44 The simplest things become more difficult

09:28 What conversations with God were like

13:16 Lamentations passage – fake it until you make it

14:52 Some Sundays God and I aren't talking to each other

15:45 The Lord can handle anything we say to him

16:29 Passages that show God understands our weakness

17:40 It's impossible for your faith to survive unless you stay tethered to his people

20:56 Counseling is very necessary including marital counseling

23:54 The role of faith in all of this

25:26 "If an empty tomb does not excite you, you've never wept beside a grave" - Good comes from tragic circumstances

26:55 "To some level, I have a miserable existence."

28:17 You can survive living with pain

29:10 Why so many couples wind up divorcing

31:25 Good grief

32:15 Good that has come from the loss

38:20 Heaven becomes more real

38:54 One becomes more comfortable with death

Discussion questions:

1. How soon should you expect to get over the grief of a child or a close loved one? (6:20, 26:55)
2. Is it realistic to think your relationship with God will stand unchanged with the loss of a child? (Lamentations 3:17-24, next page)
3. What advantages do you have in handling grief if you have a good church family? (17:40)

4. Michael says that 70 percent of couples that lose a child end up divorcing. How can a couple battle that likelihood?
5. Discuss the idea that good can come from loss.

Scriptures related to this study

Lamentations 3:17-24

- ¹⁷ my soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is;
¹⁸ so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the Lord."
¹⁹ Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall!
²⁰ My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me.
²¹ But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:
²² The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;
²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
²⁴ "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

Psalms 103:13, 14

- ¹³ As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. ¹⁴ For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

Matthew 12:20

- ²⁰ a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory;

Psalms 40:1-3

- ¹ I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.
² He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
³ He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

Hebrews 2:14-15

- ¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

All scriptures are from The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. (2016). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.