

Coping with Loss & Grief!

LOSS—A CAUSE OF GRIEF

"I don't know how I will go on. We have been together so long and now he is gone."

"It is not right for my child to have died before me. It's just not right."

"I was so happy when I landed this job. But I never expected to get laid off. How am I going to start again? How will I be able to support my family?"

Whether it is the loss of a spouse, a child, a parent or even a good job, everybody has experienced loss and the grief that often results. Grief can go deep and remain for a long time.

Grief is a normal reaction to loss. Often it results because we don't see how we'll "get by" in the future. For instance, a happily married couple looks forward to a long life spent together. But if death comes "sooner than expected" the surviving spouse faces the possibility of life spent alone.

EFFECTS OF LOSS AND GRIEF

Along with grief, a person can experience shock, denial, anger, guilt, anxiety and depression. "I can't believe this happened!" "This isn't fair!" "I should have done more." "I can't go on." Physical illnesses and sleeplessness can also appear.

LEARNING TO COPE

Over time, we adapt to loss and learn to cope with grief and other emotions. We need to do this

so that we can move forward in life again. To help us along the way we may need to find someone:

- in whom we can confide
- who is willing to listen
- who is able to be honest
- can provide positive direction

WHERE TO TURN?

To provide help in our loss and grief there are both people and places. Family. Friends. Support Groups. Professional Counselor. Pastor. Church.

JESUS CHRIST, OUR GREATEST FRIEND

Jesus is our greatest friend. But some may ask, "I cannot see Jesus or touch him or feel his presence. Can he serve as a real support and friend?" He sure can. There are two main reasons.

1) Jesus himself faced *loss and grief* in his ministry as the world's Savior. Midway through his ministry most people turned away from him. Jesus' dear friend Lazarus died and Jesus wept over him. Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, one of his chosen disciples. Jesus, the innocent one, suffered alone on the cross to atone for the sins of the world, crying out: "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" Jesus gave up his life and was laid in a tomb.

2) Jesus *came alive again from the grave* on the third day, and *ascended to reign over heaven and earth!*

How does his death and resurrection help you? By believing in Jesus, you receive forgiveness of all your sins and are given eternal life! He also promises to work out everything for your good, even the deepest loss. He is the one sure hope that can bring you calmness about the future, ease the pain of your loss, and begin to dry your tears.

Hear Jesus, your friend and Savior, as he speaks to you of this hope from the Bible!

"Take heart, your sins are forgiven" (Matt. 9:2).

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me shall live even though he dies" (John 14:19).

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

"My peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled" (John 14:27).

"In this world you will have hardship. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

"I am with you always to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).

