

“HEALING FROM GRIEF”

October 21, 2026/ GATHER & GROW Bible Study / Dr. Chris Williamson

Intro: What was your first encounter with grief? _____

The experience of grief happens to us all. Grief is **deep sorrow** caused by significant loss, especially when that loss is the death of a loved one. Grief can be **personal**, and it can also be **communal**. The suspicious deaths and unjust responses to 18-year-old **Nolan Wells** and one-year-old **Kohen Wiley**, both in Mississippi, have caused **communal grieving** (and concern) that is unfortunately all too familiar for many in the black community.

How are you coping with these two situations? _____

1) The process of grief can be either healthy or unhealthy.

Grief is different for everyone. What does **unhealthy grief** look like? _____

What does **healthy grief** look like? _____

In John 11, how does Jesus show us how to grieve healthily at the burial of His friend Lazarus? _____

2) Grief, for a disciple of Jesus, is to be a hopeful experience.

In **I Thessalonians 4:13**, Paul wrote, *“I don’t want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.”*

What does this mean? _____

In **I Corinthians 15**, Paul said that **death has been swallowed up in victory** and that it lost its sting. The grave has no victory over Jesus because He resurrected from it. This means grief is to be informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, i.e., **the gospel**.

- Jesus cried at Lazarus’ grave even though He knew He would soon raise him from the dead. Jesus shows us that the **hope** of a deceased believer’s **future resurrection** helps to swallow up the weight of **present** grief felt by loved ones.
- Therefore, when believers transition to glory, death for them is not **a period** but **a comma**, and this leads to **exclamation points** and **no question marks**!

3) Grief has no timetable, but at some point, for a disciple of Jesus, excessive grief should come to a healthy end.

For the ancient Israelites, it seems that grief was a not a long process. In the Bible, no extensive mourning is mentioned for Haran, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah or Rachel. However, once the Israelites migrated to Egypt under Joseph, they adapted the extensive mourning culture of the Egyptians.

They grieved Jacob for 40 days in Egypt (**Genesis 50:3 – 4**) and an additional 7 days in Canaan (**Genesis 50:10 – 11**). When Aaron died, Israel grieved him for 30 days (**Numbers 20:29**), and they mourned Moses for 30 days (**Deuteronomy 34:5 – 8**).

But notice: What did God say to Joshua after Moses was mourned? **See Joshua 1:1 – 2.**

Moses played a significant role in leading Israel, but he was not their primary leader. God was their leader. What should we do when a beloved spiritual or political leader passes on?

When Jesus was a toddler, women in Bethlehem mourned the execution of their sons. **Matthew 2:18** says, “A voice heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, **refusing to be comforted**, because they are no more.”

Under evil and dreadful circumstances, some people, especially parents of murdered children, might initially “**refuse to be comforted**.” Although this kind of grief is understandable, why should this expression of grief not remain permanent for us? _____

Why is it difficult for some Christians to “move on” after a loved one passes away? _____

Breakout Discussion: What person’s death deeply affected you? How did you heal or how are you healing?

Let’s stock our spiritual medicine cabinet with things that will help us heal from grief.

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