

## Part D) Grieving: How can I really help???

- Paul comments in Philippians 4:3 that a couple of sisters in Christ named Eurodia and Syntche “shared my struggles in the cause of the gospel”. We do not know how exactly they did it, but they did something that took some of the pressure away from Paul in his efforts to evangelize.
- We are also told in Galatians 6:2 to “Bear one another’s burdens...”
- Yet again we are told to in Romans 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength...”

There is a common theme in the above verses that serves as a reminder of our need in the church to help one another in our earthly struggles. Whether it for the spreading of the gospel, poor economic conditions or sin, we are to help our fellow saint and even our fellow man in lifting the weight of the burdens.

This is never more applicable than when seeing the suffering of the loss of a loved one. There is often an overwhelming desire to want to help lift that burden from their hearts and minds in their hour of need, but we simply do not know how to do this. That is the aim of this lesson, “How can I really help someone in their loss?” For some answers to this question, let us turn to John chapter eleven.

### Jesus personally focused on the glory of God.

John 11:1-4 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent *word* to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard *this*, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”

Jesus could see the big picture when it came to the fatal illness of Lazarus. It was about the “glory of God” and through that glory the Son of God, Jesus Christ, would be glorified.

This is the foremost of all to keep in mind: If one is attempting to bring comfort to a grieving soul, the glory of God must be FIRST! Our mission in trying to assist in the grieving process is not for our glory, not for the glory of the sufferer and not for the glory of anyone on earth, but for the glory of God. It is GOD that is to be glorified foremost, only and forever!

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- 1 Peter 4:11 “...so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”
- 1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

This is so important because when the emotions are crippled and in disarray from a death, it is so easy to get off track. The events that happen in this life are not to draw us farther from the Father, but ever so close to Him. We should be able to hold to this truth before even taking the

next step in assisting someone in their loss. “This journey that I am will to undertake is not about me, them or anyone else, but God.” If we prioritize in this way, then all the other plans should begin to fall into place.

Step #1 of sharing the burden of grief: It must be about the Glory of God.

Jesus personally went to the family.

John 11:13-16 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. <sup>14</sup> So Jesus then said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup> and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him.” <sup>16</sup> Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to *his* fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.” <sup>17</sup> So when Jesus came...

“SO WHEN JESUS CAME...” Jesus took the time to go be with the family in their loss. It is interesting that Thomas said, “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him. The Him is Christ, for He was going to partake in the painful sufferings. We also must take the time to be with those that are hurting when they are facing a death. It begins with the initial knowledge that someone has suffered the loss.

- 1) Being there provides an ear to listen.
- 2) Being there provides eyes to weep.
- 3) Being there provides a shoulder to cry on.
- 4) Being there provides a mind to remember.
- 5) Being there provides arms to embrace.
- 6) Being there provides a heart to break.
- 7) Being there provides a hand to hold.
- 8) Being there provides a mouth to encourage.
- 9) Being there provides a head to bow.
- 10) Being there provides a soul to mourn.

All these could not and would not be possible if the “BEING” which is YOU is not “THERE” which is THEM. Being there puts you in the unique position to be that tool in God’s hand to minister to them in their time of grief. Until the BEING is THERE we cannot be in a position to come to the aid of the hurting soul.

- It begins before the funeral when death is first realized. This might be in a hospital, a home or even along the side of a highway. It is when you find out about it and immediately move into action.
- It is also the viewing and funeral when the family is saying their final goodbyes.
- It is the days, weeks and months after the funeral.
- It is for the rest of your life, whenever you have the opportunity to do so.

Step #2 of sharing the burden of grief: Personally go and be with them.

Jesus personally wept with the family and friends.

John 11:33-35 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her *also* weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,<sup>34</sup> and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.<sup>36</sup> So the Jews were saying, “See how He loved him!”

JESUS WEPT. There is no shorter verse in scripture. We might also argue that concerning this topic, there is not a more powerful verse. JESUS WEPT! Just the thought of having the Creator of the universe moved in such a way that He actually felt the pain of losing a friend is humbling. We are not dealing with a Savior that cannot feel for us.

- Hebrews 2:18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.
- Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.

The Jews said, “See how He loved him!” Are you following this advice? SEE HOW HE LOVED LAZARUS! LOOK AT HOW MUCH HE FELT FOR THE FAMILY OF LAZARUS! If we are ever going to be effective in lifting the pain of losing a loved one from the heart of a friend, we must be willing to go and share tears with them.

### No Not One

There's not a Friend like the lowly Jesus:

No, not one! no, not one!

None else could heal all our souls' diseases:

No, not one! no, not one!

Jesus knows all about our struggles;

He will guide 'til the day is done:

There's not a Friend like the lowly Jesus:

No, not one! no, not one!

Step #3 of sharing the burden of grief: Personally be willing to weep with them.

### Jesus personally offered a message of hope.

John 11:23-27 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”<sup>24</sup> Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,<sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”<sup>27</sup> She said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *even* He who comes into the world.”

Jesus personally offered a message of hope to come to the aid of Martha. “Your brother will rise again.” She had yet to connect Jesus to that resurrection, but Jesus would do that for her. He was offering a great message of hope, light for a dark day (2 Pet 1:21), by reminding her that there was something greater to come concerning her dead brother. What is ultimately that message of

hope? Martha figured it out: JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD! This is what her trust was in and there is no greater hope to sooth the hurting soul.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Step #4 of sharing the burden of grief: Personally offer a message of hope.