

This Is Us: Part 3

Small Group Questions: A Guide for Grief

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Read

John 16:33; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14; Genesis 50:3 and 10; Number 20:29; Deut. 34:7–8;
2 Samuel 11:1–12; John 19:26–27; Romans 12:15; and 2 Corinthians 1:3–11

Reflect

Paul writes 1 Thessalonians to a grieving community. His Christ-centered words offer a guide for dealing with grief. How would you define grief? The Swiss-American psychiatrist, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross described in her book, *On Death and Dying*, the stages of grief. Are you giving yourself permission to grieve? How about other types of loss, such as loss of a dream, a job or career, or certain relationships...or even a loss of feeling protected—after suffering some form of serious trauma? If you are suffering through loss, which stage do you feel you are in currently? In which stages do you tend to revisit or get stuck?

1. Shock/disbelief
2. Anger
3. Bargaining/guilt
 - a. How would you answer, “if only I had _____?”
4. Depression
5. Acceptance and hope

Pastor Josh Walters offers us three thoughts that can lead us through our grief:

1. I should grieve.
 - a. Have you given yourself permission to grieve?
 - b. How has grief proven to be a process?
 - i. Be attentive to time. How soon do you expect yourself, and others, to get over grief?
 1. How long did the Israelites mourn for Joseph, Aaron, and Moses?
 - ii. Be available emotionally. How might you be suppressing your emotions, and why? How do you think you *should* feel, but don't?
 - iii. Be engaged spiritually. When grieving, how hard is it to seek God, and ask “What do you have for me here?”
2. I should grieve in community.
 - a. How often do we miss participating in the “ministry of presence” because we don't know what to say, or how to “fix” things for someone?
 - b. How could we focus more on helping others through the long-term process of grief?
 - c. How willing are you to reach out when you need help? What stops you? What do you fear? What's one step you can take to change that?
3. I should grieve in community with hope.
 - a. How might God want you to see your grief differently? Why did God give us the emotion of grief?
 - b. How can you comfort others with the comfort you've received from God? Have you discovered purpose in your pain?
 - c. Who is going through grief without the hope of Jesus?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?