

Trusting God in Loss

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And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus ~Philippians 4: 7.

You will keep [her] in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because [she] trusts in You ~Isaiah 26: 3.

Introduction: A Personal Story

Loss affects all of us—loss of a loved one; loss of health; loss of freedom; loss of a job; loss through a prodigal child or children; loss of dreams and expectations; loss of major events/celebrations/gatherings through COVID; loss of money; loss of aspirations and hope; loss of friendships; loss of a spouse through divorce; loss of reputation; loss of faith: Where is God in all of this?

Loss is a big deal: Loss can cause a struggle of trust, doubt, and fear. Think about David: he suffered many types of loss. In **Psalm 3**, David experienced loss of family through Absalom attempting to kill his father, David. David goes against his circumstances and fear and trusts in Who God is. See **Psalm 3: 1-8**. "David says in effect: 'Lord you give peace in my heart; the protection I need; the perspective I need.' David knew it was not the enemy on the outside that would keep him awake, but agony on the inside. David knew God was able to help him in a difficult situation." ~Warren Wiersbe. **In loss, we need peace, protection, and perspective.**

Three ways the Lord helps in our loss: 1. **Peace:** Psalm 119: 165-166; John 16: 33; 2.

Thankfulness: Psalm 106; Psalm 26: 3; 6b-8; I Thessalonian 5: 18. 3. **Kept busy:** Life goes on after loss. We have a choice: focus on the Lord or focus on your loss: "Just do the next thing" ~Elisabeth Elliot. See Isaiah 41: 14.

Your loss may be very hard, but God has a plan for your life. God's Word comforts you and gives you life: ~**Psalm 119: 49-50**. Through His Word and knowing what God has done for us in Christ, we can find real hope in Him. We see beyond our trials and this broken world to Jesus Christ and His great and precious truths in His Word ~**II Peter 1: 2-4**.

As you spend time in the Word, the Holy Spirit reminds you that God is with you. By His mercy and grace, God gives you the ability to understand the past, live powerfully in the present, and look to the future with hope. *"Let the Word of God dwell in you richly"* ~Colossians 3: 16.

How could a good God allow bad things to happen? "The problem with evil and suffering isn't just a personal one but a philosophical one. The basic argument against the existence of God between evil and suffering sounds like this: A good God would not allow or cause bad things to happen. Bad things happen. Therefore, God must not exist ~ Ken Ham: *How Could a Loving God . . . ?*

God is good, and goodness is defined by Him. See Matthew 19: 16-17. "If God doesn't exist, who could objectively define what is good and bad? It's all relative and arbitrary. What is good in one person's mind may be completely bad in another. In order for "good" and "bad" to exist, God must exist." ~Ken Ham

Do you know everything? The truth is—we know so little about the Lord until we turn from Satan's lies to God's truth. A good God exists. God is good and always good. Remind yourself of God's character and love in the Gospel. Stand on what God has shown you. Seek the Lord through His Word and the power of prayer.

We live in a broken world that began in the Garden with Adam's sin. See Romans 5: 12. God created a perfect world, but because of sin, our world is under a curse; we live under the results of that curse. But our hope is found in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 6: 19: *When sea billows roll, we have an "anchor, sure and steadfast."*

God made a way to have victory over sin and death through sending His Son Jesus Christ to suffer and die for our sins; Jesus arose triumphantly over death and is now at the Father's right hand making intercession for us. See Romans 8: 26.

Loss of Dreams and Expectations: Life never goes as planned; today probably didn't go as you planned; this past year did not go as we would have planned. What do we do with our hopes, dreams, marriages, children, or not seeing our loved ones during the COVID lockdown? Take your eyes off your circumstances and place them on the Lord. **Remember:** He loves you and proved His love for you at Calvary. We have His unconditional love and victory through Jesus Christ. He is worthy of our trust. It may be hard but take it moment by moment. The Lord Jesus said, *"Tomorrow will worry about its own things; sufficient today is its own trouble"* ~Matthew 6: 34.

Write a promise about God's character (attributes) and claim it. Put it in your pocket and glance at it all day long. Let it give you strength and power. "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I" ~Psalm 61: 2.

Jesus Christ is our Overcomer. See I John 5: 4-5. "Loss envelops us with a grief that comes in unpredictable waves. It's hard to know if you're getting better when a string of good days gives suddenly to an unexpected emotional crash. In those moments when I find myself whispering, 'Am I going to feel like this forever? Is it always going to hurt this much? Will I ever feel differently to that one who hurt me?' Healing is never neat and predictable like a check list. Healing is a choice: sometimes daily; sometimes minute by minute. But take heart, beloved one, healing is happening; hope is being restored; you're going to make it by the grace of God and the strength and power of the Holy Spirit."
~Adapted by Lysa TerKeurst

Conclusion: The Letter

*I walked a mile with Pleasure; she chatted all the way;
But left me none the wiser for all she had to say.
I walked a mile with Sorrow; And ne'er a word said she;
But, oh! The things I learned from her,
When Sorrow walked with me. ~Robert Browning Hamilton*

Study Questions

1. From where does "real" peace come? Read and write below **Isaiah 26: 3** and **Colossians 3: 15**.
2. Read **Psalm 3: 1-8**. How did the Lord help David? List below.
3. List ways God helps us in our loss. Read **Psalm 121: 1-8**.

4. Paul said that knowing Christ is more important than all other things. Read **Philippians 3: 8-10** and write below verse 10.

5. Read **Romans 8: 18** and **2 Corinthians 4: 17**. Write the verses and look at your loss through eternal eyes.

6. Prayer connects you to the Throne of *Grace*—the presence of God. Read **Hebrews 4: 16** to see where you may find grace in time of need (loss).

7. You can praise and worship the Lord in the midst of your loss. List the benefits of praising the Lord. Read **Psalms 103: 1-5**.

Reflection Questions

8. When things go wrong in your life, where do you tend to place the blame?

9. "*In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" In your loss, find something for which to give thanks. Write below your list of things for which you are thankful.

10. We can trust God in spite of our emotions and Satan's lies about God. Take your eyes off your loss and place them on Jesus Christ. He is greater than your circumstances and feelings about your circumstances. We are overcomers in Christ. Write **I John 5: 4-5**.