

How to Care for Those Who Grieve

Monday, 3/15/10 – Read Proverbs 25:20

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: How can we care for someone who is grieving -- or someone who's going through a difficult time? How can we do that well? ... This week we're going to look at some of the Bible's suggestions. ... First of all, "don't sing songs to a heavy heart." First of all, we have to honor and take seriously another person's experience. We have to let them have their experience. When someone is deeply into the pain of their grieving, it often doesn't help to try to cheer them up. And the attempt can feel like pouring vinegar into an open wound. ... Is it hard for you to be with someone who is really hurting? Do you find yourself wanting to cheer them up? ... Why is it hard to be with someone who is hurting?

Tuesday, 3/16/10 – Read 1 Corinthians 12:24b-27

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The Apostle Paul taught that we are not isolated and solitary atoms. We are inextricably related to each other -- like parts of a single body. And just like in your own body, when one part is hurt, it affects every other part of your body. This is a challenging idea for us because we are accustomed to living independently. How would it change the way you relate to those who are grieving if you thought of yourselves as part of the same organism? ... What do you think of Paul's statement in verse 26: "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it"?

Wednesday, 3/17/10 – Read Romans 12:15

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: How do we live as parts of Christ's body, allowing ourselves to be affected by the struggles and successes of others? ... Today's reading is a simple suggestion: Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ... When have you experienced that? When has someone rejoiced with you? Wept with you? Did that make a difference?

Thursday, 3/18/10 – Read Philippians 2:1-4

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: If I want to be helpful to someone who is grieving, there is one thing I've got to keep in mind: It's not about me! ... Verse 4 of today's reading asks us to attend to the interests of another (rather than our own interests). What my grieving friend needs may be difficult for me, may make me uncomfortable or anxious. ... Let's look today into our own hearts. Am I willing to endure some discomfort in order to be helpful to my grieving friend? Am I willing to focus on her or him rather than myself? ... In your prayer today, talk with God about focusing on others and whether that's difficult for you.

Friday, 3/19/10 – Read Galatians 6:2-5

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: These verses from Galatians may seem perplexing at first, but they are very important. ... "Bear one another's burdens" (verse 2). When life is hard, what makes it even worse is feeling like we're going it alone. Simply having a faithful person who is willing to be with us in our distress can make all the difference. ... "All must carry their own load." We can not grieve FOR another. Each of us has to do our own grieving, otherwise the healing cannot happen. We can grieve WITH another, but we cannot do their grieving for them. ... Does this sound hard? Being with another in their grief without taking their grieving from them? ... Think about this today. See if you can come up with some examples of grieving with another (bearing their burden) and some examples of

allowing your friend to do the grieving they have to do (carry their own load). ... In your prayer, ask God for deeper clarity and illumination.

Saturday, 3/20/10 – Read **Philippians 1:3-11**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Remember this: God is the healer! We can stand with another; we can lighten the burden maybe; we can weep when they weep. But it is God who heals. Paul wrote the Philippians that he was confident that God would bring God's good work to completion in them. ... That's how we help grieving people find hope: we stand with them in their grieving, confident that God will bring the healing, that God will bring a completion to their grieving. ... Are you confident that God is right now working for healing in those you love? In your prayer today, ask God to deepen and strengthen your confidence ... so that your confidence will be a comfort to others.

Sunday, 3/21/10 – Read **2 Corinthians 1:3-5**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Today's reading is such a beautiful expression of the way God works among us! God consoles us ... so that God's consolation can flow through us to others. As St. Francis prayed, "Make me a channel of your peace." ... Think back over your own life experience. When have you felt God's consolation flowing to you through another person? When have you experienced God's consolation for yourself? When has the divine consolation moved through you to someone else? ... Jot down some notes on your experiences. When has this been real in your own experience?

My Faith Journal, March 14, 2010

Good Grief #4

What NOT to Say

What do I hear God saying to me today?

Proverbs 25:20

Philippians 2:1-4

Galatians 6:2-5

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.