




# CHALLENGES OF GRIEF

## 2 SESSION

**YOU LASH OUT AT A FRIEND BECAUSE SHE KEEPS PUSHING YOU** to “move on.” You get to the store and realize you don’t remember the thirty-minute drive. Scattered thoughts, nausea, rapid heartbeat ... you wonder if you’re going crazy.

Rest assured, this is not the case. In this week’s video, the daily **FROM MOURNING TO JOY** exercises, and **MY WEEKLY GRIEF WORK**, you’ll discover:

-  More eye-opening reasons why your pain is so overwhelming
-  Some of the overlooked, yet common, effects grief has on your mind, body, and spirit
-  How to get things done when you don’t feel like you have any energy

### VIDEO OUTLINE

Use this outline to write down important concepts, encouraging words, or questions you have while viewing the video.

### WHAT’S GOING ON?

“I’m depressed”

“I don’t feel like working”

“I’m afraid”

“I’m overwhelmed”

*“Deliberately have some grief time.” –Judy Blore*

“Why do I miss him so?”

Regret (Luke 16:19-31)

“Are physical symptoms normal?”

**Are Physical Symptoms Normal?**

Go to the doctor

“My faith isn’t working” (Psalm 143:7-8a, Philippians 4:19, Psalm 23:4)

“God promises to walk with us through the valley.” –Brad Hambrick

## In this week's From Mourning to Joy exercises ...

Mike shares how he let his emotions rule his life, but finally realized where to find real comfort amid the madness of grief.

**Surviving the Holidays**

Thanksgiving and Christmas can be very painful when you are grieving a loved one's death. We want to help you survive, and even enjoy, the next holiday season.

**Seminar**  
The Surviving the Holidays event features video instruction and group discussion. You will be encouraged!

**Website**  
Find articles and videos that will equip you to survive the approaching holidays.

"Only Surviving the Holidays could have prepared me for the emotions that ambushed me."  
"It gives 'permission' to take care of myself above perceived social obligations."

[griefshare.org/holidays](http://griefshare.org/holidays)

**GRIEF SHARE**  
SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

"Grief blocks my ability to see God, but I shouldn't conclude that means He is absent." -Dr. Paul David Tripp



# FROM MOURNING TO JOY

## ENCOURAGEMENT AND COMFORT FROM GOD'S WORD

### Session Two - Challenges of Grief



#### MIKE: "YOUR BRAIN STOPS WORKING"

*"I was surprised at how intense grief was. You feel like you're going crazy. Your emotions take over and your brain stops working. I was trying to make everybody feel like I was doing good, and then I'd get home and sit there and I'd cry. It was like, 'What do I do now?'"*

You can probably relate to what Mike is saying, but at the same time, you realize your grief is uniquely your own; no one will experience it exactly like you. The same is true for your experience of comfort: what is comforting to you might not be comforting to other people. This week you'll learn more about what's normal in grief and how to find comfort that works for you.

#### DAY 1

#### Grief affects everything

Is there any area of your life that grief hasn't touched? So what's normal and what can you do about it?

#### GOD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*"Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and body with grief. My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak." (Psalm 31:9-10)*

1. What symptoms of grief is David, the writer of Psalm 31:9-10, experiencing?

2. What does David do in the midst of these grief symptoms?

3. What physical problems have you had as a result of your grief?

4. How has your grief affected your job performance or other duties you have?

*"You go into a stupor, and you forget all the promises God's made." -Mike*

## CONSIDER THIS

*"Grief is such chaos. So expect chaos, and then plan for it."* –Judy Blore

Make an appointment to see your doctor. It's important to monitor your health during grief.

## TALKING TO GOD

God, my mind is mush. I don't feel well physically. I feel uncomfortable relating to my family and even my closest friends. Part of me doesn't care. But I do care, God. Please give me Your strength to make it one step at a time. Help me.

**DAY  
2**

### Your grief is unique

Is something wrong if you don't express your grief the same way others do?

*"There's no right way to do this."* –Phil Sasser

## GOD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*"The king was overcome with emotion. He went up to the room over the gateway and burst into tears. And as he went, he cried, 'O my son Absalom! ... If only I had died instead of you!'"* (2 Samuel 18:33a NLT)

*"Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship."* (Job 1:20 NLT)

*"When Jesus saw her weeping ... he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled."* (John 11:33)

1. In looking at today's Bible passages, what are the responses of each of the three men?

2. How do you express your grief differently from other people you know? Share any concerns you have about this.

3. The Bible is a way God communicates with us. Why do you think God gives us examples of people grieving differently?

## CONSIDER THIS

*"Be mindful that what's worked for you won't work for everyone else."* –Sabrina D. Black

*"You go through at your own timing and pace."* –Zoricelis Davila

## TALKING TO GOD

God, sometimes people say things that make me wonder if I'm doing something wrong in my grief. From here forward, I'm going to grieve my own way, in my own time, upheld and guided by You.

**DAY  
3**

### Where do you look for comfort?

"Junk food."

"I buy shoes."

"Spending time with my grandkids."

"I pray and read my Bible."

"I numb the pain any way I can."

Are the things that bring you comfort helping you, or hurting you?

## GOD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*"My people ... have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."* (Jeremiah 2:13)

1. What types of things do you find comforting? List as many things as you can think of.

*"Pain is very personal."* –Carla



2. What have you done in an attempt to relieve the pain that were not good choices (see today's Bible verse)?

3. To keep from prolonging your grief, you need to find relief in ways that take you closer to God. Write ideas of things you can do to move closer to God.

### CONSIDER THIS

*"The loss is still going to be there after you've eaten the half gallon of ice cream or drank a fifth or done something else, but you will have added a layer of problems that impairs your ability to face your first problem."*  
—Susan Lutz

### TALKING TO GOD

God, I'm tired of hurting. Sometimes I'll do pretty much anything for a moment of relief. I need Your help with this. I can't do this on my own. Show me Your comfort.

**DAY**  
**4**

### How to find refuge

Emotional storms are slamming you. You long for a place of safety and refuge. But where? How?

### GOD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*"Keep me safe, my God, for in you I take refuge."*  
(Psalm 16:1)

*"I know the LORD is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me ... My body rests in safety."* (Psalm 16:8–9 NLT)

*"Don't many somebody just because you're lonely." —Mike*

1. Where does Psalm 16:1 say you will find refuge?

2. According to Psalm 16:8–9, where is God when you are at your shakiest, most vulnerable times?

3. Taking refuge in God involves turning to Him for protection and trusting that He will keep you safe no matter what comes. Why has this been hard for you? Or, how have you benefited from turning to and trusting Him?

### CONSIDER THIS

Turn to God by:

- **Praying** – Pray a Psalm daily.
- **Listening to what He says** – Read the Care Cards in the back of this book.
- **Learning who He is** – Consider that you might have misconceptions about who He is. Spend time getting to know Him in the Bible.
- **Obeying Him** – God wants you to follow His directives. As you get more familiar with what the Bible says, look for ways to apply what you read.

### TALKING TO GOD

God, in my storms and darkness, I long for a place of safety and security. This is only found in You. I run to You. Every time I try to turn back and live in unsafe places in my mind, help me run to You again.

DAY  
5

## Our responsibility

You can turn to God because of who He is. If you learn God's character, you'll be more likely to trust Him. But you are responsible to choose to do so.

### GOD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

*"The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you."* (Psalm 9:9-10)

1. What does the Lord promise in Psalm 9:9-10?
2. Why do you think knowing more about God's name (His character) would help you trust Him in difficult times?
3. How has God been a refuge for you?

### CONSIDER THIS

*"God's comfort is to be sought."* –Phil Sasser

*"I realized I had a choice. I decided I was choosing God."* –Cindy Bultema

*"I can trust Him because He has moved toward me and demonstrated His love and faithfulness."\**  
–Susan Lutz

\* See page xii to learn how and when God moved toward you and demonstrated His love and faithfulness.

## TALKING TO GOD

God, the relationship I had with my loved one was one-of-a-kind. When I worry that I'm not grieving the right way, help me understand that I don't need to be anyone but the person You created me to be.

### MIKE: LOOKING BACK

*"I finally listened to God. The whole time He was trying to comfort me and I was not listening. I was not relying on what I'd read and heard and what I really believed [about Him]. I was letting my emotions take over my whole life. I had gone past the grieving and just was feeling sorry for myself."*

*"I can look back and see that God was right there the whole time. The times I was crying, He was comforting me. I'd lost my wife, and my life had changed, but I knew that God still had something for me, as He does for everybody. He does love us; He will not leave us."*

### NEXT SESSION

Learn practical tips to make it through the difficult days ahead.

*"We all try to fix things, and I couldn't fix that."* –Mike