



Dealing with Grief

WHAT MOVIE ALWAYS MAKES YOU CRY?

The POINT ➤

God responds to our sorrow with
grace and compassion.

➤ PSALM 116:1-9,15-17

- ¹ I love the LORD, because he has heard
my voice and my pleas for mercy.
- ² Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
- ³ The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
- ⁴ Then I called on the name of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”
- ⁵ Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
- ⁶ The LORD preserves the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
- ⁷ Return, O my soul, to your rest;
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

- ⁸ For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling;
- ⁹ I will walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.
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- ¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his saints.
- ¹⁶ O LORD, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your maidservant.
You have loosed my bonds.
- ¹⁷ I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the LORD.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

In the movie, *The Sandlot*, an English Mastiff named Hercules terrorizes the misfit baseball buddies. As it turns out, the villain canine belonged to the ultimate villain—Darth Vader himself, James Earl Jones.¹

I am an animal lover, and I'll admit it—I cry at dog movies. It first began when I saw *Old Yeller* as a kid. Though I rarely get emotional while watching a movie, when an animal suffers, my wife will turn to me and ask, "Are you crying?" I don't even have to answer, because the catch in my voice tells her all she needs to know. I'm on the verge of crying over a fictitious dog in a made-up story.

When we watch a movie, we're drawn into someone else's world, and we feel genuine emotions along with the characters. But our sadness disappears as soon as the movie fades to dark, and we step back into our own life stories. But here in the real world, the sadness and grief we feel doesn't fade nearly as quickly. We all experience loss, and it's natural—even healthy—to grieve. The "secret" is to find hope in Christ by placing our trust in God. What does that look like? In Psalm 116, we can find out.



PSALM 116:1-4

1 What is your typical response to sad news?

2 What might keep us from turning to God when we face difficult times?

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

Because of rebellion against God, all people have been cut off from a relationship with Him, and deserve eternal death and hell, which is the punishment for sin.



It's important to understand that grief is not a sin. After all, even Jesus grieved. However, when we feel overwhelmed in our grief, it may be a sign that we aren't trusting in God.
#BSFLEmotions

PSALM 116:5-9

3 Who is helpful to have around when you are sad?

4 What helps you rest in God even when you experience grief?

5 How can a better understanding of God's character help us move through grief?

PSALM 116:15-17

6 What helps you trust God during difficult circumstances?

7 How have times of sorrow and grief refined your faith in God?

8 What are some benefits of trusting and thanking God during times of grief?



LIVE IT OUT

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

Because of rebellion against God, all people have been cut off from a relationship with Him, and deserve eternal death and hell, which is the punishment for sin.

When Adam sinned, he brought the curse of sin upon creation, and we've inherited from him a sinful nature. Further, we've all actively chosen sin and disobedience. Because of these, we've been cut off relationally from God and from His blessings. Instead, we will face sorrow, suffering, and ultimately death. However, when we turn to God in repentance and faith, through Jesus there is comfort available, even in the middle of suffering. Jesus came to earth in order to be our High Priest. He suffered the consequences of our sins, and He is able to sympathize with us in our sufferings and sorrows. Though we deserve eternal punishment, Jesus has compassion and offers comfort to those who trust in Him.

> CHRIST

Many times, we may be tempted to think that, when we live for Him, God will bless us in ways that lead to an easy, comfortable life. However, this isn't the case. Jesus suffered in the worst ways, and we should be prepared and willing to face the same things in order to bring glory to God. Thankfully, Jesus can sympathize with us and will help us endure (Heb. 4:15-16).

9 What do these verses say about Jesus' experiencing real emotions?

> Matthew 26:38

> Luke 22:44

> Mark 3:5

> John 11:35

> Mark 10:14

> John 12:27

> Luke 19:41

10 How does it encourage you to know that Jesus experienced the same things we do and sympathizes with our struggles?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

> COMMUNITY

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7. God offers us comfort so that we can comfort others in return.

11 How has God comforted you in times of sorrow or suffering? What did you learn through those experiences?



12 Who do you know who is facing sorrow? What will you do this week to offer them comfort and encouragement?

> CULTURE

We live in a world which is under the curse of sin, and there is brokenness all around. We are to love and serve not only those who are a part of our church family, but lost friends, family, and neighbors, as well.

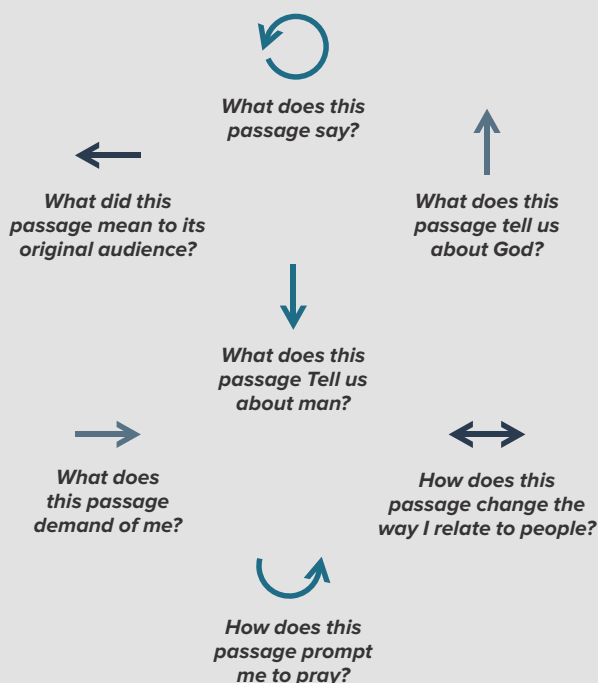
13 Where do you see sorrow and suffering in your community?

14 What will you do this week to offer comfort as a way of reflecting the hope found in Jesus?

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3

Because we live in a world cursed by sin, we will experience sorrow and suffering. Thankfully, God has promised to offer comfort to His people (Isa. 40:1; 51:3, 12; 66:13). When he wrote this letter to the Corinthian church, Paul spoke from experience—he suffered in the worst ways (2 Cor. 11:23-29), yet through it all, he experienced God’s comfort. We may be tempted to think of comfort as a kind person’s speaking soft, gentle words, or offering some sort of help to ease the pain. But this isn’t what Paul means. In this verse, comfort is related to the idea of “helper,” and speaks specifically to God’s entering into our experience, coming alongside us to share in our experiences, and rescuing us from suffering. A pain pill may offer comfort in relieving the pain of a headache, but Jesus coming to earth—and that the Spirit is here with us today—offers an altogether different kind of comfort.

➤ **Where do you generally turn for comfort?**

➤ **How is the comfort Jesus offers different from anything the world has to offer?**

Day Two

2 CORINTHIANS 1:4



When we face overwhelming struggles, it's often easy for us to focus on ourselves, ignoring everything else that's going on around us. We may even think, *no one else knows what I'm going through!* However, if we fall into this kind of thinking, we've missed the point. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve—even in His suffering. When we suffer, we are to look for the ways God comforts us, and in turn, to extend that same comfort to others. Everyone struggles. It's just that sometimes we're not aware of it because we're focused on ourselves. If we'll simply pay attention, God will use us to minister to others, and we'll often find that God blesses us, as well.

- **When are you tempted to become self-focused?**
- **What lessons have you learned in times of struggle that you can use to comfort others?**

Day Three

2 CORINTHIANS 1:5

Jesus said that because the world hated Him, it will hate us, too (John 15:20). Jesus suffered because the world hated Him, and we should expect that same kind of suffering to overflow into our lives. This may seem like bad news, and in a certain sense, it is. After all, it's appropriate to grieve the effects of sin in our lives. However, it's not all bad news. For one, we can know that, when we face difficult things, God uses it to help us mature, shaping us more closely into the image of Christ. Further, God has promised that, when we share in Jesus' sufferings, we will also experience the comfort of Christ overflowing into our lives. We may be tempted to shy away from suffering, even if it means falling into sin. Let's remember, to receive the comfort of the world ultimately ends in missing God's blessings. However, if we are willing to suffer for the sake of the gospel, we will receive the comfort of Jesus—which is far better!

- **What are some of the comforts the world offers?**
- **How does the comfort of Christ compare?**

Day Four

2 CORINTHIANS 1:6

Paul was willing to go to great lengths to carry the gospel to people who needed to hear it. Sometimes, this mission involved his facing great danger, rejection, and suffering. At times, it was overwhelming. Still, Paul was committed to fulfilling the mission of Jesus and doing his part to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. If he suffered (and he did), it was so the lost would receive the comfort for their sins that only Jesus can offer—salvation! We are called to be a part of this same mission. When we share the gospel with our lost friends, we may worry about being rejected or feeling embarrassed. Still, we need to keep in mind the suffering Jesus endured so we could be saved, and we need to continually share the gospel, willing to suffer, so others will know the grace of God in their lives.

➤ **When have you suffered for sharing the gospel?**

➤ **What keeps you from sharing more?**

Day Five

2 CORINTHIANS 1:7



Hope refers specifically to the confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises. Here, Paul said that he had a firm hope for the Corinthian church because they'd proven their faith was real in their willingness to suffer for Christ. They lived in a culture where following Jesus wasn't popular. Still, they refused to turn away from Christ. The world promised comfort and relief, if only they would choose to live the world's way. But the Corinthians knew the promises of God were far better. They certainly suffered for their faith, but they received the comfort of Christ with their choices. This is what it means to be a follower of Christ, and the only way to have a firm hope for eternity.

➤ **What gives you a confident expectation about eternity?**

➤ **What changes do you need to make in your life so your hope is more confident?**