

REAL LIFE EMOTIONS

Dealing with Grief // Psalm 116:1-9,15-17

THE POINT: God responds to our sorrow with grace and compassion.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

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.

► **What movie always makes you cry?**

PSALM 116:1-4

God hears our prayers—and He responds! The psalmist's trust-filled psalm shows us that God heard and responded when he was in a terribly difficult situation. In that moment, the psalmist called upon the Lord to save him. He didn't try to overcome his situation through his own efforts or resources. He didn't look to worldly wisdom or even to other people. He cried out to God. This psalmist was not calling out to some unknown, far-away deity. He was calling to the Almighty God who loves us, who hears us, and responds. When we experience real grief, it can be overwhelming. In these times, no amount of positive thinking will really make the difference we need. In times of deep sorrow, loss, and trouble, the only solution is to call on God—He is the One who hears and responds in His love.

► **What is your typical response to sad news?**

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

PSALM 116:5-9

The psalmist knew he could call on God to rescue him because he knew the character of the One he called on.

- **God is gracious:** God was gracious to His people, showing them favor even when they did not deserve it.
- **God is righteous:** People will not always live according to what we know is right, but God always lives in line with His standards because He is just and right.
- **God is compassionate:** Parents certainly love their children, but God's love and compassion for His people far exceeds any human parent's affections.

When we trust God to rescue us because of His gracious care and compassion, we don't need to worry. And even when we go through difficult times, we can experience rest knowing that God loves us and will take care of us. The psalmist's attitude wasn't simply wishful thinking. He knew firsthand how the Lord had rescued him from all the trouble he experienced.

► **What helps you rest in God even when you experience grief?**

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

PSALM 116:15-17

In life or death, the psalmist knew he was loved by God. Therefore, he would continue to serve Him. The Lord had loosened his bonds, and he was once again free to serve Him. As God's servant, the psalmist would offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord. It can certainly be difficult to feel thankful in the midst of circumstances that cause us pain and grief, but it's in those very moments that we need to remember God and all He has done for us. When life is painful, this is when our character comes through, and we should choose to make the difficult choice to praise God. He is worthy, no matter what we're going through. Through the cross, Jesus saved us from a life of hopelessness, and when we look forward to our eternity with Him, we can worship, even in difficult times. This is what Jesus did, even when He was on the cross.

► **What helps you trust God during difficult circumstances?**

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



LIVE IT OUT

Unit 1 // Session 1

➤ 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).

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

➤ Matthew 26:38

➤ Luke 22:44

➤ Luke 19:41

➤ Mark 3:5

➤ John 11:35

➤ John 12:27

➤ Mark 10:14

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

➤ COMMUNITY

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

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

➤ 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.

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

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