

How can I cope with... grief?

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Introduction

- What is grief?

Christians grieve...

- A universal experience (Eccl. 3:2-4, Luke 7:11-17)
- A unique experience

But not as those who have no hope

- Death is our enemy (1 Cor. 15:25-26)
- Death has been defeated (Acts 2:24, Rev. 1:18)
- Death is not the end (Rev. 21:4)

Practical helps for coping with grief

- Be honest (Psalm 31:9)
- Seek God's comfort (2 Cor. 1:3-4)
- Use God's resources (Gal. 6:2)
- Look for God's blessings (1 Thess. 5:18)
- Give comfort to others (2 Cor. 1:4)

Conclusion

Luke 7v11-17 (NIV)

¹¹ Soon afterwards, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. ¹² As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

¹⁴ Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶ They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." ¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

1 Thessalonians 4v13-18 (NIV)

¹³ Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Books I've used for this talk:

Carol Cornish, *"The Undistracted Widow: living for God after losing your husband"* (Great book – practical advice and thoroughly focused on Christ)

Paul Tripp, *"Grief"* (Short, readable, suitable for giving away; available on bookstall)

Rio Ferdinand, *"Thinking Out Loud: Love, Grief and Being Mum and Dad"* (Secular autobiography of premier league footballer in the UK who lost his wife to cancer)

Other books available on Ambassador bookstall:

Tim Keller, *"Walking with God through pain and suffering"* (Very good for a Christian response to suffering more generally)

Ed Welch, *"Side by side: walking with others in wisdom and love"* (Caring for those who are suffering in the church)