

Finding God's Presence When You Feel His Absence

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:35, 37)

Session 4: When Loss Leaves Questions

John 11:1-44

1. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross named seven stages in the grief journey:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. How can we reconcile John's statements that *Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus*, but *he stayed where he was* when they told him Lazarus was sick (*John 11:5-6*)?

3. Some factors that influence how we experience grief are:

4. How did Jesus react to Lazarus' death (*John 11:33, 35, 38*)?

5. Despite _____ the glorious _____ of our stories, Jesus _____ in our grief.

6. Henri Nouwen: “You choose to live your losses as passages to anger, blame, hatred, depression, and resentment, or you choose to let these losses be passages to something new, something wider, and deeper. The question is not how to avoid loss and make it not happen, but how to choose it as a passage, as an exodus to greater life and freedom.”

7. To fight the paralyzing power of grief:

- _____ God’s presence in our pain.
- _____ the support of friends and family as a gift of God’s grace.
- _____ the hope we have in Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. How did the raising of Lazarus reveal God’s glory?
2. Which of Jesus’ reactions to Lazarus’ death (*John 11:33, 35, 38*) is most meaningful to you? Why?
3. How do you respond when God doesn’t answer your prayers as you expect?
4. What has been most helpful to you in your grief journey? How can you help someone else?