



## Overview:

Grief is complicated and disruptive. This series will help you navigate the grieving process.

## Lessons:

1. The Pain of Grief & Our Hope in Christ
2. Stages of Grief
3. Grief Bursts
4. Healthy Ways to Grieve
5. Common Questions From Those Who Grieve
6. How Relationships Change in Grief
7. Managing the Holidays



# THE PAIN OF GRIEF HOPE IN CHRIST

*Find discipleship resources at [pursueGOD.org/grief](https://pursueGOD.org/grief)*

## TALKING POINTS

Grief may steal our joy but there is hope to be found in Jesus.

- Grief \_\_\_\_\_ you in every area of life—emotionally, relationally and spiritually. Lamentations 3:19-20
- There is \_\_\_\_\_ in remembering – remembering both your loved one and God’s faithfulness. Lamentations 3:21-24
- True healing will only come if you \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus into your suffering. Isaiah 61:3

## DISCUSSION

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1. *Share some of the things you’ve been robbed of since losing your loved one.*
2. *Read Lamentations 3:19-20. Share how bitterness has taken hold of your heart. How has that affected you and your ability to grieve?*
3. *Share your top 3 memories of your loved one. How does remembering special times help you?*
4. *Read Lamentations 3:21-24. Identify all that these verses say about God. How have you seen God’s faithfulness in your life, even in your grief?*
5. *Read Isaiah 61:3. What do you think it means that Jesus can make beauty from ashes? How have you seen God use difficult situations in the past to help you?*



# THE STAGES OF GRIEF

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## TALKING POINTS

JoAnne shares about how she experienced the stages of grief in the midst of an unthinkable family tragedy.

- The Stages of Grief:
  - Shock (or \_\_\_\_\_) is often the initial reaction to protect us from an overwhelming experience.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ is a defense mechanism that attempts to protect our wounded heart.
  - Bargaining is when we begin to allow our \_\_\_\_\_ to open and embrace the pain from our loss.
  - Depression is when our anger is turned \_\_\_\_\_, often to deal with feelings of guilt.
  - Acceptance is when we re-focus the pain and begin to \_\_\_\_\_ life without the person we have lost.

## DISCUSSION

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1. *What has been helpful to you during your grieving process? What has been unhelpful?*
2. *Read Psalm 34:18. How do you feel crushed by your grief right now?*
3. *Why is it helpful to think about grief in stages? What stage do you find yourself in right now? Explain.*
4. *Think about each stage. What are some examples of unhealthy behaviors that could arise in each stage? Do you find yourself exhibiting any of those? Explain.*
5. *Read Psalm 27:13. What do you think it means to find goodness in the land of the living? What are you thankful for even in your despair?*
6. *What do you think the last stage of acceptance means? Have you gotten to this stage? How will you know when you do?*
7. *What could you do to help yourself or someone else move through the stages in a healthy way?*



# BONUS: THE SIX STAGES OF GRIEF

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## TALKING POINTS

The 6 stages of grief is another version of the stages people may experience in their grieving process.

- The Stages of Grief:
  - Confusion - not thinking clearly and being forgetful.
  - Fear - You're angry and fearful as you don't know what the future looks like.
  - Illness - Due to stress and depression, you may get sick and feel fatigued a lot.
  - Seclusion - A complete withdrawal from being around people which then leads to feeling disconnected and alone.
  - Seeking Replacement - You may jump into another relationship or fill your time with activity because you're ignoring the pain of your grief.
  - Doubt - You doubt your fortitude and faith.

## DISCUSSION

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6. *What do you think the last stage of acceptance means? Have you gotten to this stage? How will you know when you do?*
7. *What could you do to help yourself or someone else move through the stages in a healthy way?*

# GRIEF BURSTS

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## TALKING POINTS

An emotional response to a situation or memory can take you by surprise. Learn why that happens and how to respond.

- A grief burst is a moment when you are \_\_\_\_\_ by emotion, thinking about the loss you have experienced. It can be triggered by a memory, a song, a smell, or other things.
- Because of faith, we can have \_\_\_\_\_ - hope that we'll see our loved ones again in heaven and hope in God's word.

## DISCUSSION

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1. *Share about one of your grief bursts. What triggered it?*
2. *How long do your bursts typically last and how do you work through them?*
3. *Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13. What does this verse mean to you? From where do you draw hope?*
4. *Read Psalm 56:8. Share how God has revealed himself to you in your grief.*
5. *How has God used your experience with loss to help someone else?*





# HEALTHY WAYS TO GRIEVE

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## TALKING POINTS

Grief is an ongoing experience, though its effects change as time goes on. Joanne shares some of the things she does to remember her loved ones through the grieving process.

- \_\_\_\_\_ can be an important part of the journey. Getting thoughts and feelings down on paper helps us to work through the hard emotions.
- Talking about our loved ones is also important. \_\_\_\_\_ old memories and hearing other people's perspectives is comforting- to know that our loved ones aren't forgotten by those who knew them.
- Find a \_\_\_\_\_ or outlet that brings you enjoyment.
- Find \_\_\_\_\_ that encourage you and give you hope and memorize them. Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31.

## DISCUSSION

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1. *What is your understanding of the grieving process? How can understanding healthy ways to grieve help you?*
2. *How has journaling been helpful to you? What are some things you've written in your journal that you didn't share at the time with others?*
3. *Read Proverbs 20:5. How have you seen this to be true as you write things down? Share some insights you've gained through journaling.*
4. *Share one of your favorite memories of your loved one. Share a memory someone else shared with you about your loved one. How did that bring you comfort?*
5. *Have you found a hobby or activity that's helped you during this time? Explain.*
6. *Read Isaiah 40:31 and Psalm 27:14. How do these verses speak to you? What do you think it means to wait on the Lord? Do you feel like you're waiting on God to act in your life? Explain.*



# COMMON QUESTIONS

*Find discipleship resources at [pursueGOD.org/grief](https://pursueGOD.org/grief)*

## TALKING POINTS

Though grief is very unique to each person there are some common experiences that many grieving people face.

- “What does it mean if I \_\_\_\_\_ want to pray right now?” Don’t be too hard on yourself. It’s natural to be overwhelmed with emotion or even to be mad at God for your loss. Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 8:26
- “Why do I feel like I’m the \_\_\_\_\_ one still grieving?” Grief is unique to each person. Don’t expect every family member to grieve the way you do.
- “Is it wrong to \_\_\_\_\_ to my loved one?” The person you lost was an important part of your life. It’s natural to still feel their presence or to want to include them in your day to day tasks.
- “Why do I feel \_\_\_\_\_ for not crying every day?” You can’t sustain raw emotion forever plus your ability to cry doesn’t correlate to how much you loved that person. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

## DISCUSSION

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1. *Describe your current emotional state. How has your spiritual life been impacted by your loss?*
2. *Read Matthew 11:28-30 and Romans 8:26. Jesus wants to carry your burden for you. How can you hand over your anger/bitterness to Jesus?*
3. *What makes you feel like others have “moved on”? Why is it important to recognize that grief is unique to each person?*
4. *How often do you want to talk to your loved one? What’s helpful in doing that? How could it cause problems for you?*
5. *Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. According to Solomon, there is a time for everything. How does this passage relieve you from feeling pressure to grieve a certain way?*



# HOW RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE

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## TALKING POINTS

Grief disrupts relationships - you may feel abandoned by some but embraced by others.

- Some friends will \_\_\_\_\_ away because they don't know what to say or do.
- You're \_\_\_\_\_ and you may have new or different responsibilities.
- Expect to make \_\_\_\_\_ friends as you are creating a new normal. Proverbs 12:25
- You may find that you want to be around people who \_\_\_\_\_ your pain. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

## DISCUSSION

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1. *Share about a friend who has really been there for you through grief. Share about a friend who has let you down.*
2. *Why is it important to expect that some friendships will change? How does that expectation help you deal with the disappointments?*
3. *What are some changes you've noticed in yourself since losing your loved one? What new responsibilities do you have now?*
4. *Read Proverbs 12:25. How have new friendships helped to bolster you in your grief?*
5. *Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. How has it helped you to be around others who have experienced loss? How will you help someone else?*



# MANAGING GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS

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## TALKING POINTS

The holidays for many is a time of celebration. For others the holidays are just a painful reminder of the people they've lost.

- Grief is not a one size fits all kind of thing. People grieve in different ways and at differing levels and that's okay.
  - Tip #1: Remember that grief is personal but you're not \_\_\_\_\_. People want to walk with you but they may not know how to do it.
  - Tip #2: Be \_\_\_\_\_ with who you want to be around. It's okay to say no to people who exhaust you.
  - Tip #3: Be fair and \_\_\_\_\_ with yourself. Your grief journey is unique to you and it's okay to go at your own pace, even if it's slower than what others think it should be.
  - Tip #4: \_\_\_\_\_ intentionally during the holidays about the person you lost. Find ways to celebrate their life and keep old traditions that your loved one was a part of in the past.
  - Tip #5: Be aware of when you need to seek \_\_\_\_\_. Pay attention to your mood and make sure to reach out to a pastor, counselor or trusted friend on those darker days.

## DISCUSSION

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1. *What gives you the most trepidation going into the holidays?*
2. *Who are the people in your life that you have been able to lean on so far? How honest have you been with them on what is helpful and not helpful? How could your honesty help you and them?*
3. *Who are the people and situations you want to avoid this holiday season? What are some steps you can take to draw those boundaries?*
4. *In what ways do you feel like you're not meeting people's expectations with your pace of grief? How can you avoid letting those expectations impact your journey?*
5. *How can you celebrate and include your loved one in your traditions this year?*
6. *Read Galatians 6:2. How do you know when you're slipping into a darker place? What do you need to do to take better care of yourself, especially during the holidays?*

**NOTES**



A series of horizontal lines for writing notes, consisting of 23 evenly spaced lines.