

GRIEF

Grief is a natural, expected and inevitable reaction to loss in your life. This is especially true when the loss is the death of a loved one. While you don't have a choice about experiencing grief, you can choose how you will grieve. Grief is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of being human. Grief is the process we use to work through our loss. Grief recovery is not simply feeling better, it is the ability to find joy in life again. It is learning to treasure the memory of loved ones, and to re-establish healthy relationships with others.

If your loved one or a close friend is experiencing a final illness or if death seems imminent you may be experiencing anticipatory grief. Anticipatory grief is intensely grieving the loss of your loved one before the actual death. This grief isn't much different than the grief that occurs after death. It may include a deep sadness and depression, or feelings of fear, anger and even denial. Anticipatory grief provides an opportunity to gain closure and to gradually adjust to life without your loved one. It may present an opportunity to ask for or to give forgiveness, or to say "thank you" or "I love you", and to say "goodbye".

If you have lost a spouse, child, family member or friend, you've probably found that there are not many people who understand the deep hurt you feel. This can be a confusing time when you feel isolated and have many questions about things you've never faced before.

SCRIPTURE RESOURCES

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Matthew 5:4

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. Revelation 21:4

SUGGESTED READING

- *Holding On To Hope* by Nancy Guthrie
- *Grieving With Hope* by Leonard & Hodges
- *Reflections Of A Grieving Spouse* by H. Norman Wright
- *Letter To A Grieving Heart* by Billy Sprague
- *Nearing Home: Thoughts on Life, Faith, and Finishing Well* by Billy Graham

