

How to Handle Grief in a Godly Way – Part 1 2 Samuel 1

Introduction:

1. Have you ever received bad news that literally took the breath from you?
2. As this book opens, David receives the news that King Saul and his best friend, Jonathan, have been killed in battle. David can't believe it. vs. 5
3. David had quite a history with both of these men. Even though Saul had turned on David, David still loved Saul. Saul was David's boyhood hero. David served under Saul, and married Saul's daughter. Of course, David and Jonathan were best of friends.
4. How did David respond to the news? He mourned and wept. vs. 11-12, 17
 - To "*lament*" means "to express sorrow." David was dealing with grief.
5. As we go through this life, we are sure to go through some painful and devastating losses. Many times, we can't control them. But, we **can** determine how we respond to them.
6. This time of grief was a real transitional time in David's life. He was anointed as king 10 - 15 years earlier, but had been through some deep waters. Now that Saul was dead, David would transition to being the king of Israel.
7. Times of grief are transitional times in our lives. Times of grief can make us stronger, or destroy us. Therefore, we must handle grief in a godly way. As we examine David's grieving here in this text, it gives us great insight into how to handle grief in a godly way. How can we do this?

G – Grant that a loss has occurred.

1. If there is one thing we learn from this text, it is this: It is okay to grieve! It is normal, and it is natural. David tore his clothes and began to grieve right in front of all his men. vs. 11-12, 17
 - They "*mourned, and wept, and fasted.*" Have you ever been so grieved you didn't want to eat? It's okay to grieve. God built us with emotions, and it is human.
2. What is the shortest verse in the Bible? "*Jesus wept.*" As people were grieving over Lazarus, it moved Jesus and He wept with them.
3. This isn't the only time Christ grieved. In Luke 19:41, Jesus gazed at unbelieving Jerusalem and the Bible says, "*...he beheld the city and wept over it.*"
 - As Jesus faced the imminent cross in the Garden, the Bible says that His soul was "*exceeding sorrowful, even unto death...*" Matthew 26:38
4. **Godly** grieving is **honest** grieving, whereby we admit that there has been a loss. We don't minimize it, deny it, or simply avoid it. This can be internally destructive.
5. Sometimes we are taught to be tough ("big boys don't cry"), and so we bury our feelings and never truly allow ourselves to grieve. Or, we get caught up in sideline issues and never give ourselves a chance to grieve.

6. Saul is dead. David could be king now. But rather than focusing on this fact, or how Saul's death would help him, David realized the need for lament and grief.

R – Refuse to dwell on the painful past.

1. If you were here when we went through 1 Samuel, you know that David had been through some huge hurts and disappointments with King Saul.
2. Over and over again, Saul had lied to David and done him dirty. Some would say that Saul ruined David's life for a span of about 10 - 15 years. Yet, David still loved Saul (even though Saul didn't love him back), and David felt grief.
 - There is nothing wrong or abnormal about that. It is really a beautiful thing to behold. It shows David's tender and forgiving heart.
3. Jonathan was David's best friend. But, notice verse 17. David mourned over Saul **and** over Jonathan. Isn't this amazing? How could David do this? You would think that David would relish this, and rejoice that Saul got what was coming to him.
4. But, this would have been destructive to David. David had a tender heart, even after all that Saul put him through. David simply refused to focus on the painful past.
5. Instead of remembering the emotionally crippled Saul who lashed out at people, David remembered Saul as the mighty warrior king who gave David his first chance in battle. vs. 19, 22-23
 - Some of us can relate to this. Maybe you had a loved one that really changed the last few months or years of his or her life. Maybe the person's attitudes, actions, and words were hurtful and painful to you. If you choose to focus on this, it will hinder your grieving process.
 - David refused to focus on the pains and hurts of his past with Saul. He chose to remember the good times with Saul and Jonathan.
6. David was obviously a very forgiving person. This is so Christ-like and so spiritually healthy. This is how he could grieve. Unforgiveness and bitterness create a calloused heart. Forgiveness creates a tender heart that can express grief and other emotions. Ephesians 4:32
7. When Christ was on the cross, you never see Him dwelling on how the disciples or anybody else did Him wrong. He said, "*Father, forgive them...*"
8. When you go through a loss, it is so easy to dwell on past hurts. Refuse to do it so that you can grieve in a healthy and godly way.