

Comfort when Grieving

9 January 2019 Wed – Genesis 23:1-2 – Add to Faith – Scott Childs

(Genesis 23:1-2) "And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." God has several lessons for us to learn from Abraham's grieving process that I believe can be a comfort to our hearts when we are grieving.

1. Death is Unavoidable

Sarah was a godly woman. She is the only woman in the Bible to have her age at death recorded. How did God complement her in 1 Peter 3:6? She was a submissive _____ wife. Again, God praised her in Hebrews 11:11 saying that she was a woman of _____. Yet at 127, she died. Even for such a godly woman, death was unavoidable. There are two questions that surface as we think on this.

- a. What is death? Man is a three part being (1Thessalonians 5:23) made up of body, _____ and spirit. Our bodies are material and our souls and spirits are immaterial. Death occurs when our immaterial soul and spirit leave our material body.
- b. Why is death unavoidable? Why can't we avoid it? What did God tell Adam would happen if he ate of the forbidden tree? (Genesis 2:17)? He would _____. When Adam and Eve sinned, the death process began. They instantly died spiritually and instantly began to die physically. According to Romans 5:12, who inherited Adam's sin nature? _____. Hebrews 9:27 says that because of sin, God appointed that sinners must _____.

2. Mourning is Natural

When Sarah died, her husband Abraham mourned and wept. His mourning and weeping were proper and becoming, intense and sincere, limited and restrained.

"A Jesus who never wept could never wipe away my tears." Charles Spurgeon

We should not deny that death brings sorrow. It does! Its pain is real. Its loss is genuine. Even Jesus experienced this as his cousin John the Baptist died and as He himself prepared for death. From these events in Christ's life, we find six practical lessons on how to cope with the pain of death.

- a. What did Jesus do when He heard that John had died? (Matthew 14:12-13) He departed into a _____ [solitary] place apart. Later that same day, (Matthew 14:23) Jesus sought to be alone to _____.
- b. While grieving, use this time to reflect on the life of the one who died as well as on your own life (past, present, and future). Ask yourself questions like, "What if it had been me?" "Would I have been ready?" "What am I doing with my life for God?" "Am I distinguishing between the important and trivial?" In Psalms 90:12, David asked God to _____ him to _____ his days or to realize life is short.
- c. Don't be afraid to show emotion. Abraham wept for Sarah. John 11:35 says that Jesus _____ when his friend Lazarus died.
- d. If the loved one who passed away was an unbeliever, draw comfort from the fact that God is sovereign. In Genesis 18:25 as Abraham prayed for Lot's family, he said, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do _____?"
- e. When a Christian dies, our sorrow need not be as painful as when an unbeliever dies, (1 Thessalonians 4:13), because Christians have _____. When a Christian dies, he is _____ from the body and _____ with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8).
- f. Remember that sorrow is only temporary. Psalms 30:5 tells us that "weeping may endure for a _____, but joy cometh in the _____." God will resurrect true Christians and one day He will wipe away all _____ (Revelation 21:4).
- g. Share your sorrow with a friend. In Matthew 26:37, as Jesus was sorrowful before His crucifixion, He prayed with _____, James, and John his friends. True friends will quietly comfort you. Pour your heart out to them. Romans

"Broken bones take time to heal and broken hearts take even longer." Unknown

- 12:15 says we are to "weep with them that _____."
- h. Accept death as God's will. God has appointed for all of us a time to _____ (Ecclesiastes 3:2). Christ's death was God's will. God makes no mistakes.
 - i. Resume a normal schedule as soon as possible (Matthew 14:14). Jesus went forth ... and _____ their sick. Jesus did not spend prolonged time mourning, but turned his attention to the needs of others.

3. Preparation Is Invaluable

Though death is unavoidable and mourning is natural, we need not fear death if we are prepared. To help us prepare for death, we must understand two Bible facts.

- a. Death is not the end, but the door to eternity. We all will live eternally in one of two places – heaven or hell. There is no exception. Jesus described death as passing through a _____ (Matthew 7:13-14). Death seals our destiny (Hebrews 9:27). When a Christian dies, he will depart and be _____ (Philippians 1:23). Those without Christ will be condemned (Revelation 20:15).
- b. Death is no respecter of persons and could call you today. We all know this to be true, but somehow we think we will be an exception. RIGHT NOW is the best time for you to prepare for death. If you have not yet trusted Christ to forgive your sin and save your soul, do it now. If you will admit you are a sinner, believe that Christ died for you, and ask Him to save you and make you His child, He will. All who believe will have _____ through His _____. (John 20:31).

Other comforting verses include: Psalm 23:4; 34:18; 62:5; 73:26; 147:3; Isaiah 40:29; 53:4; Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 5:4; 11:28-30; John 11:33; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 15:52-53; 2 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Peter 5:7.

"Never fear dying, beloved. Dying is the last, but the least matter that a Christian has to be anxious about." Charles Spurgeon