

Hope for Hurting Hearts
Part 8: Hope in Grief
John 11:17-44

How do we respond to a loss?

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and the stages of grief:

1. **Denial**: we deny reality and do not accept the situation.
 2. **Bargaining**: we try to barter with God; “If You do this, I’ll do that.”
 3. **Anger**: we express anger towards God or others.
 4. **Depression**: we mourn the loss and express our sadness outwardly.
 5. **Acceptance**: we embrace the reality of the loss.
- We may go through all of these stages back and forth and in any order. It is healthy and appropriate to express grief. But we should not grieve like those with no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

How can we find hope in grief?

1. Maximize the Time

³ *So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”* John 11:3

- Because our time on earth is limited, we must make the most of each day and leave nothing left undone.

2. Simplifies Your Values

²⁰ *“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’*

²¹ *“This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”* Luke 12:20-21

At your funeral, the three things that will matter most are your **faith**, your **family**, and your **friends**.

3. Intensifies Your Walk

²⁰ *When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.* John 11:20

Build upon three truths:

- a. God hurts when you hurt and He will comfort you (*Jesus wept.* John 11:35; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; 1 Peter 5:7).
- b. Death is not the end for those in Christ (²⁵*Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”* John 11:25-26).
- c. You will see your Christian loved ones again (⁴³*“Lazarus, come out!”* ⁴⁴*The dead man came out* John 11:43-44).

4. Evangelize the Lost

⁴¹ *...Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”* John 11:41-42

- Funerals are one of the greatest opportunities we will ever have to share our faith and hope in Christ.

5. Unifies Believers

¹⁹ *and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.* John 11:19

- Open your heart to family and friends and grieve together.