

PHASES OF BEREAVEMENT

We are currently in our third lesson in the series entitled, Dying Grace.

This lesson is for believers who understand the doctrinal information given in lessons 1 and 2. This lesson is directed to those who have studied the doctrine of dying grace and have the assurance based on the word of God (2 Cor.5:6-8).

The focus of this lesson is on those who will experience dying, but on those who will experience bereavement. It will be essential that they “walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor.5:6-8) [note the importance of verse 7 to the bereaved].

In our lesson text, the disciples of Jesus had been in denial about the dying of Jesus. Although Jesus has been teaching on this subject for months, they have refused to believe it (Matt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; 26:2, 26-29, 34, 74-75).

(Matt.26:31-3) “Then Jesus said to them, ‘You will **all fall away** because of Me **this very night**, for it is written, ‘I will strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’ **But after I have been raised**, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.’” (Zech.13:72)

This lesson will study four aspects of Phases of Bereavement.
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1. The disciples of Jesus were unwilling to face the reality of His death because they refused to believe the doctrinal content of the word of God regarding it.

They went to Bible study, but refused to believe the content of the Categorical Bible Doctrine (CBD) being taught.

They refused “to listen - to learn - to live” God’s word (2 Tim.3:7, 14). They failed in inhale and exhale CBD (2 Tim.3:16-17). Therefore, they were unprepared to walk by faith in time of crisis (Col.2:6-7).

For that very reason they are struggling in their bereavement and recovery to normality in their Christian Way of Life. (CWL) They went back to Old Man Thinking (normality) before Jesus called them into ministry (Eph.4:22-24).

2. They have been unable to adjust to life after the death of Christ, even after three post-resurrection appearance and additional Bible studies.

(John 21:14) “This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, **after He was raised from the dead.**”

What did they go back to doing? Are they having any success at it? I wonder why?

3. There is always a before, during, and after the death of a loved one.

How you adjust doctrinally to walking by faith and not by sight is the issue. (2 Cor5:7).

How you feel is not as important as what you think (Rom.14:22-23; 15:13). How you feel is part of human experience, but how you think is part of your spiritual experience (Col.3:1-3).

The lessons given to you before, during, or after a personal crisis (loss) have a much larger divine agenda attached to it than what is happening in real time. This is the point of our lesson text.

Do you know what these disciples did for a living before they were called to become disciples of Jesus? (Matt.4:18-22)

What did Jesus call them to become?

(Matt. 4:19, 22) “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

It is interesting that the Book of John opens and closes with Jesus' association with fishermen. (John 1:35-51 and 21:1-14). Did you notice that fishing dominates our lesson text? What lessons did Jesus teach them about their spiritual calling? (Phil1:21).

4. There are nine Phases of Bereavement that are important to walk by faith and not by sight.

- 1st phase is the death event, whether expected or unexpected
- 2nd phase is making funeral arrangements and service
- 3rd phase is legality assuming the responsibilities of the dead
- 4th phase is supporting one's children and close kin
- 5th phase is income adjustment such as child care, single rather than double income and the bills
- 6th phase is dealing with the personal belongings of the deceased
- 7th phase is dealing with the sense of loss of companionship of one's mate or parents
- 8th phase is the first-year adjustments, holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, and special events
- 9th phase is listening to sound counsel before making any major decisions (Prov.11:14; 15:22)