

May 17, 2020 -

Hebrews 4:12-16 -

“Coping with our Lost”

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Introduction

The last four days have been days of sadness for several church families. Jayne Ratti, Angie Ricci, Gina Baez and Mina Aurora all have lost loved ones and most to the covid-19 virus. Grieving the loss of a loved one is a deep and difficult challenge at any time. However, this pandemic has magnified the sense of loss and mourning. The U.S. COVID-19 death toll now stands at 88,473 and the world has suffered the loss of more than 310,000 people.

Family gatherings and funerals are on hold. Empty places, missing faces, and lost traditions all have frequent this pandemic. Without question this has tested the resolve of those that are grieving and hurting. If you are mourning a loss of a loved the scriptures have some important things to keep in mind.

While it is common to think of loss and grief only in connection with death, life itself is full of losses that must be acknowledged and coped with. We have all suffered a loss of one kind or another because of the Coronavirus virus. This pandemic has created the loss of jobs, educations, graduations and vacations. You might have experienced a finance loss, a lifestyle, a career, your health or even your home. People are suffering loss and every day we continue fighting this virus there is more lost.

The writer of Hebrews states in verse 12 God's word is powerful, it exposes our inner most thoughts and desires. He knows our loss he knows our pain and our suffering. We must now more than ever before rely on the truth of scripture. The Psalms are a wonderful place to start. They can lift your spirit in an unexpected way and bring peace and comfort. I often go there in these difficult and trying times. The text for today reminds us our God is in control and knows all our heartache and trials. Our help is always found in him and His Word. He speaks to us through His Word.

Application:

Are you struggling with lost today, the loss of freedom, the loss of choice, the loss of employment? Any loss can bring about grief and pain but my good friends the Lord is familiar with grief. Today's outline is introduced with three P's.

I. Petition Jesus' Compassion

1. When the experience of loss happens JESUS knows all about it. He is aware of everything. Nothing is hidden. Hebrews 4:13 uses the word “*äf-fä-nas*” that carries the idea that nothing escapes God eyes he is fully aware. (Pr. 15:3) The Bible causes us to realize nothing is hidden from God, but everything in our lives is naked and opened before the eyes of our Father.

Jesus was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with "grief. " Look with me -**Isaiah 53:3-5. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.**

That presents the question, what would He be grieving over? Perhaps it was the loss of a perfect world and sin. Perhaps He grieved the loss of the position He held and gave up to put on an earthly flesh, come down here and live as we live, and die for us. Loss is a reality.

2. The very fact that Jesus walked where we need to walk gives us comfort and courage at the same time. He grieved and there will be times we need to allow ourselves this process so that we can cleanse our souls. I can share in His suffering, and I can bond with Him as I go through loss too. I can be confident that He knows how to comfort me, because He has been there and experienced it all in human flesh.

We have this truth affirmed in our text **4:14 & 15**. Note the words, “be touched with the feeling” this is one word in Greek, the word “*süim-pä-thai*’-ō where we get the English word *sympathy* it means to feel for, have compassion or sympathy.

Dr. Gary Collins a noted psychologist said, “Grief is an important, normal response to the loss of any significant commodity or person. It is an experience of deficiency and anxiety which can show itself physically, emotionally, cognitively, socially and spiritually.” (unquote)

3. You and I cannot be fully prepared when loss comes our way. Folks, what does our Father tell us, “**Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:** Jesus has already done that for you! Refuse to believe or live in the lie that time is going to heal you. Yes, time will fade the pain and soften the blow but only God can carry them away.

II. Practice Recovery within God's Word.

1. The Psalmist said, " **My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.** (Psalm 119:28). David is saying, my soul is heavy with sadness however I can be strengthened according to thy word. Within the Lord's mercy you can go forward into the future free of despair and suffering. Recovery comes in steps. First you have to do some assessment of your losses and

allow yourself to except the loss and trust Him with the pain. **Don't put excessive expectations on yourself.** God has given you wisdom and compassion to work through the lost. -- Job

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. --- I Peter 5:7

2. The onset of new behaviors and expectations may seem daunting, but God gave you your previous normal. Ask Him to give grace and hope in the face of the new normal. Let Him lead you to a place where you can relax and let Him beam His light on you. Don't walk in the path of distress.

3. Trials don't indicate a reduction in God's love for you. He loves you and promises to make things right in the end. Spend time focusing on His inescapable love for you.

(Romans 8:37-39- Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Allow your relationship with Jesus be your encouragement throughout this pandemic. "His church is a gift too, seek out God's help.

III. Pursue the Lord's Comforters.

1. God has blessed some with the gift of compassion and comfort. Some people know just what to say and do to encourage others who are going through difficult times. Their words give strength to those who are discouraged and comfort to those who are grieving. These people are sensitive to God's voice. They are not self-centered or unaware of the struggles of those around them. They are welcome visitors when we are in distress, for their presence sustains us.

2. Scripture testifies of many whom God enabled to encourage others. When Moses was overwhelmed by his work, Jethro went to him and encouraged him. Jethro gave Moses wise counsel. Paul found strength and encouragement in Timothy (2 Tim. 4:9). Paul experienced trials throughout his life, but God sustained him by placing godly friends around him Who provided support in practical and sacrificial ways. God wants to develop you into the kind of Christian friend who can encourage others.

Conclusion:

Release everything to the Lord let him remove the poison from your soul that this time of loss has taken. Allow God's abiding love to encourage: "Christ is ready to...stand in the gap between you and the pain, and to be your constant companion in the dark hours. He loves you."

Ask Jesus to love through you and get your eyes off problems and on to Him and others. In Christ you can do all things.