

Handling Losses Biblically

Jim Berg, Professor Biblical Counseling, BJU Seminary and Founder, Freedom That Lasts

Definitions Related to Loss

Loss

- We experience loss when something of value is either removed or withheld from us.

Sorrow

- Sorrow is the emotion of loss (grief, “groaning,” pain in the soul, heaviness, melancholy, etc).

Despair

- Despair is sorrowing over our losses without hope (hopelessness/helplessness).

Hope

- Hope is a confident expectation of a good outcome because God is involved keeping His promises.

Losses

- All trials produce losses of some sort—loss of property, loss of respect from others, loss of certainty, loss of money, loss of health, loss of valued relationships, loss of opportunities, loss of productivity, loss of hopes and dreams, loss of peace and joy, etc.
- In addition, our losses can come from things we *lack* in life—lack of godly influence at home, lack of wise problem-solving instruction, lack of educational opportunities, lack of adequate healthcare, and so forth. Everyone who has experienced these kinds of deficiencies feels the loss of something that they never had. These losses become trials.

Preparations for Handling Loss

- Despair is driven by the *conversations* we are having with ourselves—words we say in our minds—about our situation and the lack of options at our disposal to change anything.
- In our minds, we form the *conclusion* that things will not improve and that we are helpless to do anything about it.

- The more we *think* about our hopelessness and helplessness, the more we are tempted to *choose* to end the pain by indulging in sinful activities or, eventually, ending our lives.
- This downward spiral of thinking is both predictable and preventable.

1. *We must seek to know God better.*

- 2 Peter 1:2-3; 2 Peter 3:18
- “What comes into your mind when you think about God is the most important thing about you.” —A.W. Tozer
- Mixing Bowl illustration

Stabilizing Truths About God

1. God is always good—always! That means...
 - a. He will always meet my genuine needs—always.
 - Philippians 4:13, 19; Matthew 6:31-33
 - b. He will always forgive my sin—always.
 - 1 John 1:9; Psalm 51; Isaiah 66:2b
 - c. He is always up to something good in my life—always.
 - Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:26-34
 - d. He will always love me personally—always.
 - Romans 8:35-39; Jeremiah 31:3; John 17:23
 - e. He will always give me the grace I need—always.
 - 2 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
2. God is always great—always! That means...
 - a. He is always in control of all things—always.
 - Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 14:27, 46:9-10
 - b. He is always present with me—always.
 - Psalm 139:7-12; Isaiah 41:10; Jeremiah 23:24
 - c. He is always the same—always.
 - Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:10-12

d. He is always trustworthy—always.

- 2 Timothy 2:13; Psalm 36:5; Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 7:9; 31:8

e. He is always wise in what He does—always.

- Romans 11:33; Colossians 2:3

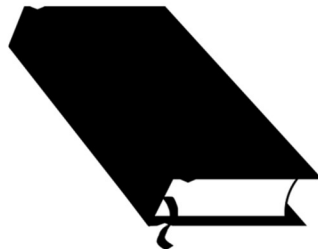
Instructions:

- Read through the statements about God every day.
 - Ask, “If I really believed and remembered these truths about God during my trials, how would my responses to the trials be different?”
 - Memorize key statements.
 - Memorizes verses under each statement.
 - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
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2. We must act on the truth about God.



Bow



Trust



Obey

Conclusion

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:4

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Romans 15:13