**"REFLECTIONS ON THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE"**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The loss of loved one is a difficult burden to bear...I KNOW !!!

 a. Only those who die young and before others escape this burden

 b. All others will bear this burden at some point in their life

2. The Lord certainly knows our grief...

 a. He wept when as He saw those weeping over the loss of a loved one

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[**Jn 11:33-35**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2011.33-35)**…33When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.34And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.35Jesus wept.**

 b. Then He sought to prepare His own disciples for when they would lose

 Him –

[**Jn 14:1-3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2014.1-3)**….14 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.2In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

3. We all know that, God can be a wonderful source of comfort...

 a. In the here and now - cf.

[**2CoR 1:3-5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%201.3-5)…3**Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;4Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.5For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ..**

 b. In the hereafter - cf.

[**Re 21:4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Re%2021.4)**…And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.**

4. In the death of my mother...

 a. I found God to be the God of all comfort

 b. Indeed, I found that He provided many avenues of comfort

[As I reflected on my mother's passing, I found myself thankful for His

many comforts. Perhaps you might find my thoughts helpful should you

find yourself losing a loved one...]

**I. SOURCES OF COMFORT DEFINED**

 **A. HOPE IN CHRIST...**

 1. As Christians, we grieve, but not as those with no hope –

[**1 Th 4:13**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Th%204.13)**….**13But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

 2. In Christ, we have the hope of resurrection and reunion –

[**1 Th 4:14-17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Th%204.14-17)**14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.15For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.16For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:**

 3. This hope is a wonderful source of comfort –

[**1Th 4:18**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Th%204.18)**….18Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

 **-- I was comforted to have a mother who died in Christ**

 **B. PRECIOUS MEMORIES...**

 1. Memories can be a source of comfort - e.g.,

[**Php 1:3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%201.3)**….I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,**

 2. Especially when they involve one's faithful service to Christ

[**Php 1:4-5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%201.4-5)**…Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,5For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;**

 3. Such memories add to the confidence of our hope –

[**Php 1:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%201.6)**….6Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**

 **-- I was comforted to have a mother who was a faithful Christian**

 **C. LOVE OF FAMILY, BRETHREN, FRIENDS...**

 1. One way that God comforts us is through other people

 2. Who comfort us with comfort they have received from God –

[**2 Co 1:4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Co%201.4)**….Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**

 3. In times of loss and suffering, it often brings out the best in

 people

 **-- I was comforted by many expressions of love and kindness from**

 **others**

 **D. THE WORD OF GOD...**

 1. The Word of God is a source of peace and strength - **Ps 119:**

 **165;** Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them

PSALM **1:1-3**

 2. If such was true of the Law, how much more the words of Jesus

 and His apostles!

 **-- I was comforted by God's words of peace, love and hope**

 **E. PRAYER...**

 1. Prayer is likewise a source of peace and strength –

[**Php 4:6-7**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%204.6-7)**…6Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.7And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

 2. It is an avenue in which to find grace and help in time of need

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[**He 4:14-16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%204.14-16)**14Seeing 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.15For 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.16Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**.

 3. Many people wrote to tell me that I was in their prayers

 **-- I was comforted by both personal and public prayers, offered by**

 **so many**

 **F. SONGS...**

 1. Songs of joy, faith, and hope were sung at the funeral

 2. Later, a congregation devoted an entire service to song in

 memory of my mother

 3. With hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs, singing both praises

 God and edifies one another –

[**Ep 5:19**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%205.19)**;** 19Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

[**Col 3:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Col%203.16)**..****16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**

 **-- I was comforted (and moved most, providing an outlet for my**

 **grief) by songs of hope and faith that we have in Christ**

[With so many sources of comfort, I found the loss of my mother to be a

reminder of how richly blessed I am, and how kind God has been to me.

Yet I am aware that not all enjoy such blessings during the time of

their loss. Which leads me to say a few words about the following...]

**II. SOURCES OF COMFORT DEVELOPED**

 **A. HOPE IN CHRIST...**

 1. Our wonderful hope is for those who are faithful to Christ till

 death –

[**Re 2:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Re%202.10)**….10Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**

 2. If we desire to have this hope, and to leave it as a legacy for

 those left behind, we must be faithful servants of Christ

 **-- Do not wait until it is too late; you will only add to the**

 **grief of your loved ones**

 **B. PRECIOUS MEMORIES...**

 1. Now is the time to be making memories

 2. Especially memories of your faithful service to God, your

 kindness to others, etc.

 **-- What kind of memories have you been creating lately?**

 **C. LOVE OF FAMILY, BRETHREN, FRIENDS...**

 1. Loving relationships take time to develop

 2. Don't think only of family, you might outlive all of yours;

 remember brethren and friends

 **-- What kind of relationships with people are you developing now?**

 **D. THE WORD OF GOD...**

 1. It also takes time to become familiar with the Word of God

 2. To learn where to turn to find comfort, peace, and strength

 **-- Are you familiarizing yourself with the Bible so it can help**

 **you in your grief?**

 **E. PRAYER...**

 1. Prayer is of value only if we are right relationship with God

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[**1Pe 3:12**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%203.12)**….12For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.**

 2. Prayer is comforting only if we are already close to God

 **-- Are you drawing closer to God by frequently talking to Him in**

 **prayer?**

 **F. SONGS...**

 1. Like the Word of God, songs comfort us when they are familiar

 to us

 2. When we've had time to reflect, to understand what we are

 singing about

 **-- Do you sing spiritual songs enough to find comfort in them now?**

**CONCLUSION**

1. The death of a loved one has been made easier to bear because of

 God's grace...

1. Jesus died to deliver us from the fear of death –

[**He 2:14-15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%202.14-15)**…14Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;15And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

1. The death of a righteous person is precious in God's sight –

[**Psa 116:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Psa%20116.15)**….15Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.**

 c. The loved one has finally gone home; if we remain faithful, the

 separation will be temporary

2. The blessings that God affords His children in time of death are so

 many...

 a. But they must be received and acted upon

 b. We must act now to benefit from them in the future

Are you preparing for the reality of death? Are you doing things today

that will make the "death-day" of your loved ones (and your own) easier

to bear, even a cause for celebration...?