

36.3 Getting Out More

In our last “*Woe Be Gone Wednesday*” grief lesson we talked about how important it is to connect with God in our times of grief. We come to God in these times because He is our ultimate Healer. I believe that the grand design of grief is to bring us to the Healer we need. In **Exodus 15:26** (NKJV) God told the Hebrews:

. . .I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer.

We know, that He is our Comforter, our Teacher, and our Companion. Jesus told the disciples in **John 14:26** (NKJV):

²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

While we need God, He made us to need even more. God created Adam and He saw that it was not good for the man to be alone, so He created Eve. We are made for community. God made us in His image as He lives in community as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In addition, He lives with the angelic host of heaven.

The following is an adaptation of a post from one of my Face Book Friends. It reminds us of how we impact one another.

My lemon tree is nearly ten years old. For the first six years it didn't produce one lemon. Folks told me to trim it. I did and no lemons. Others told me to fertilize it. I did and no lemons. So I gave up on it and bought a little orange tree. All of a sudden the lemon tree started producing lemons. It didn't need to be trimmed, better soil, more light . . . all that was missing was cross pollination. The pollen from the orange tree stimulated the lemon tree.

You and I cannot make it alone just because the ground is fertile and there's plenty of light. We need each other. We need friends. We need connections, not only to God, but to the body. I need you brother. And you need me. Make an effort to connect with people. It's the only way you will ever be able to produce fruit.

Jesus connected the two greatest commands in the Hebrew Scriptures by using the common words, “*and you shall love*” in **Mark 12:29-31** (NKJV). One comes from **Deuteronomy 6:4-5** and the other from **Leviticus 19:18**. Notice His statement.

²⁹Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. ³⁰And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. ³¹And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Love God? Yes. Love your neighbors? Yes. We need both connections. In fact, we need, not only to love God and our neighbor but to be loved by them as well. Love is part of the image of God. John said, “**He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**” in **1 John 4:8** (NKJV).

It may be tempting to stay in solitude when we grieve. It may be comforting to stay with God in our heartache. But we also remember the people near us. We have the need for give and take with others. Believe it or not, people can help in our grief recovery process.

Being with people reminds us that we are not alone. Too much alone time can be harmful to us though less threatening. Let's think of the continuation of the Elijah story in **1 Kings 18-19**. While he was at the mountain of God he felt all alone and told the LORD in **1 Kings 19:10** (NKJV) the following:

“I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”

Elijah thought he was alone in the Lord’s work. God had a different perspective. Listen to the LORD’s response in **1 Kings 19:18** (NKJV):

“...¹⁸ Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

We really aren’t as alone in our grief as we may think. God is present. There are people who care. Sometimes we just have to get out more to see. We just need to pay attention to the people whom God is putting into our lives. We need them and they need us (believe it or not). This is, in fact, a practical purpose for churches.

Think of what are called, “One Another” passages of scripture. Here is a partial list:

- Love one another – **John 13:34; Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12**
- Build up one another – **Romans 14:19; Ephesians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:11**
- Be of the same mind toward one another – **Romans 12:16**
- Give preference to one another – **Romans 12:10**
- Greet one another – **Romans 16:16**
- Serve one another – **Galatians 5:13**
- Receive one another – **Romans 15:7**
- Be devoted to one another – **Romans 12:10**
- Rejoice or weep with one another – **Romans 12:15**
- Comfort one another – **1 Thessalonians 4:18**
- Encourage one another – **1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13**
- Be compassionate with one another – **1 Peter 3:8**
- Pray for one another – **James 5:16**
- Accept one another – **Romans 14:1; 15:7**

Take time to be alone. Take time to be alone with God. Then take time to be with people as you are able, even if it is in short stretches at first. Give yourself permission to cut meetings short if necessary. In our grief we need others, maybe especially in our grief we need others.

Keep The Light of Others Burning!