

Finding Your Way When the Worst Happens

... each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment . . .
Hebrews 9:27 (New Living Testament)

... All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
Psalm 139:16 (New International Version)

The Bible helps us to see what actions believers must take to find our way during a painful of loss; to find our way when the worst happens.

- **ACTION #1: EXPRESS YOUR GRIEF; DON'T STUFF IT.**

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NIV)

... mourn with those who mourn. Romans 12:15b (NIV)

(See David's Lament in 2 Samuel 1:17)

- You work through grief as you talk about your loss to those who love you.

Two Things Happen When You Talk About Your Loss

- You get in contact with what you are feeling. (You process your loss.)
- You open yourself to the comfort and support of others.
- Talk to God.

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

... God ... comforts the downcast ... 2 Corinthians 7:6 (NIV)

- Talk to the people who love you.

Talk About Two Things

- The person you've lost
- How you are feeling at the moment

- **ACTION #2: RECEIVE SUPPORT; DON'T ISOLATE YOURSELF.**

... for each one should carry his own load. Galatians 6:5 (NIV)

"Load" = the common word for any burden

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

"Burden" = a heavy weight; an oppressive burden

What Does Support Look Like?

(See 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 5:11; Ephesians 4:32)

- It includes your presence and your touch.
- It includes your on-the-spot prayers.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16 (NIV)

- It includes your listening ears and encouraging words.

The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out. Proverbs 20:5 (NIV)

- **ACTION #3: GUARD YOUR HEART; DON'T GIVE IN TO BITTERNESS.**

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.
Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

For God ... made his light shine in our hearts ...⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay ...¹⁴we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence ...¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.
2 Corinthians 4:6-7, 14, 16-18 (NIV)