

# Counselling those who feel sadness and loss – principles and practical advice

**Sadness: A common problem!**

**Feeling Loss - Ps 103:1-2**

*Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless his holy name!  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits...*

His benefits:

**Loss: A universal problem**

**How could you help fellow pilgrims experiencing loss and responding in the usual three ways?**

- 1. How might you encourage them as a Saint?**
- 2. How might you comfort them as a Sufferer?**
- 3. How might you challenge them as a Sinner?**

**(A note on bereavement – everyone is different, everyone goes on a long journey)**

## **GETTING TO THE BIBLE**

### **Three “Elephant Trap” Passages**

Romans 8 – don’t forget to groan

1 Peter 1 – NOW exiles, scattered, perish, spoil, fade, suffer grief; rejoice in FUTURE

James 1 – “consider it pure joy” is NOT the same as “cheer up”

### **Lament: A neglected tool in the Bible’s toolbox for loss and sadness**

#### **Lamentations**

Repeating cycles – *The Life you Never Expected*

Irregular shape

Mercy in there somewhere

**Vroegop's four parts (often intermingled) – Deep Clouds, Dark Mercy**

- Address God
- Bring complaint
- Ask boldly
- Choose to Trust

Can you spot them in Psalm 3? (in a different order...)

<sup>1</sup> *LORD, how many are my foes!  
How many rise up against me!*

<sup>2</sup> *Many are saying of me,  
'God will not deliver him.'*

<sup>3</sup> *But you, LORD, are a shield around me,  
my glory, the One who lifts my head high.*

<sup>4</sup> *I call out to the LORD,  
and he answers me from his holy mountain.*

<sup>5</sup> *I lie down and sleep;  
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.*

<sup>6</sup> *I will not fear though tens of thousands  
assail me on every side.*

<sup>7</sup> *Arise, LORD!  
Deliver me, my God!  
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;  
break the teeth of the wicked.*

<sup>8</sup> *From the LORD comes deliverance.  
May your blessing be on your people.*

(NIV 2011 UK)

**Now You Try It!**

What's the enemy up to?

Who is God?

What will it look like for you to trust God this week?

What shall we ask God for?

How will he answer even if we don't know when?