

The Valley of the Shadow

Walking Through Grief in the Christian Life

The character of grief

Grief is universal.

Grief is unique.

Grief is appropriate (1 Thess 4:13).

Grief is directly proportional to one's love.

Grief changes you.

What helps in grief

Time

Friends

God

God *grieves* over death (John 11:35).

God *knows* death (John 19:30).

God *overcomes* death (Isa 25:8; 1 Cor 15:54).

Helpful Resources on Grief

A Grief Sanctified, J.I. Packer

In this work, Packer looks at grief through the story of Richard Baxter - a 17th-century Puritan pastor - who lost his wife after almost 20 years of marriage at a relatively young age. Baxter wrote a short biography of his late wife in the wake of her death as part of his grief process, and Packer draws some overall principles from his experience.

Good Grief, Granger E. Westberg

Westberg's book was originally published in 1961 and has been through 50 editions. He outlines ten common "stages" that will help readers see their experience not as entirely unique (and therefore isolating), but as part of the fallen human experience known by Christians everywhere. At less than 60 pages, this book is a wonderfully pastoral, realistic, and hopeful book. Though helpful for those grieving themselves, it is probably most helpful for those in the position of walking with someone through grief.

A Grief Observed, C.S. Lewis

While Baxter's work on grief (above) focuses on the life of the one lost, Lewis's work examines his *own* experience after losing his wife. As always, Lewis is quotable and profound as he explores such an intimate subject. This work is a classic.

Lament for a Son, Nicholas Wolterstorff

This book is a series of short, raw, and honest reflections from a father after the loss of his 25-year-old son in a mountain climbing accident. Like Lewis, Wolterstorff is unafraid to articulate some of the most haunting questions that confront us when we lose someone we love - especially when that loss is unexpected and early.