

Published based on [A Time to Grieve](#)

A Time to Grieve

1 To everything there is a season,

A time for every purpose under heaven:

2 A time to be born,

And a time to die;

A time to plant,

And a time to pluck what is planted;

3 A time to kill,

And a time to heal;

A time to break down,

And a time to build up;

4 A time to weep,

And a time to laugh;

A time to mourn,

And a time to dance...

Ecclesiastes 3

I don't suppose there are any of us who could say we really enjoy grieving. The very definition of the word frames the intensity of the pain.

Grief - keen mental suffering or distress over affliction or loss; sharp sorrow; painful regret; anguish, heartache, woe, misery; sadness, melancholy, moroseness.

As the writer of Ecclesiastes pens this beautifully melodic verse, aren't we just tempted to say, "Well, that was the writer of Ecclesiastes. We all know his writing is fairly negative at times." We know it is God's Word but wasn't the writer just a little off kilter?

I guess I would say he was in a season.

I don't know any of us who love all seasons equally. As a matter of fact, most of us have at least one season of the year that we just downright hate. We dread its arrival and we endure its length; and we are grateful to see it go.

For me, it's winter. I don't enjoy the cold barrenness. Sometimes my body aches when the temperature drops. The nerve damage in my hand screams in response to cold. Winter just doesn't say "welcome" to me. When I go outside during the winter, I prefer to just get it done and move on with my day.

As of late I have been thinking about the importance of seasons in our lives and what God intends to work in us during our "time to mourn". It began in the Garden when sin entered. The mourning of the death of intimacy with God and with each other. The mourning of the loss of peace. The mourning of the loss of grace. The loss of home and heart.

And ever since, we as humankind have faced grief. Certainly Jesus came to reverse the curse, to heal our brokenness, to restore our relationship with God and others, but we all have a pretty good sense that we are not living in the fullness of that restoration. We believe that one day grief will end. Sorrow will be no more. Tears will be wiped away, but we are not there yet.

So in the current time on earth, there is a time to grieve. Most can embrace grieving over the death of someone they have loved, but how many of us embrace grieving over the other losses in our life? Hasn't life taught us to suck it in, be tough, just go on? No use crying over split milk, right?

I am learning that those thoughts have a measure of deception in them. There is a time to mourn; a time to grieve. If we shortcut that process by stuffing our grief inside, what does that mean for us as individuals?

I am not the first to purport this so I don't claim to give birth to new thought here, but I am discovering an inner truth that for me requires a facing of grief; a looking straight into it; a walking through the valley instead of around it.

How often in our religiousness do we misuse the truth of God's Word to excuse our lack of willingness to embrace the time to mourn? We say we take authority over it; we are overcomers; we are strong in the Lord. Hogwash. We deceive ourselves. We cannot take authority over, overcome, strong arm our way out, or deny our way through grief. We may appear to be doing so for a time, but I am reminded of the saying that "buried pain never dies."

If we go back to the Garden, let's take note that God did not allow Adam and Eve to handle their grief in any of these ways. He didn't allow them to skirt any of the issues. Now He did make provision for their ultimate healing. He did give them hope. He did redeem. But He didn't sweep anything under the rug.

In fact, He boldly brought Adam and Eve face to face with the shame of their sin. He boldly brought them to truth. He boldly spoke of consequences. He boldly called for them to face grief.

They were hiding. They were doing everything they could to deny the reality of the sadness of their present life. They had sinned. They had hurt each other. They had broken fellowship with God. The implications of what had happened are still reverberating within all of us and the entire world. God would not allow them to skip over their need to grieve.

And doesn't repentance include the element of grief? If we only make a mental assent to our failure and try to turn over a new leaf, it never works. We can't change without repentance. Repentance requires looking honestly at what sin has cost us, whether it be our sin or the sin of someone else against us. That honest look breaks our heart. When we face our sin, we grieve.

We aren't called to stay in that grief forever. To do so is to refuse the grace of God. To stay in blame, shame, and regret forever is to offer ourselves as the payment for our sin. That is, in many ways, a pride-filled way to reject God's offer of Christ to cover our sin by trying to cover it ourselves.

But for today, my point is, "There is a time to mourn; a time to grieve."

My mechanism of choice is to refuse to deeply feel pain. I prefer stuffing it in. I'd rather not think about it. But in my journey of healing, I have found that those ways of relating have never really worked for me. My lack of honest dealing with grief has shown up in my physical body, my emotional well-being, my mental health, my relationships, and my spiritual paths. It just doesn't work for me any longer. In truth, it never did.

The healing journey that I am finding is requiring me to grieve. Does that sound like an oxymoron? Does it fly in the face of our ideas of strength? How often have I found that God's ways are just that. Confusing. Paradoxical. Ways that lead us into discomfort. Ways that lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. Ways that lead us to look deeply into pain.

As we look, we must come to the place that says "Without Him I can do nothing." Without him I can't truly heal. Without him my life cannot be fixed. I come into the depths of my heart and being and find depravity. But then the season begins to change. The wind begins to warm. Little shoots of green spring up. What is this? It is my glory. My journey of being created in his image. It is my dignity of being like him. It's the paradox.

In embracing true deep grief, my tears have provided the water for the growth of my soul. The snow melts. The sun warms. And I know more of God than before. I know more of the trueness of the love of others. I know more of my own heart and the plans God has for me.

So maybe you think that reading about grieving is depressing. It seems to me, more than I knew before, that grieving is living life in truth, facing pain so that I can see redemption.

So don't deny your grief. Experience it in its fullness. And then know that just as the writer of Ecclesiastes said, "To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven." And seasons change.

A time to mourn gives way to a season of laughter and dance. A season of hope and healing. Springtime in your heart and soul are just around the corner.

You can also find this article published on [A Time to Grieve](#), and on the tag pages [Adam and Eve](#), [bible comfort](#), [bible comfort verses](#), [bible death comfort](#), [bible grieving](#), [comfort dying](#), [death christians](#), [eccl 3](#), [eccl 3 4](#), [Ecclesiastes 3](#), [Ecclesiastes 3 4](#), [Ecclesiastes chapter 3](#), [grief](#), [healing](#), [scripture comfort](#), [seasons](#), [truth](#), [when dying](#).