



23 emphasis mine). It was painful and heartrending for David to lose his son, but he still knew there was hope of seeing him again. David was certain that his son was with God, and he resolved to “go to him” (cf. Ecc. 12:7). Though difficult and agonizing, we must also have the same resolve if we lose a child. We can mourn for lost infants and miss them, but we can take comfort in knowing that they are with God, and we may yet see them again if we are faithful to the Lord.

this part of the story, strangely, we find hope and peace of mind. Why? Consider David’s response: **“While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.’ But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I WILL GO TO HIM, but he will not return to me”** (2 Sam 12:22-

Indeed, death will come to us all and to those we love. There are many emotional and spiritual challenges that come when we lose someone we love. There will be a clarity that comes after their death in which we discover just how important they were to us while we, at the same time, must try to adapt to a life without the one in whom we confided and relied upon. Let us be diligent, then, brethren to teach our loved ones the truth of Christ, and strive to remain faithful ourselves that we might be reunited with those dearest to us on the Day of Judgment.



Faithful Sayings Issue 14.3 January 15, 2012

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ISSUE

14.3

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

January 15
2012



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia

“A Time to Mourn”

By Jason Garcia

Someone once said that death is life’s final common denominator. Eventually it comes to us all and, more often than not, it comes to someone we love before we must face it ourselves. Whether it comes to a mother, father, a husband, a wife, a child, or dear friend, the result is the same for those left behind by their beloved—grief. If left uncontrolled, grief can drive someone to take his or her own life, or—even—cause people to stop caring about any and everything (cf. 2 Sam. 12:18). There is nothing wrong with experiencing grief and it is normal behavior for those who have lost someone dear. In fact, Scripture teaches that there is a time to mourn and grieve for the departed (cf. Ecc. 3:4). Jesus Himself mourned over His friend Lazarus before raising him from the dead (cf. Jn. 11:35). John tells us Jesus’ grief was so intense that, upon seeing Him weep with the family, those nearby exclaimed, **“See how He loved him!”** Scripture tells us in the same context that the Lord was **“deeply moved within”** (Jn. 11:36, 38). So we can be sure that the Lord has felt the same anguish in bereavement as we have felt when we lose someone dear to us. However, like all emotions, it must be controlled and not be allowed to overwhelm the

heart. What else does the Scripture have to say about mourning our lost loved ones?

Job was a man well acquainted with grief. All of his servants were killed or captured except for the four who escaped to bring him the news (cf. Job 1:13-17). Things only got worse for this man because on the same day these disasters struck, he lost all of his children—seven sons and three daughters (cf. Job. 1:32 18-19). Most of us can



Olsen Park church of Christ

scarcely imagine such a tragedy—happening in our own lives and in the same rapid succession that they occurred for Job. What was Job’s reaction to such terrible loss? He worshipped God (cf. Job 1:20-22). We shouldn’t conclude that Job was unaffected by the deaths of his children for **“he tore his clothes”** and **“shaved his head”**—outward signs of his tremendous sorrow. He was deeply saddened by his loss, but his grief did not give way to doubt or hatred toward God. Rather than dwell on the loss, he took the opportunity to acknowledge the *goodness* of God. He fell to the ground and proclaimed, **“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord”** (Job 1:21 NASB). In just a few words he acknowledged such gifts came from God and that He is sovereign over all. We can be certain of Job’s sincerity because of the Spirit’s testimony regarding the man’s response that **“through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God”** (Job 1:22). Sometimes when we lose our loved ones the news comes to us suddenly, and we feel blindsided as Job did. At other times, due to terminal illness or other inescapable circumstances, we are able to anticipate death drawing near, and so we are prepared to say “goodbye” one last time. In either case, we may choose to dwell upon the loss and focus on our own sadness—allowing grief to overwhelm us, or we may see it as an opportunity to worship God and thank Him for allowing us to share what little time we had with our loved ones.

David also experienced much grief in his life. Early on he distinguished himself as a military leader and was the dear friend of the king’s own son, Jonathan. David’s relationship with this man is typically well known because of the strong language that Scripture uses to describe the two. The Spirit says that **“the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself”** (1 Sam. 18:1). Perhaps we

have felt the love for a dear friend as David and Jonathan had for one another. In their story we see great gestures of their love: Jonathan gave David the clothes off his back and even his own armor, pled for David’s life before his father the king, and risked his own life to arrange the signal that would assure David’s safety (cf. 1 Sam. 18:3-5; 19:1-7; 20:12-23). Sadly, though, Jonathan would die at the hands of his father’s enemies, leaving David to mourn his death. David’s words for Jonathan prove his affections for his fallen friend: **“I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; you have been very pleasant to me. Your love to me was more wonderful than the love of women”** (2 Sam. 1:26). David knew his friend was one of a kind and could not be replaced, and this is only part of the lament David is described as “chanting” for Jonathan. It’s important for us to find an outlet for our grief as well. We do not have to eulogize and honor our friends in song or prose if that makes us uncomfortable, but we may express our grief in other ways to our family or to God in prayer. In our day and time, we usually hold ceremonies following the death of a loved one that may include a visitation for family, a funeral service, and perhaps even a graveside service. All of these serve as opportunities to express our grief as David did in his memorial to Jonathan. Even in David’s song we do not see him dwelling on and pining for the past, but rather remembering and celebrating the love of his friend. We must also choose to cherish and share the memories we have of loved ones. Death may take all things away, but it cannot rob us of precious memories.

Later in life, David would have to cope with another tragic loss—the death of his infant son. If there was ever a time when words seem too weak and fruitless to capture the heartache and agony of our experience, it would be the death of an innocent child. In David’s case, it was his own sin that led to his son’s death which, as one can imagine, would only compound the grief and distress he must have felt. Scripture offers a very sad picture indeed: **“David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground. The elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them”** (2 Sam. 12:16-17). David would continue to do so for seven days until his suffering baby would pass from this life. Like Job, David went straightway to worship God as we’ve previously seen, and it is here at