



## **Grief: A Journey of Transformation**

As a pastor at LAUMC, one of my primary roles is to reach out to those experiencing loss and offer care on behalf of the church. I often see myself as the donkey in the story of the Good Samaritan—carrying people through their pain, bridging the gap between need and healing.

One of the hardest parts of ministry is witnessing the loss of loved ones. Whether sudden or expected, traumatic or natural, death leaves a deep impact. Grief is heavy, and walking with those who mourn is both sacred and heartbreaking.

In these moments, I am invited into holy ground—to be present, to witness, and to affirm the depth of their loss. This journey has led me to reflect on the weight of grief and how it shapes our lives.

### **A Biblical Perspective on Grief**

Lamentations 3:22–23 offers comfort: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Grief reshapes the soul—not as something to be forgotten but as part of who we become. Poet Gwen Flowers reminds us, "Grief is not a task to complete but a new way of seeing, a new definition of self." It transforms loss into deeper understanding.

Love and grief are inseparable. Kenneth R. Mitchell and Herbert E. Anderson affirm, “There is no love without loss. And where there is loss, there is grief.” Mourning is a sacred act, honoring what we have cherished—whether a person, a dream, or a season of life.

Grief is not a linear process. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s stages—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—remind us that healing is personal and fluid. Even Jesus wept at Lazarus’ tomb (John 11:35), showing that grief is sacred and that we do not mourn alone.

Rituals—storytelling, memorials, and prayer—help us process loss, offering healing within community. Grief is not about closure but about learning to live anew. May we hold to the promise of Psalm 34, trusting that the God who walks with the brokenhearted also carries us toward healing, hope, and transformation.

Pastor Jeong