

Issue 33 - Grief & Hope on Easter

Messy Story of the Week

Easter morning arrived with all the usual signs of celebration.

The sanctuary was fuller than usual. Bright colors replaced the quieter tones of the weeks before. Children held onto baskets and bulletins, a little more wiggly than normal. There was an energy in the room—a kind of lifted anticipation.

“He is risen!”

The words were spoken, sung, echoed.

And yet... something felt different.

Because this year, someone was missing.

There was a space where she should have been. A voice that should have joined the singing. A presence that had been part of so many ordinary Sundays—and now, suddenly, wasn't.

People smiled and greeted one another, but there was a softness to it. Hugs lingered a little longer. Eyes filled more quickly. Some conversations stopped short, not because there was nothing to say, but because no one quite knew how to hold both things at once:

Resurrection... and loss.

A child asked a simple question—one that didn't feel simple at all:
“Why are we happy if she died?”

And the answer didn't come quickly.

Because Easter doesn't ask us to pretend death didn't happen.
It doesn't rush us past the ache of absence.

Even on the day we celebrate an empty tomb...
there are still places in our lives that feel very full of loss.

We stood and sang anyway.

Not because everything felt resolved.
Not because grief had lifted.

But because somewhere underneath the sorrow—quiet, steady, and unshaken—there was a deeper truth:

Death is real.
Loss is real.
And still... it is not the end.

Faithful God Then and Now

“Jesus wept.” — John 11:35

Before the empty tomb... there was a full one.

Before resurrection was declared, grief was expressed.

Jesus stood in front of Lazarus’s tomb knowing exactly what He was about to do—and still, He wept.

He didn’t rush past the sorrow because He knew the ending.

He didn’t correct the grief of those around Him.

He didn’t say, “Just wait, this will all make sense in a minute.”

He entered the grief fully.

He wept with them.

He honored what had been lost.

He made space for the weight of it.

And then—*He called life out of death.*

That same pattern still holds for us now.

We don’t grieve like the world—not because we grieve less, but because we grieve with a deeper hope.

A hope that doesn’t erase loss...

but anchors us inside it.

Because the promise of Easter is not that death never touches our lives.

The promise is that death does not get the final word.

So when we stand in our own places of loss—whether it’s fresh and raw or quietly lingering—we are not asked to choose between grief and faith.

We are invited to hold both.

To weep honestly.

To remember deeply.

And to trust that the same Jesus who stood at Lazarus’s tomb...

is still present with us now.

Not rushing us.
Not correcting us.
But meeting us—right here—in the middle of it.

What We Can Learn

- Grief is not something to rush past—it is something to walk through
Even Jesus paused to weep before He moved toward resurrection. We are not more spiritual for skipping what He chose to enter.
- You can hold sorrow and hope at the same time
Faith does not require you to feel better—it invites you to trust that something deeper is still true, even when it hurts.
- There is no “right pace” for grief
Grief does not follow a timeline or a neat progression. It moves in waves, and faithfulness is staying present inside those waves—not escaping them.
- Avoiding grief doesn’t protect you—it delays healing
What we push away doesn’t disappear. It waits. Healing begins when we gently allow ourselves to acknowledge what is real.
- The promise of resurrection doesn’t minimize loss—it gives it context
Death is not the end, but it is still a real and painful part of our story. Easter doesn’t erase grief—it anchors it in hope.

Behind the Curtain

In coaching, I often see people quietly wondering if they are grieving “the right way.”

They don’t usually say it out loud, but it shows up in the questions they ask themselves:

“Shouldn’t I be doing better by now?”

“Why does this still hit me out of nowhere?”

“Why can I be fine one minute and undone the next?”

There’s an unspoken expectation that grief should follow some kind of path—steady, predictable, forward-moving.

But that’s not how grief works.

Grief moves more like the tide than a straight line.

Some days it barely touches your feet.

Other days it pulls you under without warning.

And in between those waves, life keeps asking things of you—meals to cook, conversations to have, responsibilities to carry. So people often find themselves moving back and forth:

One moment tending to their grief...

The next moment tending to life.

That back-and-forth can feel confusing, even disorienting. But it’s not a sign that something is wrong.

It's actually part of how we endure loss.

What complicates things is that many people try—often without realizing it—to manage their grief by avoiding it. Staying busy. Pushing it down. Telling themselves they'll deal with it later.

But grief doesn't resolve through avoidance. It waits for our attention.

Not all at once.

Not in overwhelming ways.

But in honest, manageable moments where we allow ourselves to acknowledge what is true.

And here's what I want you to know:

You are not behind.

You are not doing this wrong.

And you don't have to force yourself into someone else's timeline.

Faithfulness in grief doesn't look like "moving on."

It looks like staying present—with God, with yourself, and with what is real—one small step at a time.

Let's bring this home—steady, grounded, and actionable without feeling heavy.

Faithful Family Tools

If this issue meets you in a place that feels tender, you don't have to walk through it alone:

- On Facebook: [Faithful Families | Christian Marriage and Parenting Help | Facebook](#)
 - Work with me - [Start the application process](#)
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Faith Step for the Week

Instead of asking, *"How do I move on from this?"*

Ask, *"What does it look like to be faithful inside this?"*

Let your goal this week be presence—not progress.

Bible Passage

John 11:1–44 — The death and raising of Lazarus

2-Minute Practice

Take two quiet minutes today.

Place your hand over your heart and gently notice:

- What am I feeling right now?
- What thoughts are connected to this feeling?
- Am I trying to rush, fix, or avoid this?

Then simply pray:

“Lord, You are here too.”

No need to explain.

No need to resolve anything.

Just practice being present—with Him in it.

Prayer

Lord,

You are the God who sees, who stays, and who weeps.

Thank You that You do not rush us past our grief or ask us to pretend we are okay.
You meet us in what is real.

Help us to be honest about our sorrow without losing sight of Your promises.
Teach us how to grieve in a way that keeps us connected—to You and to one another.

Give us courage to sit with what hurts,
wisdom to know when we are avoiding,
and peace that comes not from answers, but from Your presence.

And as we remember the resurrection,
help us hold onto hope—not as a way to escape our grief,
but as a truth that steadies us inside it.

Amen.

Coming Next

Next week, we're going to talk about why grief can feel so confusing—and what's actually happening beneath the surface.

Not as a set of stages you're supposed to move through, but as meaningful work your heart is trying to do.

We'll look at the "tasks of grief"—how we begin to face the reality of loss, process the pain, and slowly learn how to carry love forward in a changed world.

Because grief isn't just something that happens to you.
It's something you learn to walk through—with God, step by step.