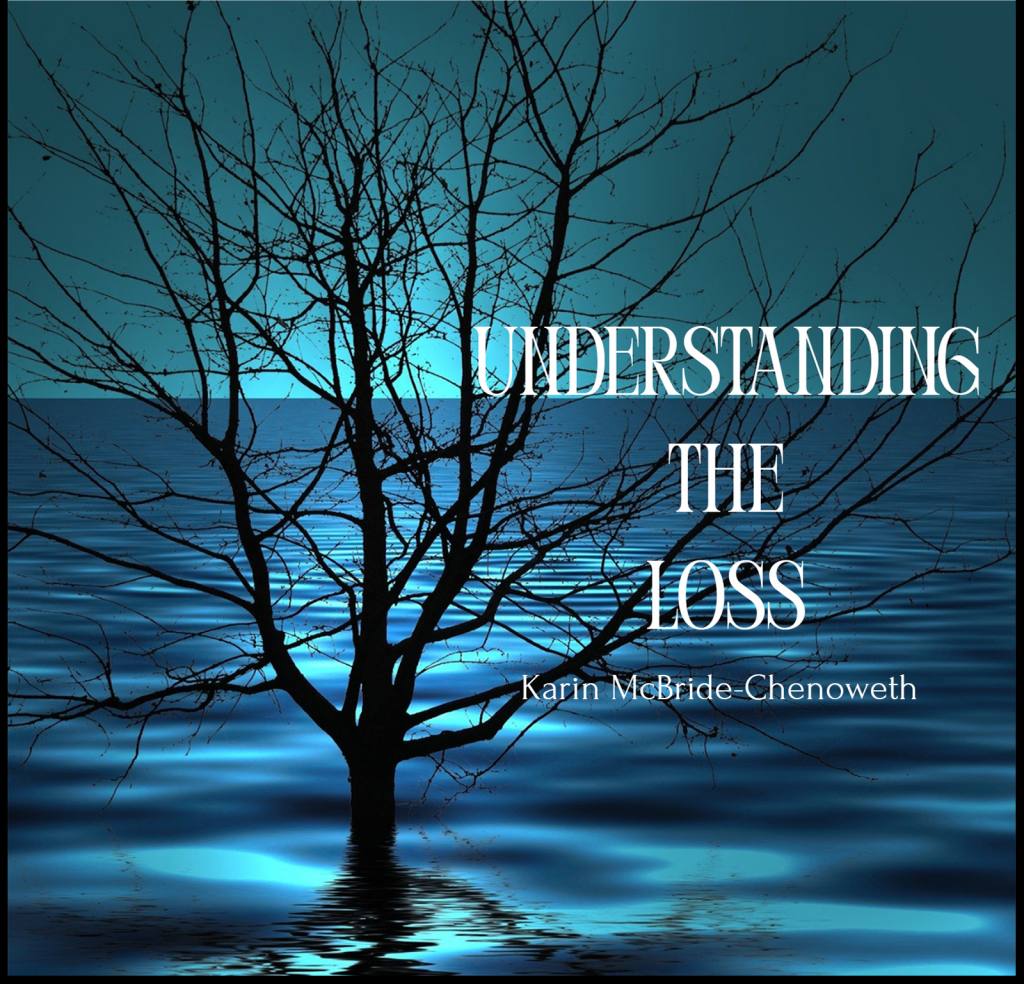




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LIFE CHALLENGES

SERIES



UNDERSTANDING THE LOSS

Karin McBride-Chenoweth

Understanding The Loss

'He said, "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." Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba...' 2 Sam 12: 22 -24

Jesus taught us to comfort one another and to weep with those who weep. It is very difficult sometimes for others to understand what happens whenever there is the loss of a baby in the family. It is a great mystery to me that no-one appears to know what to do, particularly in some instances the husband. The woman who has 'lost' the baby sometimes has to undergo a series of tests to ensure there wasn't 'something wrong' with her! She agrees as she already feels a 'failure' and something that ought to be the most natural thing in the world she 'cannot' do...

For many years I have listened to pastors and people teaching on this subject. Having lost my first baby 5 days after her birth, I was anxious to know whenever I became a believer exactly where she was, was she in heaven or some sort of purgatory? You see, someone had told me, straight after her death, that because I didn't believe in God and because I hadn't had her baptized, I would not be able to have her buried on consecrated ground.

Therefore, my little bundle of joy who had struggled with survival but for a short time would not be allowed to be buried on consecrated ground.



As this was spoken to me right after she died and the fact that I was very young and naive, I believed it! Why wouldn't I? I had no spiritual grounding in the Lord and anyway I had made my mind up firmly that there could not possibly be a God – a God of love would not allow my beautiful baby to endure the coldness of death and to put me through this...

This became one of the most important moments of my life; losing my firstborn became a major spiritual marker in my life that would eventually lead me to Jesus and the Cross. For almost 9 months I had carried this new life within me. I was there whenever she first moved within me, I felt her first kick, I was there at her birth and whenever she left this world five days later.

I was a new mom and a new grief-stricken one at that. When you lose a baby, so close to birth, you are dealing with two great polar opposites – life and death. Yet Jesus had to die to give us life. Through the death of my daughter I began to earnestly search for the truth and the very essence of life itself. It took me a while and it took me into some interesting places over the years, but eventually I found it.

I was amazed to find myself again at the entrance of the door looking at the Cross in the distance. He had asked me to run into His arms that Saturday morning in May 1984, whenever my arms physically ached to hold the baby I had just lost. I had refused and then and I had to go through the wilderness a little while longer. But the Lord understood I needed time.

As I look back at this event in my life, I have learned a lot about the world we live in and life itself. Life is precious and we must never take it for granted. I believe truly that God was able to use this terrible time to enable me to connect to Him, the Creator. I kinda understood a little more what God must have gone through to redeem mankind, by offering up His only begotten Son for an ungrateful world.

Over the years I have gained much comfort from the scripture at the beginning of this article. It was first read to me by my the Pastor at my first church. He became the first person to not turn his back and 'change the subject'.

That one verse contained so much for me personally and I related thereafter to the character of King David and how he dealt with the suffering of the loss as a man of God.

I know where my daughter is, she is part of the eternal plan and purpose that helped to shape my life enormously. She changed and influenced my very thought patterns and emotions forever – her life was extremely brief but so impactful and she never spoke a word. Some people can live a lifetime and never achieve this. She was created by God and I thank Him every day for her life, she left her own legacy in a way that I will be always be forever grateful for and I consider it a privilege that I had a brief time to know her and love her.

In your walk with Jesus always be mindful that you seek God and ask Him to help you to bring Jesus to other people's lives. Live impactful lives. You never know how your words or a hug or your very presence in a room will speak to another. Let Jesus shine - always!