



## Lesson Seven

# “Bereavement Ministry”

**Objective:** *To train and equip students to minister comfort and encouragement to those experiencing the loss of a loved one.*

**be·reave·ment:** *the state of being sad because a family member or friend has recently died: the death of a family member or friend*

Our mission for bereavement ministry is to provide spiritual support, guidance, comfort and love to hurting family members during this difficult time. Through the bereavement ministry we will allow the Holy Spirit to minister the love of Jesus to strengthen them and to bring the knowledge of Christ and eternal life to others.

During bereavement, many questions flood the minds of believers and unbelievers alike. In this lesson we will answer the most commonly asked questions about death. Job lost all of his children in one day and asked the question...

**Job 14:14** NKJV *If a man dies, shall he live again?*

This is a good question. It has been asked throughout generations. Normally no one even likes to think about death. We probably don't even give it a second thought until we are forced to such as when it happens to someone near and dear to us. God included the subject of death in the Bible so that we would have a clear perspective on death.

**1 Thess 4:13** NKJV *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.*

## I. What is Death?

**1 Thess 5:23** NKJV *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Scripture shows us that God has uniquely created humans as tri-part beings.

**1. We are \_\_\_\_\_ who live on the inside of a physical body and we possess a soul.**

The spirit part of us is the real part that will live and exist eternally. The body serves as the suit that our spirits live and move in. To illustrate this more perfectly, think about

your hand being inside of a glove. If you move your fingers around in the glove, the glove appears to have life. However, when you remove your hand, the glove no longer appears to have life because the part that gave it life has departed from it; so it is with the relationship between the spirit and the body. Physical death occurs when the spirit leaves the body. **Gen 2:7; Gen 3:19; Ecc 3:2; Psalm 31:5; Luke 23:46**

**Ecc 12:7** NKJV *Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.*

**2. When we are absent from our bodies, we are \_\_\_\_\_ with the Lord.**

**2 Cor 5:8** NKJV *We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*

## II. Why do People Die? Gen 2:17

People of all ages die; infants, adolescents, teens, middle aged and older people. All kinds of people die, Christians and non- Christians and everything in between.

**Heb 9:27** MSG *Everyone has to die once, then face the consequences.*

Death occurs when the body can no longer sustain life. The body operates according to certain laws and principles. One of the laws is that the organs of the body must function in a certain way in order to keep the body alive. When the organs can no longer sustain the body in the earth, the spirit has to leave. Death can occur because of several reasons.

**1. \_\_\_\_\_**

**Ecc 7:15** TLB *In this silly life I have seen everything, including the fact that some of the good die young and some of the wicked live on and on. So don't be too good or too wise! Why destroy yourself? On the other hand, don't be too wicked either-don't be a fool! Why should you die before your time?*

**2. \_\_\_\_\_**

**Job 2:7-8** NIV *So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head.*

**Luke 13:11** NKJV *And behold, there was a woman who had a **spirit of infirmity** eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.*

**3. \_\_\_\_\_ of the Flesh**

Infirmity of the flesh is a weakness in the body. It can occur for several reasons. A person can be born with organs malformed or malfunctioning. Please understand that God did not do that. It is a result of sin in the earth.

Another infirmity of the flesh is when something traumatic happens to the body causing injury. Also, because sin and death entered our bodies after Adam and Eve disobeyed

God, our bodies will not last forever as they were created to. The cell regeneration process slows down as we age and the body wears out. **Gen 3:22-23**

#### 4. \_\_\_\_\_

It is the believer's right to be able to go home to be with the Lord.

**Phil 1:23-25** NIV *I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith...*

#### 5. The Believer has \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Tim 4:7-8** NIV *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

**Ps 91:16** NKJV *With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation."*

Let's take notice that none of the reasons listed is that God killed anyone. Contrary to what you might have heard, God does not kill His children.

The Bible describes the Christian walk as warfare. In every war there are casualties.

**2 Cor 10:4** NKJV *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds*

### III. What Happens Beyond the Grave? Luke 16:19-31

#### 1. We will be Very Much \_\_\_\_\_

Through Jesus' ministry, we get incredible insight as to exactly what happens beyond the grave. It is clear that there is **consciousness and feeling; he remembered** his brothers; **he felt emotion**.

**2 Cor. 12:1-4** NLT *This boasting will do no good, but I must go on. I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. 2 I<sup>[a]</sup> was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. 3 Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know 4 that I was caught up<sup>[b]</sup> to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.*

The walk of life we are in now is only part of what life is all about. Believing in Jesus and trusting Him for forgiveness of our sins and eternal life with God in heaven assures us of an eternity that we will enjoy very much.

**John 3:16** AMP *For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (<sup>[a]</sup>unique) Son, so that whoever believes in*

(trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him **shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.**

**John 11:25-26** NKJV Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, **though he may die, he shall live.** 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

2. We will be in a place \_\_\_\_\_ for us with Jesus.

**John 14:2-4** NKJV In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; **that where I am, there you may be also.** **Revelation 21:18-21 – Revelation 21:3-4**

3. We will \_\_\_\_\_ Each Other in Heaven

**1 Cor 13:12** NIV Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, **even as I am fully known.**

**(At the Mount of Transfiguration – the disciples recognized Elijah and Moses even though they had never seen them before)**

4. There will be a \_\_\_\_\_. **1 Cor. 15:50-55**

**1 Cor. 15:50-55** NLT What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. <sup>51</sup> But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! <sup>52</sup> It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. <sup>53</sup> For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. <sup>54</sup> Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die,<sup>[a]</sup> this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

**1 Thess 4:13-18** NKJV But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore **comfort one another with these words.**

#### IV. Comforting Those Who Mourn Through...

##### 1. \_\_\_\_\_

When someone dies, it can feel overwhelming trying to find the right words to say to comfort the surviving family and friends. The Bible tells us to comfort one another with the words that focus on the promise of eternal life with Jesus. Many times I have found that it's better to **be a certain way** than it is to **say a certain thing**. When you don't know what to say... just hug! In tragic situations, **pointing to our trust in God** even when we don't understand brings comfort.

##### 2. \_\_\_\_\_

When a family experiences a death, many people find it hard to eat or even think straight. As a church, we bring prepared meals to the bereaved family to try to encourage them to eat and relieve them of that burden.

##### 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer makes tremendous power available, dynamic in its working. The prayers we pray for those experiencing the loss of a loved one are the most important thing we can do. Long after the service is over the family is still picking up the pieces and trying to move on with life. We should remember to extend our prayers for the family weeks after the funeral is over.

Pray for peace in the family. Many times that is when the devil starts using the carnality of people to stir up old rifts and power struggles over properties, etc.

##### 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Whenever possible, we should be there to support the family during the funeral. It may not seem like much but our presence does make a difference. Just being there expresses the love of the Jesus.

##### 5. \_\_\_\_\_

Xceleration Church will send flowers on behalf of the pastors and church as an expression of our care and concern.

##### 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Remember that the grief process continues for some time. It can be very meaningful and encouraging to receive a card or a call letting the person know that you are still remembering them in their time of grief for up to a year after their loss.

##### 7. **Be ready to** \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis time is God time. The death of someone we know always causes us to stop and think and examine our lives and preparedness for our own death. It often becomes an opportunity for others to receive Christ. Be ready to pray the prayer of salvation with others.

V. Sample Funeral Sermon for a \_\_\_\_\_ who has Passed  
**Celebration of Life Service**

**1. Open in prayer –**

Father, we honor you in this Holy moment – and this divine appointment – and precious time – **for Your word says, precious in your sight is the death of your saints** – We are grateful for our Comforter, The Holy Spirit Who is already at work in our hearts and minds.

May the promises of your word steady us and hold us like an anchor.

In Jesus' name – Amen.

**We are here today to do 3 things:**

- **Glorify God**
- **Celebrate the life of \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **Comfort and Encourage one another in the promises of God.**

**2. Scripture Reading: Unison (also play or have music sung at this time of glorifying God)**

**Psalm 145:3** *ESV Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.*

**Zeph 3:17** *ESV The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love...*

**Psalm 90:2** *NKJV Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*

**1 Chronicles 29:11** *ESV Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.*

**Psalm 23** *NKJV The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. <sup>3</sup> He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. <sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,*

*I will fear no evil; For You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

*<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. <sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.*

**3. Remarks: (Celebrating Life) Pre- arrange people to talk about the person in an uplifting way. Let them know they need to keep it to no more than**

**3 minutes and usually have no more than two.** (If you do not let people know ahead of time they can go on and on)

**4. Sermon – Minister \_\_\_\_\_  
Xceleration Church, Humble, Tx**

**The Bible says ‘there is a time to mourn.’**

**This is a time where we really have to trust God’s word.**

**Proverbs 3:3-5** *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.*

**Because of the promises of God, we do not mourn as those who have no hope!**

**1 Thes. 4:13** NIV *Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.*

\_\_\_\_\_ was a believer – so as a believer listen to the words of Jesus.

**John 11:25-26** NKJV *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. <sup>26</sup> And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”*

**That’s good news but what about this loss – how do we cope with it?**

**Promise: God will comfort us...**

**Psalms 34:18** NIV *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

**Psalms 147:3** NIV *He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

**Joshua 1:9** NIV *Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for **the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.**”*

**You will get through this. With God’s help. He promises to help you.**

**1. It is the believer’s right to go be with the Lord.**

**2 Cor 5:8-9** NLT *Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.*

**To the place He has prepared for us.**

**John 14:2-4** NKJV *In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And where I go you know, and the way you know.”*

**John 14:6** NIV *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

\_\_\_\_\_ was a believer. She/he put their trust in Jesus for salvation and eternal life.

**Phil 1:21** AMPC *For me to live is Christ [His life in me], and to die is gain [the gain of the glory of eternity].*

\_\_\_\_\_ has gone to the place of:

#### **Reward:**

**Matthew 25:21** KJV *Well done, good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things: enter into the joy of the lord.*

#### **She/he finished their race...**

**2 Tim 4:7-8** NKJV *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

#### **Rest:**

**Revelation 14:13** GW *I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: From now on those who die believing in the Lord are blessed." "Yes," says the Spirit. "**Let them rest from their hard work.** What they have done goes with them."*

You know how it's a whole nother vibe when you go on vacation – heaven will be like that – no more work –

Jesus called it paradise – One thief on the cross – TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE!

**I study near death experiences** – and every one that I've heard of – when Jesus tells them they have to come back – they don't want to! Being at home with God is the greatest thing we can experience.

#### **Revelation:**

**1 Cor 13:12** NLT *Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.*

All the mysteries of heaven are being revealed to her. She is seeing the holy angels – the streets of heaven – the **face of Jesus**. The glory of God – the music in heaven - What it feels like **to hug Jesus** – to hold His hand!

**1 Cor 13:12** MSG *We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us... knowing him **directly** just as he knows us!*

#### **Relief:**



**I like to call it the land of “No More”**

**Revelation 21:4** NKJV *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”*

**Reunion:**

\_\_\_\_\_ is experiencing a happy reunion with those he/she loved that are already there. (name some \_\_\_\_\_)

**And the people we’ve read about in the Bible! Abraham, King David – Moses – Esther – Peter - Joshua**

**She has joined that great cloud of witnesses**

**Heb 12:1** *we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith*

**MSG** *all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on?*

She/he went from being a pioneer in life to a veteran who is now cheering the rest of us on!

**THE INVESTMENT JUST GOT GREATER ON THE OTHER SIDE.**

you’ve not lost \_\_\_\_\_ – it’s just like she/he’s gone on ahead of you on a trip.

And we all have a ticket that’s been pre-purchased with our name on it –

**John 3:16** NKJV *For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.*

If \_\_\_\_\_ could say anything at all today it would be to make sure **you** make that same decision to trust Jesus for salvation!

Don’t miss heaven!

Pray – salvation prayer – Pick up your ticket now pray this prayer.

**Resurrection:**

**She has entered the place where she awaits the resurrection:**

**John 11:25** NKJV *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.*

**1 Thes. 4:14-18** NLT *For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.<sup>15</sup> We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and*

*with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died<sup>[b]</sup> will rise from their graves. <sup>17</sup> Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup> So encourage each other with these words.*

**1 Cor. 15:55** NKJV "O Death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

**MSG** *Who got the last word, oh, Death? Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now?*

Graveside – (you may want to reserve the last point of resurrection for the graveside and then pray -

**Lord we commit \_\_\_\_\_'s body to the ground and to the dust –** for out of it we were taken and your word says that our bodies will return to the dust until the resurrection.

**And now into Your Hands Oh Lord we commit his/her spirit to Your love and care until the resurrection that we all eagerly await!**

We are trusting you oh lord to comfort and to guide us through this season of grief – Weeping endures for the night but joy comes in the morning!! You will turn for us our mourning into dancing!

**So together we pray like the Lord taught us to pray**

Our father who art in heaven hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom the power and the glory forever amen!

This concludes the graveside service – Remember the family in the coming days and be sure to reach out and text or call – it all means a lot. God bless you.

Be sure to go to each family member and take their hand, look them in the eye and bless them.

The funeral director may take it from there and let the family know what to do next. Sometimes people stay until the body is buried and some leave after the prayer. Be ready to stay and comfort and pray with anyone who needs it. It's a good idea to have some Xceleration Church business cards on hand for anyone who asks.

