

# View

## Dealing with Grief through Faith

BY MATT DICKEY

The following was written shortly after our son Blake passed away from a terminal illness called Trisomy 18. Blake was just over 3 months old (92 days) when he passed from this life.

As Christians we understand the concept of not fearing death, because we have been saved through faith and baptism. I can tell you from recent experience that when you lose a child that concept of not fearing death becomes crystal clear. This does not mean you have to lose a child to understand God's sacrifice and love for us, and I am *not* saying those who have lost a child understand this concept any better than those who haven't, however I do believe that when you lose a child, you under-

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stand the raw emotion on how God may have felt when he sacrificed his only son.

Such expressions of emotion touch the heart. All who have suffered the loss of a loved one or endured a similar experience understand the feeling of emptiness and heartache. Grief is not inevitable, but it is common to us all. Grief at the loss of a child is one of the most difficult of human problems. However, whether our problems are great or small, there is an answer. There is comfort for every heart that is filled with sorrow. To every grieving soul come the words of truth from the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Mt. 5:4). Notice that he did not say, "They will not mourn." He said, "They will be comforted." Those who mourn are blessed, because there is comfort that takes away their sorrow and leaves them on higher ground where the vision is clearer and the view is wider.

### The church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Assembly  
9:30 AM  
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM  
Wednesday Bible Study  
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.  
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Is it not significant that the verse telling of Jesus' grief is one of the shortest ones in the Bible? "Jesus wept" (Jn.11:35). Sorrow touched Jesus, but sorrow's stay was short.

Look at the word mourning. When the letter u is removed, the word becomes morning, the beginning of a new day! Jesus saw the morning and came through the night to a great new morning. You and I can do the same no matter how irreparable our loss may seem to be. We can leave it behind and go forward, even though from the depth of our grief we may momentarily say

with the writer of Lamentations, "Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow."

We may ask ourselves, "How can I go on?" Can I overcome my grief? Can I see through the darkness of night, and into the morning light?

My answer is yes, I know that Blake could never be taken from me, could never be lost to me. I know that God will lead me through grief to a greater spiritual understanding, and in my greater understanding, Blake is nearer to me than ever.

Most of us can probably look at our circle of our friends and find examples of varying reactions to the loss of a loved one. Where some in their grief permit the darkness to close down on them, others use faith to sweep it away.

Faith will ease the deepest grief. Faith is the answer to the question we throw out in the poignancy of our grief. Faith overcomes, and Faith is victory. Faith tells us the truth that all is well with our child and all is well with us. Faith tells us that the Spirit is immortal, that love surpasses death and transcends time.

The loved one who has passed from this earth is still alive, gloriously alive. Some of the best advice we received during Blake's strug-

gles was this, Do not shut yourself in and others out with a wall of grief. Focus on your prayers to God and focus on your faith. Think of your loved one wrapped in the arms of Jesus. Remind yourself of this by saying, "I know this child is in God's loving care."

The loss of a loved one seems to cause you to think about your own life and really provides you with profound perspective on what is important, and what is not. I am thankful this perspective has not quickly been forgotten. I now realize to not be too concerned with what

the future will be. I believe with all my heart that life is a great experience, a part revealed and a part unrevealed, and I know that all is to be revealed in God's time. Since Blake's passing from this life I sometimes have difficult teary-eyed moments, but my focus seems

to quickly shift to thoughts about Heaven each and every time, the tears fade and a smile breaks through! I believe this is Faith easing my pain little by little!

I then often think about how glorious heaven must be and that smile quickly becomes a big grin! As a father I can think of nothing greater than to know that your child is in Heaven, safe in the arms of Jesus, and that makes me smile!

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