

Anchored:  
Hope & Healing from Grief & Loss  
Leader's Manual

By

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# Anchored: Hope & Healing from Grief & Loss

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**Leader's Note:** This is the start of a 6 week study on healing from grief and loss. Your Life Connect member may not actively be experiencing grief or trauma but our prayer is that God can bring healing into all old and fresh griefs they may have. We want to equip all members to help others who are experiencing grief and trauma. The first two weeks we will watch a sermon by Pastor Mike Connell, who is known for his great deliverance ministry and is the apostolic oversight for Ascend Global Church, New Zealand.

Please allow time for people to share their experiences and emotions. So much of this past year has been filled with people who are isolated and people need to be heard. Listen to the Holy Spirit's direction on how to manage this time. If someone is really struggling with their grief please have them make a personal counseling appointment with yourself or with a church pastor.

Please distribute the accompanying Life Connect Journal and encourage your members to write notes during the lessons and journal at home during the week. For your reference, at the end of each lesson you will find a copy of the weekly journal called "My Healing Journey."

# Anchored: In Healing Part 1

Week 1

## Introduction

This past year has been a year where many of us have faced trials that we never would have thought possible. From being in lockdown, the loss of jobs, changes in our finances, working from home, facing an invisible enemy of Covid-19, not being able to attend church in person, experiencing sickness in our own bodies or loved ones, experiencing the death of loved ones and so much more. We are all grieving or know someone who is. That is why it is so important for us to remain anchored in Christ. He is the one our hope rests on. Our hope is in God alone and not in any person or government. During this time of trial we all may have experienced emotions that caused us to feel unsettled and to experience grief and trauma at the loss. Jesus is our answer and the One who secures our soul (Hebrews 6:19). Let's listen as Pastor Mike Connell has a special word for us. This will be part 1 of his sermon and we will watch part 2 next week.

**Please show Ps Mike Connell's Sermon:** "Arise Go Over this Jordan" (16 min).

**Leader's Note:** We've provided a sermon outline of Ps Mike Connell's sermon for your reference. After the video sermon, please feel free to ask a few of the questions or use the quotes to inspire your Life Connect to share their thoughts and emotions. Remember this is not the time to preach the sermon again. Please end this time in prayer and worship. Next week's sermon will have more application on how to process grief with God.

## Sermon Outline (Part 1)

**Title: Arise Go Over this Jordan Part 1**

Main Verse: Joshua 1:1-3

Key theme: Grieving is a process we must all work through

- **Moses was dead. Now what?**
  - Joshua 1:1-3
  - Grieving is a process of facing and resolving loss
    - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - God wants to comfort us so we can comfort others.
    - From our experiences we carry a revelation of God in our hearts
    - God's focus is on the issues of our heart.

- How to deal with grief is part of the story of the Bible.
  - Jesus wept: Jesus freely expressed emotion at Lazarus' death and Jerusalem's hard heart.
  - David wept at the loss of his son.
  - The people in the book of Ezra wept at the loss of the Temple.
  - Jesus bore our grief and sorrow on the cross - so that we may be free.
  - The sting of death is removed by our relationship with Him.
- Loss is part of the human experience:
  - Death of parent, sibling, unborn child through miscarriage or abortion, loss of close friend, job, financial troubles, loss of dreams, trauma experiences, sexual and verbal abuse, abandonment, rejection, betrayal in relationships, divorce, etc.
    - This leads to SHOCK
      - Leaves us feeling powerless, vulnerable and extremely hurt.
      - Something valuable taken from me.
      - I was powerless to stop it.
- Israelites experienced great grief.
  - Moses is removed suddenly as they are just ready to enter the promised land.
    - He was their spiritual father for 40 years. He helped them encounter God.
  - Deut 34:8. Thirty days of grieving at the river Jordan,
    - God allowed them to grieve. He didn't hurry them.
  - God gave them time to process their grief and then He spoke with them. (More on this in part 2)
  - Letting go is painful because of how deeply attached we are.
- **Grief Has Many Faces**
  - Can be current or something from the past that was never processed.
  - Some of the feelings associated with grief:
    - Shock - numbness, denial
    - Anger - "not fair" "not right"
      - If not resolved anger will be expressed at each other
      - Anger turned on one another.
    - Blaming or bargaining

- “If only this” “if only that”
    - Sadness - Depression
    - Acceptance - Adapt - Release
  - Failure to process grief can leave us STUCK
    - Both emotionally and spiritually
      - Part of our soul becomes imprisoned in grief - it is locked up and not free.
    - Demonic spirits are attracted to wounds - Spirits of grief and Spirits of mourning come in.
    - If grief is not processed we can be triggered by something we experience. The reaction will be out of proportion to what's going on.
    - Unprocessed grief can lead to a Spirit of Control - trying to control everything -even things out of our human control.
- **The Overcoming Power of the Holy Spirit**
  - “By the power of the Holy Ghost we can overcome grief and be a different person. We will never be the same because part of us has changed.”

**Questions from the sermon:**

1. At what stage am I in my grief?
2. Is there a loss in your life you've never faced?
3. How has it affected you?

**Quotes from the Sermon:**

“God desires to speak with us.”

“God never wastes a crisis. He faces us, encounters us and gives us a revelation of His heart.”

“God doesn't promise us a life free from grief.”

“Through our connection with Christ we can overcome grief. We are changed but we can overcome.”

**Ask:**

1. What statements stood out to you?
2. Why do we have to face our grief?
3. Have you ever experienced some of the stages of grief? (Shock/Denial, Anger, Blaming/Bargaining, Sadness/Depression, Acceptance).
4. What does overcoming grief look like?
5. What Biblical advice would you share with someone going through grief?

**Prayer:**

1. Pray for healing from all grief, loss and trauma. (Psalm 147:3)
2. Pray for release from every spirit of grief, trauma, and death. (2 Timothy 1:7)



# Anchored: In Healing Part 2

Week 2

## Introduction

This past year has been a year where many of us have faced trials that we never would have thought possible. From being in lockdown, the loss of jobs, changes in our finances, working from home, facing an invisible enemy of Covid-19, not being able to attend church in person, experiencing sickness in our own bodies or loved ones, experiencing the death of loved ones and so much more. We are all grieving or know someone who is. That is why it is so important for us to remain anchored in Christ.

Last week, we watched part 1 of Ps Mike Connell's sermon and learned that grief is a human emotion that we must all work through. This week he will continue and share with us some applications on how to process this grief with God.

**Please show Ps Mike Connell's Sermon:** "Arise Go Over this Jordan" (18 min)

**Leader's Note:** We've provided a sermon outline of Ps Mike Connell's sermon for your reference. After the video sermon, please have your group repeat out loud Ps Mike Connell's prayer. This is a time for them to choose faith and healing from God and to speak and declare the enemies plans are broken in their lives. Please end this prayer time in worship.

## Sermon Outline (Part 2)

**Title: Arise Go Over this Jordan Part 2**

Main Verse: Psalm 84:4-7

Key theme: Go through Grief

- The Valley of Weeping
  - We must choose to process grief and grow
    - Psalm 84:4-7
      - Baca means "weeping"
  - Different type of valleys in the Bible that we may be going through:
    - Valley of Trouble "Acor"
      - Where they lost peace, victory and got stuck
    - Valley of giants "Rephaim"

- Where you are facing a big issue in your life and you feel very small in the midst of it
- Valley of the shadow of death
  - Live in fear of what's gonna happen to us or that we will lose our life (or those we love)
- Valley of dry bones
  - Where they had lost hope and become disconnected from one another
- Valley of decision
  - You need to make a decision. You cannot stay stuck in grief. You need to process it.
- How to Go through the Valley:
  - Stay Connected (vs 4)
    - With God
    - With the House of God
    - With God's People
    - Don't isolate or withdraw. Stay connected in relationship.
    - Create an atmosphere around your life where God's presence can touch and heal you.
      - Ex. Play Worship music in your house
  - Find your strength in God (vs 5)
    - God's strength gives you the ability to overcome and prevail
    - Our trying to control the circumstances is not putting our trust in God's strength.
      - Our need for control leaves us open to a spirit of control
    - Lean into God and engage God
      - Create spaces where you can worship God
      - Let go and surrender to Him
      - Allow what you feel to flow out of you
  - Your heart is set on a pilgrimage (vs 6)
    - God takes us through a process to grow us
    - We need to set ourselves on a journey of walking towards God and not walking away from Him.
    - Create a space where you can grieve with God and process with God.
      - Connect with your heart
      - Journal your emotions

- Let your emotions out.
  - Pass through the Valley of Baca
    - It's time to process what is going on in your heart.
      - How to process:
        - Open your heart to expressing feelings to God
        - Spend time in the presence of God
          - Allow him to talk to you through prayer, journaling, and the world of God.
      - Repent
        - Forgive those you need to forgive
- Make it a well
  - Engage with God
    - Allow the Holy Ghost to comfort you
    - Let God into the place in your heart that's in pain.
    - Pour out your heart and feelings
    - Let go of the pain and grief and bring it to the cross.
- Choose to move forward
  - Joshua 1:1-3
    - Leadership may change but God doesn't.
    - "Moses my servant is dead"
      - God was the source of all - Moses was just His servant.
      - God is redirecting the attention back to Him and the calling He placed on their lives
      - There is new leadership to take you to the next season
  - All Assignments come to an end
    - Jesus completed His assignment
    - We all have an assignment
  - Joshua had work to do
    - Joshua received a word of empowerment from God.
- The Word is still the same for us
  - Preach the Gospel

- Heal the sick
- Cast out demons
- Make disciples

**Questions from the sermon:**

1. Where am I stuck in my grief?
2. Is there a loss in your life you've never faced?
3. How has it affected you?

**Prayer:**

**Leader's Note:** After the sermon ends, have everyone repeat this prayer after you. Please end this time in worship.

Lord, I open my heart and allow you to bring me out of the valley of weeping.

Take me from strength to strength.

Let me have a fresh encounter with you, God.

Lord, bring up any area of grieving that you want me to face today. Bring it back to memory.

Thank you Jesus for carrying my griefs and sorrows to the cross.

I release my griefs and sorrows to you.

I ask for your healing presence to touch me right now.

I speak to the spirit of grief and I command it to go in Jesus name!

I speak to the spirit of death that has brought numbness and disconnection in my heart. Go in Jesus name right now!

I speak to every spirit of Jezebelic control that has controlled hearts, emotions and relationships. Go in Jesus name right now!

Holy Spirit come.

Let your loving presence come and fill me with your love.

Let your angels minister to me.

Let me feel your presence, God.

I decree, I will go from strength to strength.

I will go from strength to strength. *(You may insert your own name or church name.)*

I declare peace into my house today.

Peace upon my family.

Peace upon the leadership.

Peace upon the church.

I decree enlargement of the church.

I release strength, faith and courage into the house today.

**Action:**

- My Healing Journey: Journal your thoughts and prayers this week using the booklet provided.

- It is time to reconnect with people. Reach out to 5 friends this week. Send someone you haven't spoken with in a long time an encouraging sms or whatsapp.



# Anchored: In Hope

Week 3

## **This Journey may be Disruptive and Disorientating**

This year has been a year where many of us have faced trials that we never would have thought possible. From being in lockdown, the loss of jobs, changes in our finances, working from home, facing an invisible enemy of Covid-19, not being able to attend church in person, experiencing sickness in our own bodies or loved ones, experiencing the death of loved ones and so much more. It is time for us to process our grief.

This is a journey that you are on. It is time to choose to move forward. It is too easy to allow ourselves to become immobilized by grief. But how do we move forward in this journey?

**Grief is the recognition that you have lost something or someone that you love.**

“If there were no love, there’d be no grief.” - Zig Ziglar

Grief is normal. It is not a sign of weakness and pretending that you're okay is not helpful. You have lost someone or something you loved. You need to let your grief and emotions show in order to fully process them. This is not the time to try to be brave or strong but to be vulnerable and real, reaching out to God and your friends and loved ones for support.

## **Emotions are not a bad thing**

Jesus wept at Lazarus' death (John 11:33). Do not be afraid or ashamed to allow your grief and emotions to show. If Jesus Christ can groan in His spirit and weep so can you!

*“Tears are a normal sign that we are letting go and allowing what we feel to show.”* - Pastor Mike Connell.

Allow yourself to express your emotions honestly. It is time to be honest with what you are experiencing. Honest with the loss you feel. Honest with how your heart is broken.

## **Christ is our Blessed Hope**

When we go through difficult times of grief and loss, we need to remember who our faith and hope is in. We must choose to cling to the anchor of Christ when the storms of life come. We look to Him, our blessed hope, because He will never let us down (Titus 2:13).

Hope is the constant expectation of good.

When we look at Christ we see that:

**God's is faithful:**

Hebrews 10:23, *"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."*

**God has a hope and a future for you:**

Jeremiah 29:11, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

**God has not left you:** This season may have been the darkest and the most desperate of your life but it doesn't mean that God has left you.

Hebrews 13:5, *"He will never leave you, nor forsake you"*

**Our Hope Found in Christ's Death, Burial & Resurrection**

1 Corinthians 15:3b - 6a, *"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once..."*

**But why did Jesus have to die? Why do people die?**

*"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—" Romans 5:12.*

*"For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" 1 Corinthians 15: 21-22.*

When Adam fell, sin and death entered into the world. Jesus paid the price for all your sins when He died on the cross because of His great love for you. It is important to understand this verse is not saying that the death of your loved one or the loss you experienced was the result of your loved one or even you being punished for specific sin or sins. Remember, we are all human, we are all sinners, and as a result must ultimately face death. All of us will eventually face God and be held accountable for our sins. We die a physical death because of Adam's sin but through Jesus we can have eternal life.

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23.*

## **The good news is that Jesus loved us so much that He wants to give us everlasting life!**

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” John 3:16.*

This everlasting life means that we will spend eternity with Him in Heaven. We may die here on earth but we will live forever with Jesus in Heaven. Have Hope in God! Make sure you've received God's forgiveness. If you haven't yet. Now is the time.

**Leader's Note:** Please lead the group in the Salvation Prayer.

Be encouraged, Jesus is alive! He is alive in this world. He is alive in you! He is alive in your family. He is alive and brings healing to your broken heart. He is alive and brings healing to your family.

### **Ask**

**Leader's Note:** Please feel free to ask a few of these questions to inspire your LIFE CONNECT to share their thoughts and emotions. Please end this time in prayer and worship.

1. How have you found this journey of grief disruptive?
2. How would you describe your pain?
3. What have you learned from your time journaling these past few weeks?
4. What does God's hope look like? Where do you find it?
5. What steps can you take to hold onto hope in the midst of your grief?
6. How does hearing and reflecting upon Jesus' death, burial and resurrection give you hope?

### **Prayer**

1. Pray for Hope to be released into people's heart
2. Pray for God to continually bring healing to the broken hearted.

### **Action**

- My Healing Journey: Journal your thoughts and prayers this week using the booklet provided. .
- Invite your friends and family to come to church this week.



# Anchored: In Peace

Week 4

## The Prince of Peace

We are anchored to God through His Peace because He is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Often when people think of peace they will define it as some soft flimsy emotional thing. But the truth is that peace is so much more.

Peace or “shalom” in Hebrew means, “completeness, soundness or well-being.” God is here to bring completeness where your life has felt turned upside down. He wants to bring wholeness where you have felt incomplete, and He wants to restore your well-being where you have been in misery. Philippians 4:7 says, “...and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” God’s peace will guard your heart. This is especially powerful when your heart is broken with grief as you don’t have to do anything but to rest in God. The truth is we often don’t have the strength to do anything *but* to cling on to this peace. It’s not about your power but His power sustaining you through these difficult times.

The Peace of God is a defensive place for you to run into and be saved, (Proverbs 18:10). It’s time to find your rest in the Prince of Peace.

## The Voice That Commands

When storms come into our life we can feel like our life has turned to disaster as the wind and rain rages around us. As we have been discussing overcoming and passing through our grief, be encouraged that God is here to bring PEACE and COMFORT in your storm as you find FAITH in Him.

One day, Jesus and the disciples took a boat ride. This boat ride seemed like any other. For certainly if they could have seen a storm approaching they would not have boarded the boat?

*“On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.” Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” Mark 4:35-38.*

We know that Jesus knows all things (John 16:30) so He would have known the storm was coming and yet He still boarded the boat. Did He warn them of the coming storm? No. He went to sleep. Does this mean that Jesus didn’t care about the boat and the disciples? No!

In fact it proves the exact opposite. He slept in the midst of the storm because He knew it could not destroy the boat or cause harm to those inside. He had perfect peace because He is the Prince of Peace.

*“Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!” Mark 4:39-41.*

Here the word, “Peace” that Jesus says is *σιωπάω* (*siōpaō*) which means to, “**be silent**, not speak, of one’s own volition.” In other words He was saying to the storm, “Be silent! Be still! You have no authority here!” The storm did not have greater power than the voice of Jesus Christ. It had to obey the God of Creation.

Jesus could see the storm coming and He knew it was powerless beyond trying to spread fear to those it came across. That’s the thing we all need to remember, when God is with us, a storm may rage, *but it can only destroy us if we lose sight of who is in the boat with us* - Jesus Christ.

The disciples' incorrect fear of the storm was changed to the correct fear - the Fear of the Lord. Which means that they finally understood the power God had and showed proper respect and worship to Him. In that moment their eyes were opened to the real holder of the power - Jesus Christ. He had the power to command the waves and wind and that is something to stand in awe of!

**“I’m not going to allow the outward attack of the storm or the inward attack of the enemy to destroy me because God is with me.” - Ps Neville McDonald**

No matter what happens around us,  
no matter what our financial situation is,  
no matter what our job situation is,  
no matter what abuse or betrayal may have happened,  
no matter what sickness comes against you,  
or loved one may have passed away:  
God is in control and He has not left you alone or powerless.

### **Jesus has Overcome**

*“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” John 16:33.*

Here the word “Peace” is *εἰρήνη* (*eirēnē*), which means “peace, harmony, tranquility.” This word is connected to the Hebrew word of shalom. In Christ we find our great harmony and

tranquility even in or especially in times of difficulty. Jesus said that we would face tribulation in this verse which means “trouble, distress, and oppression.” Grief is certainly a time of great trouble, distress and oppression for us all.

### **The Great Comforter**

This trouble can come in different forms but the truth is still the same: Jesus has overcome all the trouble, distress and oppression. This should bring you great comfort and cheer! God’s comfort brings relief from sorrow and distress. His comfort will console and encourage you.

**Comfort means that God is your advocate, your defender, and your strength.**

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.*

Comfort is not something that just helps our emotional state. Isaiah 51:11-13 shows that God brings comfort to Israel by rescuing them from the enemy and returning them to relationship with Him. He is your great defender and liberator even in times of trouble.

God has a promise of peace and comfort for you. Matthew 5:4 says, *“Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.”* In order to receive God's peace and comfort you need to place yourself where He is. You will find it in prayer when you walk with God. You will find it when you read your Bible. You will find it when you worship God. You will find it when you come to church and connect to God and your fellow believers.

### **Ask**

**Leader’s Note:** Please feel free to ask a few of these questions to inspire your LIFE CONNECT to share their thoughts and emotions. Please end this time in prayer and worship.

1. What have you learned from your time journaling these past few weeks?
2. What does God’s peace and comfort look like? Where will you find it?
3. What steps can you take to hold onto God’s peace and comfort in the midst of your grief?
4. Why didn't Jesus warn the disciples that the storm was coming? (What did they need to learn? What is our application from this truth?)
5. Have you ever asked God for His peace and comfort?

### **Prayer**

1. Pray for the peace and the comfort of God to be released into people’s heart.
2. Pray for God to continually bring healing to the broken-hearted.

### **Action**



# Anchored: In Life

Week 5

**Leader's Note:** This week we will talk about suicide. If someone is really struggling with their grief or suicidal thoughts please have them make a personal counseling appointment with yourself or with a church pastor.

## A Legacy of Life

When you're broken-hearted and experiencing grief that you have not processed it can lead to thoughts that your life is not worth living. These suicidal thoughts can come in many forms; one may be that you are not good enough to stay alive on this earth or that your pain is so much it would be better to end your life so you can end the pain. Last week, we talked about reaching out to the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. When you experience these suicidal thoughts you are reaching out to the Spirit of Death. You need to make a choice, that no matter how great your pain is that you are choosing a legacy of life.

Pastor Kris Vallotton described his experience with suicidal thoughts, "What kept me from taking my life was that I didn't want to leave a legacy for my kids to have a dad that killed himself. Even though I was in so much pain, I decided to attach myself to the reality of what it would be like for them and I found the vision and fire to fight for my life, and for their lives too.<sup>1</sup>"

It is important to remember what Jesus said in John 10:10b "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Jesus wants you to have life that is not only a life well lived but one that is lived abundantly. Which means that He wants your life to be, "**exceptional**, more than expected, and beyond." It is time for you to reach out and ask God to help free you from every suicidal thought and help you to live a life that is exceptional, and beyond anything that you ever expected. There is a hope and a future in you!

## A Life of Gold

Be encouraged that God is God and is in control of all things. 1 Peter 1:6 says, "*In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials.*" You may have experienced many trials but it is time to rejoice in God! Peter continues in verse 7, "*...that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...*" It is in these trials of fire that the genuineness of your faith is tested. Your faith is more precious than gold. When the fire comes everything that is inferior is burned away and only gold remains.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.krisvallotton.com/fight-suicidal-thoughts>

### **Kintsukuroi (Golden Repair)**

In Japan, when pottery is broken they do not discard it. Instead they pick up the pieces and repair it with gold. You are not broken forever. You are being lined with gold and made into a beautiful piece of priceless art. Allow Him to bring healing into your heart and you will experience beauty again.

*“The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit” Psalm 34:18.*

You may be broken-hearted but your emotions do not determine the truth. The truth is that as a child of God He is close to you and He has never left you nor forsaken you (Hebrews 13:5).

### **A Life of Joy**

God wants you to experience His goodness and joy. Romans 8:28 says, *“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”* The way to find joy is to find what is good in your situation.

What good do you have in your life? It may be that you have a roof over your head. It may be that you have a job. It may be that your loved one is no longer suffering. It may be that your children can make you laugh. Whatever it may be, thank God for the good things He has given you.

Seasons of grief change our perspective on life and that is not necessarily a bad thing as long as we are clinging to Jesus for His truth. It is in these times that we can learn where our true treasure is. Matthew 6: 19-21 says, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

### **A Life of God's Goodness**

When we go through grief we will want to ask, “why?” This is a normal response as we seek to understand. We may not always understand the “why” but we need to know that we can trust in God's eternal plan for us. Proverbs 3:5 says, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding.”* We are called to believe in God and His goodness for our lives even in times of darkness. This is a choice that we must make. A decision to place our lives in the goodness of God even if we do not understand all the reasons why - we understand who is in control - God.

God knows all things. Deuteronomy 29:29, *“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”* There are some things that God will share with us and sometimes there are secret things that belong to God alone. But remember that even when

we haven't received the exact answer to our exact question, God is still God and He has shared with us that:

**He will give us joy:** John 16:22, *"Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you."*

**He will never leave us:** Hebrews 13:5b, *"...I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

**He can do all things:** Philippians 4:13, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

**He will wipe every tear from your eyes:** Revelation 21:4, *"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."*

**Your thinking is being renewed by God:** Romans 12:2, *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

**The Lord is close to you:** Psalm 34:18, *"The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit."*

**He will give you rest:** Matthew 11:28-30, *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

**He heals the broken-hearted:** Psalm 147:3, *"He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds."*

**He blesses the poor in spirit:** Matthew 5:3, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

**God is your strength and portion:** Psalm 73:26, *"My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."*

**You will be with the Lord forever:** 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, *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. 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. Therefore comfort one another with these words."*

**By His wounds you are healed:** Isaiah 53:4-6, *Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

**God is with us:** Joshua 1:9, *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”*

**All things work for our good:** Romans 8:28, *“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

**God will comfort and bless us:** Matthew 5:4, *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”*

**God is our comfort:** 2 Corinthians 1:3, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.”*

**The heavens declare the glory of God:** Psalm 19

**There is a time and season for everything:** Ecclesiastes 3:1-17

## Ask

**Leader’s Note:** Please feel free to ask a few of these questions to inspire your LIFE CONNECT to share their thoughts and emotions. Please end this time in prayer and worship.

1. Have you ever experienced suicidal thoughts?
2. What is your legacy of life that keeps you fighting for a long life? (Your kids, parents, ministry, etc)
3. What are some of the “Why” questions you want answered?
4. If God is working all things for your good, what would be good about your situation?
5. What do you treasure more now than you did before the loss you experienced?

## Prayer

1. Pray against the spirit of death and suicide. Close any doors that may have been opened because of grief. Declare life over them!
2. Pray for God to continually bring healing to the broken hearted.
3. Pray for people to experience the joy and goodness of God.



# Anchored to Heaven

Week 6

## Heaven is More Real & Beautiful Than This World

As human beings, we have bodies that will die and remain on the earth. But as children of God, our souls will be welcomed into God's presence in Heaven. Heaven is perfect because God is perfect. That's why only the redeemed will be allowed into Heaven - He can't welcome something imperfect into His presence. That is the power of Christ's blood for us. He washes us white as snow restoring us so that we may have relationship with Him (John 3:16).

This earth is a pale comparison to the rich beauty that is found in Heaven. The earth has beauty but also has been corrupted by sin. This sin and corruption has left us with a world that is a mix of beauty as God created it to be and defiled with sickness, pollution and corruption. Not so heaven! God describes Heaven as,

*“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”* Revelation 22:1-5.

This beautiful place is unlike any other place on earth. *It is pure.* The river speaks of God's presence giving life to all. The tree of life is now revealed to be planted within the Heavenly garden. No longer is the fruit of life withheld, it is now bearing a different kind of fruit that can be eaten every month! Even its leaves are now usable - they bring healing for the nations! Which shows that Heaven is available for all nations. The curse of sin and the consequences from it are GONE and God's throne is now established at the centre of everything. Showing that the false throne that Satan and Adam tried to erect has been destroyed and God's rightful throne is in its rightful place. God's children will serve Him not as slaves, or under religious obligation, but out of a heart of love and thankfulness. Here we will see God's face! We won't even need the sun because God will provide the light!

## Why Is Heaven So Wonderful?

Nothing on earth compares to the glory of heaven. *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* Romans 8:18. It is heaven that you will see Jesus face to face. You will see the throne room of God with God seated on the throne.

*“Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald” Revelation 4:2-3.*

Heaven is beyond our understanding. God has prepared a place for His children that is beyond our greatest imaginations (John 14:2). 1 Corinthians 2:9, *“But as it is written, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

### **What Happens in Heaven?**

God is worshiped for ever and ever. The elders continually throw down their crowns and worship God saying, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” *Revelation 4:11*. This continual revelation of the greatness of God brings about never ending worship of God. It’s time for you to worship God in the same way, continually and with great revelation of who He is. Plus if you have a loved one in heaven, and you want to do what they are doing, then it’s time to worship the King of Kings!

There isn’t any more death or grief in heaven. That passes away on earth, “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” *Revelation 21:4*.

### **Who Goes to Heaven?**

Everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life in heaven.

*“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26.*

This means that your loved ones who are saved will be in heaven with you! What a great party we will all have in God’s presence!

### **Finding our Purpose**

Heaven is real and is waiting for us but God has a plan and a purpose for us while we are living on the earth now. If He didn’t have a purpose for you why would you still be on the earth? When David had completed his purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep (Acts 13:36). You’re alive because there is more for you to do! Don’t fall asleep on your God given purpose! It is time to arise and shine for your light has come (Isaiah 61)!

Let your life’s purpose be found in the prayer, *“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven!”* Matthew 6:10.



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\_\_\_\_\_ *Take time to pray that you will receive God's purpose and healing.*

**This week's Action:** Pray and ask God to reveal someone you could share Jesus with. Then in boldness and love go and speak with them! May they see and experience heaven!