

Dealing with the Loss of a Spouse: Illness, Divorce, Death

2

The Unique Bond of Marriage brings a unique intensity to this loss.

- ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24 (ESV)
- ⁴ He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵ and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? ⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV)

3

Determine what is needed initially: evangelism, discipleship or restoration.

- Does this person have a relationship with Christ?
- Has this person very recently experienced a loss and seeking help in navigating the days ahead?
- Has this person reacted to the loss in unbiblical ways and suffering the consequences of these reactions?

4

Debilitating illness

- Financial challenges
- Difficult decisions about medical care.
- Loss here is more along the lines of loss of hopes and dreams and how life would be together. The caregiver can feel trapped and frustrated with the guilt that goes along with those feelings.
 - Jesus modeled and taught that fulfillment is found in serving. Matthew 20:26-28

5

Biblical matters to take into consideration when making decisions in the face of a debilitating and potentially life-ending medical condition.

1. Sanctity of mortal life
2. God's authority over life and death
3. Mercy and compassion
4. Hope in Christ

– Butler, Kathryn. *Between Life and Death* (p. 32). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

6

- “Distinguishing between these elements—which appear stark on paper, but tangled and messy at the bedside—depends upon a key question: “Will life support in this scenario constitute preservation of life or prolongation of death and undue suffering?”

– Butler, Kathryn. *Between Life and Death* (pp. 40-41). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

7

Divorce

- Guilt-distinguish between worldly and godly sorrow. 2 Corinthians 7:9-10
- Receiving and giving forgiveness Matthew 18:21-35
- Recurring challenges Luke 6:37; 17:3-4.
- Disappointment John 18:10-11, 15-18, 25-27
- Disillusionment Hebrews 12:3

8

Death

- After a prolonged illness
 - What is my purpose now?
 - Did I do all I could or should have done?

9


Death

- Accidental or sudden death
 - Disorientation
 - Lead toward an understanding of the body of Christ at work. Romans 12:9-13
 - Struggle with trust in God. (Why did God not intervene in this situation?)
 - Patiently lead toward a renewed understanding of the character of God as revealed in scripture.

10

Death

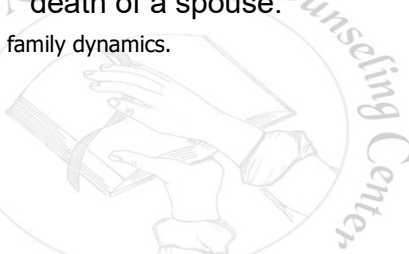
- Suicide
 - Sense of betrayal
 - Guilt
 - Shame
 - Bewilderment
 - Anger
 - Rejection



11

Issues related to remarriage after the death of a spouse.

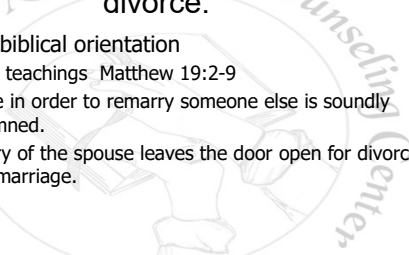
- Navigating family dynamics.
- Timing



12

Issues related to remarriage after a divorce.

- Keeping a biblical orientation
 - Two clear teachings Matthew 19:2-9
 - Divorce in order to remarry someone else is soundly condemned.
 - Adultery of the spouse leaves the door open for divorce and remarriage.



13
