GRIEF IS A GIFT FROM GOD

Imagine what life would be like without grief? At first you might think it would be wonderful. No fears, no sadness, no pain. But the reality is, all that would still exist… you just wouldn't know how to express it. You wouldn't know how to share the value of the loss you've experienced. You wouldn't know how to express the sadness of missing the person you love. You wouldn't know how to show appreciation for the experience, or job, or opportunity that is now gone. A life without grief would be a life void of expressions and emotions. Grief is actually a gift from God. A gift that makes us stronger, healthier and wiser as we grow.

6 Reasons why grief is a gift:

1. ***Grief teaches us to direct our trust to a more firm foundation***. Psalm 73:26 says, "*My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*" Left to feelings and emotions alone, we will forever feel hopeless and exhausted. God teaches us that our hope is found on the rock that is Jesus Christ. The rock that gives everlasting joy and peace even in the midst of devastating loss. [1]

2. ***Grief teaches us to rely on God's strength as we come to the end of our own strength***. Grief is often accompanied by regret, loneliness, helplessness and even depression. It's only through God's strength that we can overcome the challenges grief brings into our lives. Grief makes us aware of how much we need the Holy Spirit to empower us to deal with those challenges well. [2]

3. ***Grief teaches us to appreciate what has come and to look forward to the future***. The best companions of grief are gratitude and hope. We can be thankful for what God has allowed us to experience with people, things and ventures in the past and be hopeful and excited for the glory that is to come both in this life and in the next. [1]

4. ***Grief's reminders help us set wise priorities.*** Every moment that God gives us is a precious time we should use wisely. Grief reminds us our time on earth is finite thus helping us to set our priorities straight.

5. ***Grief leads to a pathway of healing***. Our bodies were created with built in outlets for expressing sorrow. Some cry, some process verbally, some exercise, some journal. When we embrace the sadness and allow our bodies to express, in healthy ways, the pent-up frustration and sadness we move further down the path towards healing. [3]

6. ***Grief can show us we aren't alone.*** We *will* experience heartbreak, and in our heartbreak, God *will* walk with us. God is right there in the midst of the tears. He is right there as you smile over a memory that comes to mind. In our grief we are given the opportunity to see just how close God is. Right there, with us, every step of the way. [3]

   "*He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*" (Psalm 147:3)

Gifts are usually things you are excited for or anticipate opening, things that make your life better or happier. Grief is rarely that kind of a gift. Instead, it's a gift that brings perspective, deepens appreciation and builds intimacy with God. Grief is a gift that God wants to use to change you, to strengthen you, to assure you of His presence and everlasting love.

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[1] https://www.christiantoday.com/article/why.grief.can.be.a.gift.from.god/95554.htm
[2] https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/women/5-reasons-grief-can-be-a-gift.html
[3] https://www.incourage.me/2019/10/the-gift-of-grief.html