

Phoenix Rising

This grief newsletter is sent to members and friends of Paradise Valley United Methodist Church following the loss of a loved one. PVUMC pastors are available to you if you need one-on-one support. Contact the church office for more information at 602-840-8360. If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, contact the church office or e-mail ddoran@pvumc.org.

Debbie Doran, Editor

Faith During Adversity

When I retired, I decided to explore the Bible through taking the Disciple I Class. I began to understand some of the themes that run throughout the stories and reflections in the Bible: the authority of God; the awe and wonder expressed by His faithful people; God's covenant and the resulting responsibilities of believers; the freedom to choose one's actions – to be obedient to God's edicts or to disobey, resulting in sin.

Between the covers of the Bible, I read example after example of adversities, laments, fears, anger, forgetting, fighting, consequences, forgiving and reconciliation. Sometimes the stories concern individuals, sometimes a group of people; sometimes sins have been committed and at other times the reasons are not understood, i.e., Job. The one resounding recourse for those who lived in Biblical times was their faith in One God. At every turn, His continued love and guidance were available to those who listened.

Is it so different today?

We plan. We want life to follow those plans. We are impatient and become angry. We forget to trust, and thus we worry. We attempt to solve problems in "our own way" instead of accepting and trusting God's plans and timing. Each of us fails; we repent; we ask for forgiveness. Through faith in His ultimate purpose, each generation must learn to surrender to His authority. And, as in the Bible, God continues to be present throughout our adversities, and His grace is available for us to claim.

Adversity and pain, loneliness and hurt are part of each earthly life. Some suffer more than their share and shout, “No more!” Others become bewildered, asking, “Where is God?” At such times, it’s hard to trust to “live by faith and not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

Are your steps so difficult that you cannot see beyond your pain? Is your faith faltering? “Pain that is not transformed is transmitted.”*

Explore ways to embrace your faith to transform your pain.¹



Grief One Day at a Time

“Keep on going, and the chances are that you will stumble on something, perhaps when you are least expecting it. I never heard of anyone ever stumbling on something sitting down.” Charles F. Kettering

Grief is passive and internal. Mourning is active and external. We grieve first, then we put our grief into action through mourning.

It’s when we’re actively mourning that we stumble onto things. We stumble onto compassion when someone sees we’re mourning and reaches out to help us. We stumble onto gratitude when we encounter small, unexpected blessings. We stumble onto hope when we are exposed to new opportunities.

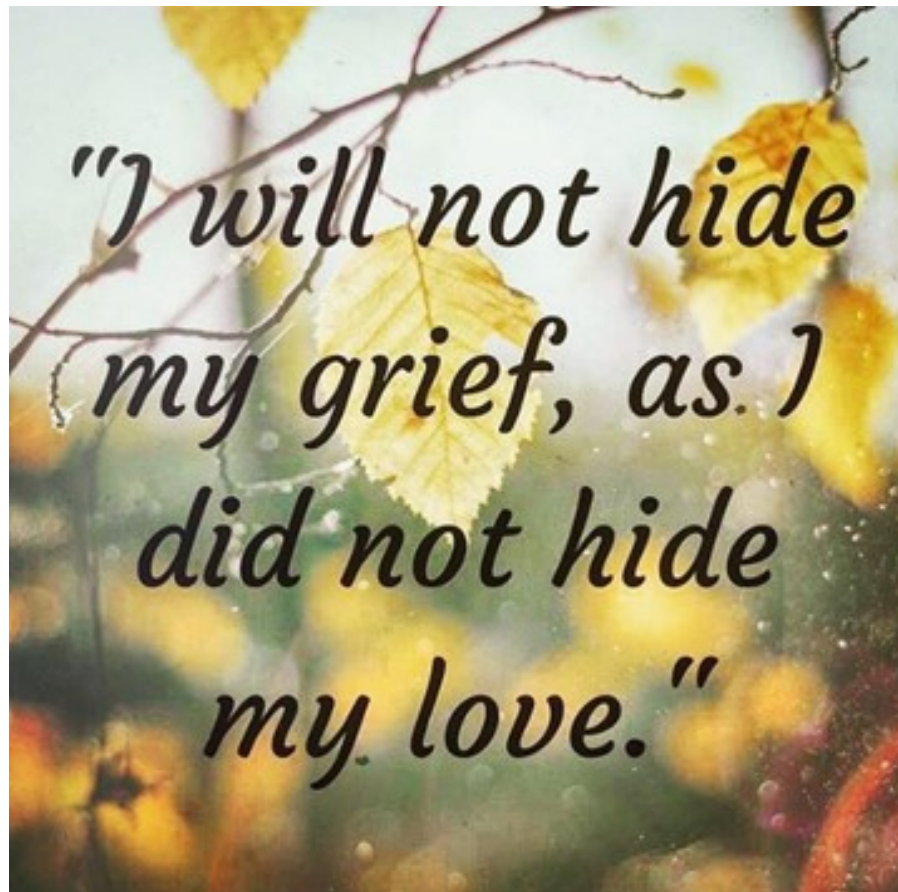
Sometimes we do need to sit down with our grief, silent and alone. But when we put it into motion, over and over we find ourselves stumbling onto grace.

C’mon grief. It’s time to get moving.²

"The more you
open yourself to being healed, the
more you will discover how deep your
wounds are...The great challenge is living your
wounds through instead of thinking through them...
The choice you face constantly is whether you are taking
your wounds to your head or your heart. In your head you
analyze them, find their causes and consequences, and
coin words to speak and write about them. But no final
healing is likely to come from that source. You need to
let your wounds go down to your heart. Then you can
live through them and discover that they will not
destroy you. Your heart is greater than your
wounds." ~ Henri Nouwen

GriefCoachingCertification.com





Footnote:

1. Paula Rugen; and *Richard Rohr www.Azquotes.com/quote/814475/
2. *Grief One Day at a Time*; Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D.; page 338