

Update

Austin Graduate School of Theology

Volume 95, Issue 3

July, 2011

Resources for Living with Grief



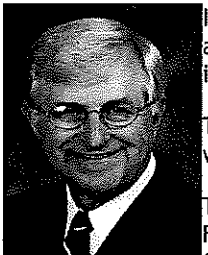
Todd Hall, Austin Grad librarian, shared his journey through grief at Friends' Day and Sermon Seminar. Now he shares the books he found helpful.

Through my own experience, I have developed an affinity for books that offer a theological vision of grief and grief ministry. Following is a list of books that I would recommend both for those who are in grief and those who minister to the grieving.

Nicolas Wolterstorff, *Lament for a Son* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). Wolterstorff, a theologian lost his son, Eric, in a climbing accident. This is a journal of his journey through grief. It was instrumental in my remaining faithful in my own grief. Wolterstorff's presentation of grief is raw and therefore allows ministers to see into the emotions and thoughts of those to whom they minister.

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Visionary Philanthropy



I recently came across a quote that has stuck with me and continues to be meaningful. I can't give credit to its author but I appreciate whoever it is.

The quote says, "Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting."

The quote is meaningful to me for several reasons. First, it describes a lot of people I know. I have been fortunate to know some of the most generous people in the world. Most of them are described by this quote.

Most people who share their resources do so from a genuine motive to help others. Seldom are they concerned with self-gratification. The benefit of others is their concern.

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A Year Later



It has been a year since Sergio Longoria completed the Master of Arts in Theological Studies. Sergio came to Austin Grad to deepen his understanding of the faith and to prepare for full-time ministry after retirement.

While Sergio does not serve in a traditional or paid ministry role, he continues to serve those he encounters in everyday life and in his work. At Austin Grad he developed more confidence in his ability to help people cope with the difficult situations of life.

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- [Course Schedule](#)

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Words are not enough to tell how much we appreciate our faithful supporters. Their generosity makes it possible for Austin Grad to continue its mission. For a list of our gracious donors please click below.

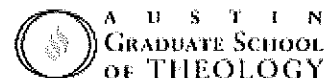
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Resources For Dealing With Grief

Todd Hall, Austin Grad librarian, shared his journey through grief at Friends' Day and Sermon Seminar. Now he shares the books he found helpful.

Through my own experience, I have developed an affinity for books that offer a theological vision of grief and grief ministry. Following is a list of books that I would recommend both for those who are in grief and those who minister to the grieving.

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C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: HarperOne, 2001). This is a side of C.S. Lewis that is rarely seen. Lewis kept this journal after losing his wife to cancer. It is a different experience of grief than Wolterstorff's. Lewis is angry, and his book reflects the experience of disillusionment common to Christians who have lost. It is a difficult read, not in terms of language, but in tone. But it is a vitally important read for those who are angry in grief and for those who minister to them.

Jeffrey Zurheide, *When Faith is Tested: Pastoral Responses to Suffering and Tragic Death* (Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997). Zurheide's book is the best ministry book on helping those in grief that I've read. It is also excellent for those who suffer, as it provides a theological context for viewing grief.

John Mark Hicks, *Yet Will I Trust Him: Understanding God in a Suffering World* (Joplin: College Press, 1999). John Mark is familiar with suffering, and his book provides perhaps the best theological lenses for viewing suffering and grief. He also provides a very helpful "what not to say" section that will be invaluable to ministers and church members.

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The quote is meaningful to me for several reasons. First, it describes a lot of people I know. I have been fortunate to know some of the most generous people in the world. Most of them are described by this quote.

Most people who share their resources do so from a genuine motive to help others. Seldom are they concerned with self-gratification. The benefit of others is their concern. They do not keep lists of those they have helped and often do not recall specific acts of kindness when reminded of them. On those rare occasions when others reciprocate their good deeds, they never forget and are forever grateful.

Secondly, I like the quote because it seems so consistent with our Lord's teachings about giving. Matthew 6 comes to mind. Jesus taught that the purpose of our acts of kindness should be to help the needy and not to call attention to ourselves.

There have been many surveys designed to determine the main reasons people give to charitable organizations. The results are always the same. People give to organizations like Austin Grad because they believe in the institutional mission. Tax benefits and recognition are secondary. Not that they are unimportant, but first and foremost, the true philanthropist lives and gives to serve others.

At Austin Grad, we believe in recognizing and honoring our donors. We list their names in our publications. We name facilities for them. We put them on our donor wall. Why? Because we want them and others to be ever mindful of our gratitude for their generous support. Moreover, their example serves as inspiration for others to do likewise.

Yet, we know their hearts. There is no doubt that their support is given for the right reasons. Their concern is to support the mission of Austin Grad and the students who attend here. They are true philanthropists. They give, often without remembering and take without forgetting. We are all blessed by them.

Neil Haney
Director of Development

A Year Later

It has been a year since Sergio Longoria completed the Master of Arts in Theological Studies. Sergio came to Austin Grad to deepen his understanding of the faith and prepare for full-time ministry after retirement.

While Sergio does not serve a church in a traditional or paid ministry role, he continues to serve those he encounters in everyday life and in his work as an engineer. At Austin Grad, he developed more confidence in his ability to help people cope with the difficult situations of life.

His time at Austin Grad also contributed to his own spiritual growth. For Sergio a closer walk with God is the result of knowing him better through the study of scripture and theology. Because of his spiritual growth, he feels more confident to speak to those in difficult situations, as well as more confident in speaking and teaching about his faith.

Working toward a degree is a time-consuming endeavor and many students find that after graduation they miss the discipline of regular study and attending classes. This past year Sergio has missed the learning environment and the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge and insight of the professors.