



A TIME TO GRIEVE

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The purpose of this short booklet is to give comfort and healing to those who have recently lost a loved one who resided in a senior care community.

We are so sorry for your loss. May the content of these few pages bring comfort and healing to you and your family in this time of grieving.





A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

“For everything there is a season,

A time for every activity under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die.

A time to plant and a time to harvest.

A time to kill and a time to heal.

A time to tear down and a time to build up.

A time to cry and a time to laugh.

A time to grieve and a time to dance.

A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones.

A time to embrace and a time to turn away.

A time to search and a time to quit searching.

A time to keep and a time to throw away.

A time to tear and a time to mend.

A time to be quiet and a time to speak.

A time to love and a time to hate.

A time for war and a time for peace.”



“What do people really get for all their hard work? I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.” *Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 (New Living Translation)*

The previous verses are from the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, a book that some believe may have been written by King Solomon, the wisest man to have ever lived. The writer states the obvious; but sometimes we need a major life event to remind us of the obvious, we cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.

Just as there are seasons of the year, there are also seasons of life. Notice the opposites in the wording. Two lines in particular stand out. “A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance.”

A Time to Cry.

I am fortunate to still have both of my parents. When the time comes for me to attend their funerals, I will have begun to experience all four of the emotions mentioned above. I will cry over losing them, and I will truly miss them!

A Time to Laugh, Mom.

I will cry, but I will also laugh when I remember how funny Mom looked when she was coming after me with the paddle. She was mad and was going to tear into my rear end, but I had put a book in my pants. After about four swats, she realized she was spanking a book, not me. I will also laugh when I remember the time she laughed so hard she started to hyperventilate. I told my younger sister to get a bag out of the drawer behind her. She brought out a plastic bag instead of a paper lunch bag. I grabbed a paper bag and instructed Mom to breathe into the bag. In a few seconds she was fine. I could see the headline, “Mother of four dies laughing.”



A Time to Laugh, Dad.

I could tell several stories of my dad that cause me to laugh, but this story has to be one of the funniest of all. While I was in college he and I started a summer painting business. Whenever we took a lunch break, we would wrap our paintbrushes in a wet cloth. Because he didn't like to climb, Dad painted the lower portions while Jerry and I painted from the ladders. Dad would often paint near our ladders, and he did so one day just after we had returned from lunch. As Jerry loaded his brush with fresh paint to paint the rough siding of the barn not far from the school where he and Dad taught, a big quarter size drop fell and hit dad on the right side of his face. Jerry saw what had happened and started laughing, but Dad didn't think it was funny and walked over to the truck to get a cloth to wipe his face. Unfortunately, he picked up the cloth that we had put around our brushes and rubbed much more paint onto his face. Jerry was laughing so hard he had to get off the ladder. Although Dad never cracked a smile, I still do as I picture his face covered in paint.

A Time to Grieve and a Time to Rejoice.

When my parents pass, I will cry, and I will laugh. I will grieve; however, I will also rejoice knowing that they had a good life, knowing that their suffering is over, and knowing that they are in Heaven with their parents, siblings, friends, and the brother I never met. Heaven is for real, and I will be at peace knowing that where they will be after death is much better than anything we can ever imagine. That assurance is the peace which passes all understanding.



As you journey through your grief and loss,
I would like to suggest the following.

1. **WRITE A LETTER.** We often leave things unsaid, say things we shouldn't, and don't say things we should have. Now is your chance. Write a letter to the loved one you just lost. No, it's not too late. This exercise is more about you right now than it is about your loved one. Your letter(s) will be cleansing. They will make you laugh; they will make you cry; and they will bring you healing.
2. **WRITE ABOUT THE MEMORIES.** You have so many memories of your loved one. Write them down while they are still fresh. The task will bring healing and will be something to hand down to others. You may be surprised at how often you revisit this step as the memories continue to flow.
3. **GIVE BACK BY GOING BACK.** This step may be the most difficult for you, but I hope you will try. The very first line of this little booklet states a purpose; "to give comfort and healing to those who have recently lost a loved one who resided in a senior care community." I want to challenge you to give back by going back. Go back and ask the staff for an introduction to one to three residents who rarely receive a visit from family or friends. The staff won't have difficulty coming up with some names for you. The visits will be your time to plant. *A time of harvest will come.*



Thank you for accepting this gift from us at the time of your loss. We would love to hear from you, to learn how you are doing, and to know that we helped you.

“He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.” Ecclesiastes 3:11

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