

# YOU

**Sermon Series: When Emotions Rise**  
**To be used with: Session 1: Walking in Grief**  
**Sermon Title Possibilities: Feeling Grieved**  
**Scripture: Psalm 116:1-9,15-17**

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study “*When Emotions Rise*,” this sermon explores how a believer is able to endure times of grief. As believers, when we are feeling grieved, we must intentionally keep our focus on God.

**Introduction:** The psalmist expresses gratitude to God for deliverance from difficult circumstances. In recounting the experience, the psalmist describes the depths of grief he felt. Nevertheless, his ability to look back indicates he has made it through the situation.

We find ourselves in a time of grief for many people. This is a period of loss in a number of ways. Many people have experienced the loss of loved ones, their health, their employment, or their ability to interact with others as they had done previously. The psalmist offers us some insight into how we too can persevere through trying times.

## **1. Seized by Despair (v. 1-4)**

The psalmist expresses love for God for hearing his appeals. While this may sound like a self-serving reason to love, it is appropriate since our love for God is always a response to God’s love for us. Rather than refusing to show emotion, the psalmist had been honest about the depth of his despair. This despair did not prevent God from reaching the psalmist, however. Just as God answered the psalmist’s appeal, we can be confident that he will answer ours as well.

The psalmist describes feeling like he was about to die. The pain threatened to strangle and suffocate him. Grief can and does often feel this way. We should not minimize our feelings of pain. In this desperate situation, the psalmist knew to call on the Lord to save him.

## **2. Surrounded by the Divine (v. 5-9)**

The psalmist shifts his focus from his grief to his God. We can acknowledge our problems but should not allow them to block our view of God. He is full of grace, always does what is right, and is full of compassion. When we cannot save ourselves, God can and does. God's help is available to us all.

Being aware of God's presence with us should cause us to be able to rest. The psalmist speaks to himself and tells himself to be at peace. Sometimes we have to do this when we find ourselves getting overwhelmed by our feelings. Problems may be great, but God's blessing of us is greater. God is actively involved in our lives during periods of grief, relieving our sadness and keeping us from stumbling. Knowing that God stabilizes us enables us to live for him.

### **3. Submitted to a new Desire (v. 15-17)**

The Lord cares about his people's lives from beginning to end. God preserves us as we live and then after death welcomes us to be at home with him. The psalmist again speaks to God, committing himself to God's service. While calling himself a servant, the psalmist also recognizes that God has freed him. When God frees us from the burden of grief our response should be willing, joyful service to him.

The psalmist desires to serve God and to worship him. Even though we cannot repay God for all he has done, we should consistently thank and praise him. The psalmist looks forward to offering God public worship. He focuses on serving God in the present and future, rather than being bound by the pain of the past.

**Conclusion:** The psalmist addresses God, himself, and the worshiping community. Even periods of grief can ultimately lead us into worship. Grief and death do not have the last word. As believers we know that Jesus bore our pain and grief on the cross (Isaiah 53:4). Now we have life! Grief and death no longer have the victory!

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