ROOTED IN CHRIST · SEVEN-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Make room for grief, and for care.

Read, remember and receive Christian hope without rushing your loss.

Full Bible passages · Guided prayer · A practical step each day

A little encouragement before you begin. There is no timetable here. Pause, repeat a day or simply sit with one short passage whenever that is helpful.

Grief and bereavement resources · Rooted in Christ · 7-day journey

For adults grieving a death or supporting a bereaved person. Some reflections may also help with other significant losses. Make room for grief, receive Christian hope without forced closure, and identify supportive ways to remember, rest and seek companionship.

Read at your own pace. These are not seven stages to complete. You may pause, repeat a day or set this guide aside. For urgent mental-health help in England, call NHS 111 and select the mental-health option. Call 999 or go to A&E if life is at risk or you cannot keep yourself or someone else safe. Do not wait for a church response. NHS urgent-help information.

Begin the study · Start the devotional · Ask for pastoral companionship

> The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves those who have a crushed spirit.
>
> *Psalm 34:18, World English Bible British Edition*

Finding hope after losing someone you love

Loss can change ordinary moments: the quiet house, a familiar journey, a message you can no longer send. Christian hope does not require you to call those moments easy. You can miss someone, ask difficult questions and receive care. The seven readings below are companions for a season of grief, not stages you must complete or a schedule for feeling better.

Important: Grief is personal and has no required timetable. You can seek bereavement support at any point. If you are struggling to manage daily life or are concerned about your health, ask a GP or suitable professional for help alongside any pastoral support.

Go directly to the seven-day Bible readings and prayers

1. Make today smaller

Choose what genuinely needs attention today and what can wait. It may help to write one

essential task rather than a whole recovery plan. Ask someone you trust to sit with you while you make a difficult call or deal with paperwork. You are allowed to accept assistance without becoming ready to talk about everything.

2. Tell someone what companionship could look like

People may be unsure what to say. A concrete request can help: ‘Could you have tea with me on Tuesday?’ or ‘Could you help me with this appointment?’. You can also say that you want quiet company, not explanations. Someone else’s wish to make you feel better does not create a deadline for you.

3. Make room for a memory, if you wish

You might write a story, look at a photograph or name something you miss. You can stop if that feels too much. Remembering with tenderness does not require idealising a complicated relationship, and choosing an ordinary activity does not mean you have forgotten the person who died.

4. Prepare for a difficult date

Before a birthday, anniversary or family occasion, consider who you want nearby, which activities you may decline and how you could leave early. Plans can change on the day. Explain your preference simply; you do not need to justify why a date is difficult or celebrate it in someone else’s way.

5. Let faith include lament

Begin with Jesus’ response to grief in the full reading below. Bring sadness or silence into prayer rather than forcing cheerful words. If a religious explanation has hurt you, name that in a safe conversation. Ask for a listener who will make room for questions rather than claiming to know why a particular death happened.

Your private next-step worksheet

One thing that feels hard today; one thing that can wait; one person who can accompany me; a memory I may wish to keep; my preference for the next difficult date. You may leave every question unanswered and return later.

Questions you may be asking

Is it wrong to cry when I believe in resurrection?

No. In the Gospel account printed below, Jesus meets bereavement with tears. Christian hope is not a requirement to suppress sorrow, and a day of renewed sadness does not cancel earlier moments of peace.

What if my grief does not look like someone else's?

Relationships, circumstances, culture and personality differ. You do not have to compare the amount you cry, how soon you return to routines or whether you want company. Ask for support that fits your situation.

Can ANCC provide bereavement counselling?

You can ask the church about pastoral prayer and a conversation. Do not assume a specialist counselling service or a particular group is available. Cruse offers bereavement information and routes to support independently of church attendance.

Continue with relevant ANCC resources

- Learning to Pray When Words Are Hard
- When Resentment Lingers: An Honest Christian Prayer
- Plan Your Visit

Cruse: understanding grief and finding support

You are welcome to explore ANCC at your own pace. Ask about current opportunities; no attendance, disclosure or donation is required to read this guide.

Go deeper: the Bible study and group discussion

Jesus meets grief with presence

John 11 describes Jesus speaking with Martha and Mary, and weeping. The resurrection hope he brings does not make their sorrow an embarrassment. You need not hide tears, anger, numbness or unanswered questions to belong in prayer. Avoid explaining a death through a supposed hidden failure in the bereaved person. Presence, listening and practical care may be more helpful than an attempt to explain why it happened. The scene with Mary is printed under Day 1.

Hope does not impose a timetable

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and Psalm 13 below. Paul distinguishes Christian hope from hopelessness, not grief from godliness. The passage does not require someone to stop missing the person who died. Christians place hope in Christ's resurrection while remaining humble about details God has not disclosed about an individual's story.

Remember and receive care

Romans 12:15 and 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 encourage compassionate companionship. Make

room for both memory and present needs. You may want conversation, silence, practical help or specialist bereavement support. Ask for a form of care that fits rather than forcing yourself into someone else's preferred way of grieving. Friends can offer a specific task and keep checking in sensitively after the first wave of attention has passed.

Discuss and apply

1. What do you notice about Jesus' response to grief?
2. Which feelings have you felt pressure to hide?
3. How can hope and sorrow exist together?
4. What memory would you like to honour, privately or with someone safe?
5. What form of support would be useful now?

Your optional exercise: Choose one act of remembrance: write a memory, look at a photograph with someone safe, speak the person's name in prayer or record what you wish you could say. There is no obligation to share it. Then identify one present need, such as company, a meal, an appointment or bereavement support. Allow a supporter to help with that need without demanding that the activity make you feel better.

For leaders and supporters: Do not require disclosure, impose stages or promise that grief will end after this plan. Avoid claims that God needed another angel, that a death was punishment, or that a particular sign is a message from the deceased. Listen and use appropriate bereavement or urgent support where needed.

Seven days of Bible reading and prayer

Every daily reading is printed in full. The declarations are optional, Scripture-shaped expressions of hope, not new revelations or predictions about a deceased person. Bible passages use the public-domain World English Bible British Edition, except John 11 (World English Bible) and Psalm 77 (WEB Classic).

Day 1: Jesus wept

Read John 11:28–36 — World English Bible.

> [28] When she had said this, she went away and called Mary, her sister, secretly, saying, "The Teacher is here and is calling you."
>
> [29] When she heard this, she arose quickly and went to him. [30] Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was in the place where Martha met him. [31] Then the Jews who were with her in the house and were consoling her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep

there.”

[32] Therefore when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you would have been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.”

[33] When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, [34] and said, “Where have you laid him?”

They told him, “Lord, come and see.”

[35] Jesus wept.

[36] The Jews therefore said, “See how much affection he had for him!”

Reflect: Jesus enters the sorrow around Lazarus’ death rather than standing outside it with an explanation. Tears do not contradict his love or power. You do not need to apologise for missing someone. Read only as much as you can bear today and let the simple picture of Jesus weeping make room for your own response.

Consider: What feeling needs room rather than correction today?

Pray: Jesus, meet me in this grief as I am. Help me receive your compassion without having to hide tears, numbness or unanswered questions. Amen.

Declare: My grief is not an embarrassment to Christ’s compassion.

Practise: Give yourself permission to name a feeling or simply sit quietly.

Day 2: Near to the brokenhearted

Read Psalm 34:15–18.

[15] The LORD’s eyes are towards the righteous. His ears listen to their cry.

[16] The LORD’s face is against those who do evil, to cut off their memory from the earth.

[17] The righteous cry, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.

[18] The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves those who have a crushed spirit.

Reflect: The psalm speaks of God’s nearness to the brokenhearted. Nearness may not feel dramatic or remove the ache. Let the verse offer companionship rather than a test you must pass. A trusted person’s presence can also matter. You may ask for company without

needing to explain everything you feel.

Consider: Would quiet company be helpful today?

Pray: Father, be near in the ache of loss. Bring gentle companions and help me receive care when words are difficult. Amen.

Declare: A broken heart does not place me beyond God’s care.

Practise: Ask for quiet company or another form of support you can receive.

Day 3: A question can be a prayer

Read Psalm 13.

> For the Chief Musician. A Psalm by David.
>
> [1] How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?
>
> [2] How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart every day? How long shall my enemy triumph over me?
>
> [3] Behold, and answer me, LORD, my God. Give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death;
>
> [4] lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed against him;” lest my adversaries rejoice when I fall.
>
> [5] But I trust in your loving kindness. My heart rejoices in your salvation.
>
> [6] I will sing to the LORD, because he has been good to me.

Reflect: The psalm allows repeated questions to remain inside a relationship with God. You may have asked why many times and still have no satisfying answer. Do not force yourself to produce one. Honest lament makes room for longing and confusion without turning them into a judgement about your faith.

Consider: What question keeps returning?

Pray: God, hear the questions I cannot settle. Hold me in your mercy and keep me connected to people who can listen without rushing me. Amen.

Declare: I can bring unanswered questions to God without pretending that grief is simple.

Practise: Write a question as a prayer, with no obligation to answer it.

Day 4: Remember with tenderness

Read Psalm 77:1–12 — WEB Classic.

> For the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm by Asaph.
>
> [1] My cry goes to God! Indeed, I cry to God for help, and for him to listen to me.
>
> [2] In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord. My hand was stretched out in the night, and didn’t get tired. My soul refused to be comforted.
>
> [3] I remember God, and I groan. I complain, and my spirit is overwhelmed. Selah.
>
> [4] You hold my eyelids open. I am so troubled that I can’t speak.
>
> [5] I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.
>
> [6] I remember my song in the night. I consider in my own heart; my spirit diligently inquires:
>
> [7] “Will the Lord reject us forever? Will he be favorable no more?
>
> [8] Has his loving kindness vanished forever? Does his promise fail for generations?
>
> [9] Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he, in anger, withheld his compassion?” Selah.
>
> [10] Then I thought, “I will appeal to this: the years of the right hand of the Most High.”
>
> [11] I will remember Yah’s deeds; for I will remember your wonders of old.
>
> [12] I will also meditate on all your work, and consider your doings.

Reflect: The psalmist remembers while distressed. Memory can hold gratitude and pain together, and you may choose how much to revisit today. There is no requirement to turn a personal memory into a public testimony. Honour what was meaningful in a way that respects your capacity and the complexity of the relationship.

Consider: Which memory would you like to hold gently?

Pray: Lord, help me remember with tenderness and honesty. Give me freedom to honour what mattered without forcing a feeling or a public story. Amen.

Declare: I may remember at my own pace, with room for both love and complexity.

Practise: Choose one private act of remembrance, or postpone it if today is not the day.

Day 5: Sorrow with resurrection hope

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.

> [13] But we don’t want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you don’t grieve like the rest, who have no hope. [14] For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. [15] For this we tell you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will in no way precede those who have fallen asleep.
>
> [16] For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with God’s trumpet. The dead in Christ will rise first, [17] then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. So we will be with the Lord forever. [18] Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Reflect: Paul offers hope grounded in Jesus’ death and resurrection. He does not forbid sorrow. Let the passage direct attention towards Christ rather than pressure you to feel cheerful. Christian hope can be a quiet conviction held by the community around you when your own words feel thin.

Consider: What part of Christian hope would you like to understand more?

Pray: Risen Jesus, hold me in the hope of your resurrection. Help me bring sorrow honestly while trusting the future to your mercy and wisdom. Amen.

Declare: In Christ, grief does not have the final word over the future.

Practise: Share one question about resurrection hope with a thoughtful, trusted Christian.

Day 6: Let someone weep with you

Read Romans 12:15.

> Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3–4.

> [3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Reflect: Christian care includes weeping with those who weep. A supporter does not need to fix your loss to be present. Explain one thing that helps and one thing that does not. Specific requests can make companionship more useful and protect you from well-meant pressure to move on before you are ready.

Consider: What would make another person's support more helpful?

Pray: Father, bless those who stay near in grief. Help me ask for the care I need and receive compassion without feeling responsible for others' comfort. Amen.

Declare: I may receive compassionate company without making my grief easier for everyone else.

Practise: Ask for one practical or relational form of support.

Day 7: Continue without a deadline

Read Lamentations 3:19–26.

> [19] Remember my affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the bitterness.
>
> [20] My soul still remembers them, and is bowed down within me.
>
> [21] This I recall to my mind; therefore I have hope.
>
> [22] It is because of the LORD's loving kindnesses that we are not consumed, because his mercies don't fail.
>
> [23] They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.
>
> [24] "The LORD is my portion," says my soul. "Therefore I will hope in him."
>
> [25] The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.
>
> [26] It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

Reflect: Mercy and waiting are named within a book that takes suffering seriously. Finishing these readings does not complete your grief. Keep the support that helps and seek more when needed. Hope may mean continuing to accept company, care and ordinary responsibilities at a pace you can manage. You may return to any day again.

Consider: What should your supporters understand about the coming weeks?

Pray: God of mercy, walk with me beyond this guide. Help me receive continuing care and meet each day without a forced timetable for healing. Amen.

Declare: I may continue grieving and receiving hope without a deadline for recovery.

Practise: Arrange a future check-in or explore bereavement support when ready.

Your next step

Ask ANCC Care for pastoral companionship. Cruse Bereavement Support offers specialist bereavement information and support routes; its website explains availability. For an overwhelming moment, use Hope in a Crisis alongside appropriate urgent support. For words to pray, continue with Learning to Pray When Words Are Hard.

Original ANCC Rooted in Christ study. Scripture: WEB British Edition, John 11, WEB, and Psalm 77, WEB Classic, public domain. Full daily passages appear above. Use your browser's Print menu to print or save this page as a PDF.