

**Recap of 3/29/26 message by Chris Sommerfield
(Time to Grieve) 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8a**

This passage details the aftermath of Absalom's rebellion and David's profound grief over the loss of his son, blending themes of leadership, familial love, and the complexities of grace amidst pain. True leadership involves embracing our grief and allowing God's grace to define our responses. In moments of sorrow, we reflect Christ's love and mercy more profoundly, showing that hope can arise even from tragedy.

Grief is a natural part of life, but it's still hard. There is a fundamental distinction between grief and despair seen in the scriptures. Paul tells believers to experience pain over loss, yet not like those without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). The difference between grief and despair ultimately depends on your theological foundation. Christian hope is firm because it rests upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As believers we need to learn to grieve with authentic emotion. Christian grief involves painful sorrow expressed honestly, yet even amid intense feelings, the believer may look with confidence beyond tragedy to its solution in Christ. Our grief should be anchored in hope and expressed with God and community.

We also need to turn outward toward others while we grieve. We see this right in our passage today. In the midst of David's grieving he is reminded of all the people who depend on him and that an overindulgence in his sorrow is hindering his leadership and poisoning the community. Now this is hard. I'm not saying that when we are grieving and feeling pain, we should just get over it. No, rather when we allow our sorrow or grief to define us, consuming all of our thoughts, we become turned in and self-centered in how we perceive reality. When we consciously turn outward toward others it can help break that cycle as we begin to focus on things outside of ourselves.

Jesus did for us what David could not. Absalom died hanging in a tree with a spear for his rebellion thrust through his heart; Jesus died on a tree with a spear for our rebellion thrust through His heart. Though David wanted to die in place of Absalom, Jesus did so. He died in our place so that we may have life, abundant life, life everlasting! It is His atoning sacrifice and His resurrection that gives us hope even in the midst of grief, pain, and sorrow.