

# LAMENTATIONS

Issue 3

G.R.I.E.F

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## Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Yes, You heard me! We can have a **Merry Christmas** and a **Happier** new year. It is up to each of us.



Making a Christmas holly wreath represents our lives. The continuous or concentric circle of the **wreath** represents our life for one day. We have to go around that circle each day and it can be a journey of hope or it can be a journey of despair. Of course there are many mixtures each day, but we can try to make each day the best day possible. The **Holly** is for what life "gives" us. As we bind the holly together to make the wreath, the holly is prickly (our grief) and the pain from being "stuck" sometimes hurts so deeply that we think we are bleeding. But it is also a healing prick, because it releases some of our pain. The holly wreath is beautiful and we can stand back and look at its beauty and admire the progress we are making in our grief. The **Berries** represent the blood and tears we shed. These also add to our wreath. The **Bow** at the bottom "binds" it all together. This is the process of grief. It is a laborious task - but when we are "finished" (if you ever finish grieving), we have a wreath to hang and admire.

I am a firm believer in crying. It helps in so many ways. Gregg Levy's article in *Psychology Today* entitled "Tears That Speak" he explains the relief we experience when we cry, not only emotionally, but physically. Three chemicals are stored up by stress and released by crying: ACTH, a hormone, sends warning signals that stress is building. Scientist believe another chemical, Leucine-enkephalin, affects the amount of pain we feel. However, prolactin, a hormone, comes to the rescue by stimulating tear production so the stress-stored chemicals and manganese can be released from the body, thus relieving stress.

Experiments have shown women to have almost 60 percent more prolactin than men. This explains why women cry about four times more than men. It also helps us to understand that we grieve in so many individual ways, and we should be understanding when others don't cry as much as we. It doesn't mean they are grieving less.

Are you embarrassed by your grieving in public? I read a wonderful article which suggested that if you know you are going to be facing an emotional situation, prior to that time, find a time and place that you can do "active grieving." Look at pictures, or think of something that will make you cry. In this way you will release those "prolactins" and when confronted with the situation, you will have more self-control. It works.

"The tears . . . streamed down,  
and I let them flow as freely as they would, making  
of them a pillow for my heart.  
On them it rested."  
Augustine, "Confessions" IX: 12

## Grief Grafts

This is a new section. I have received several poems, quotes, etc. from so many that I thought I would share them with you. I came up with the "Grafts" because a graft is defined as a cause to unite with something; to propagate by grafting; to join or unite; or to implant. By sharing our grief and our feelings, what ever they are, maybe we can join or unite, or we can propagate- we can spread out and affect a greater number. I am hoping that what helps others with their grief, will in turn, "graft" to me and help me. Have you written anything you would like to share with our fellow Grief fraternity members?

Ruth Bucy, whose daughter Lori was killed in an automobile accident, sent this memorial:

*Lori – My Rose  
(2-25-69 9-12-89)*

*Many times you sent me flowers to brighten up my day  
You brought me joy for hours in every single way  
You are always in my thoughts and prayers  
Even though we are apart, I know you are asleep with  
God, but the pain is still in my heart.  
I love you,  
Mom*

Beth Covington wrote this poem in memory of her brother Tim and his friend Jim who were killed in an automobile accident:

*"The Crash"  
(2-17-73 7-30-90)*

*The Crash had past  
The end had come and the beginning just started, as the  
two ran from the car, up to heaven into Jesus' arms. And I  
think God ran to his children, well leashed in what they had  
done, and overjoyed to see them coming home.  
Just as the father of the Prodigal Son was so happy to  
see his son and ran to him, God ran to Tim and Jim and  
lifted them up to heaven. And maybe, they looked back-  
just once, to see what they left behind. Their families and  
friends and Brent unconscious in the car. Brent saw*

*them running and wished he too, could go. But it was not  
God's will, for he had a greater plan for him, and he had to  
stay, only to wake up the next day, absent a brother and a  
friend.*

*We all feel their loss – Brent, two moms and dads, and  
Glenda and me. Time and Jim added so much; there is such  
a void there now. What a pair – two peas in a pod. Two  
lean boys, one 16, one 17, a dark brown-headed one, and a  
light blond-headed one. They were two brothers in Christ  
and it wouldn't have been right to separate them. What a  
close bond they shared between them. They complimented  
each other, they supported each other, they were the best of  
friends. And now, ultimately, they are forever together;  
inseparable.*

*Thank God.*

*The Lord tells me that even though they were dead, they  
will live, because they believed and loved Christ, so to die is  
to gain.*

*One day, I will reunite with my dear brother, and Jim,  
too. I count the days. No, I don't ever have to stop loving  
my brother. We both share something that will remain,  
even through death, and that, my friend, is Christ. Thank  
God for Christian parents who raised us in a Christian  
home, otherwise, how would we have known?*

*Where would Tim be now?*

*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last  
trump, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead shall be  
raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed!*

*1 Corinthians 15:52*

As we celebrate the season of Advent, Christmas and Hanukkah, we know that the candles in the Advent Wreath represent, **Love, Hope, Peace, Joy** and the center candle- **Christ**. Judy Carpenter, whose daughter was killed in an automobile accident 8- 14-92, sent this.

### Four Candles

*As we light these four candles in honor of you,  
we light one for our grief, one for our courage, one  
for our memories and one for our love.*

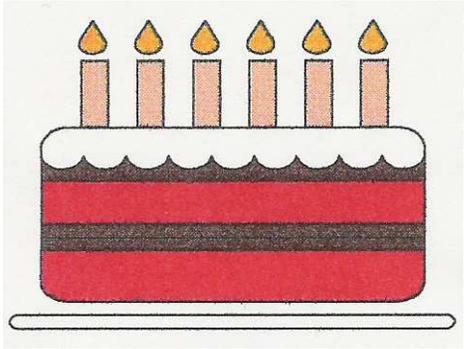
*The first candle represents our Grief: The pain  
of losing you is intense. It reminds us of the depth of  
our love for you.*

The second candle represents our courage. To confront our sorrow- to comfort each other- to change our lives.

The, third light is in your memory - The time we laughed, the times we cried - The times we were angry with each other - the silly things you did, the caring and joy you gave us.

The fourth candle is the light of love. As we enter this holiday season day by day we cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for you. We thank you or the gift your living brought to each of us. We Love You.

I would like to add two more. The Fifth candle is a promise- a promise that you will not be forgotten. That your life had meaning and will continue to do so.



The sixth candle is a thank you. Thank you for being **You!**

I began this *LAMENTATIONS* Sunday night. Monday afternoon we had to take our 85 year old Father to the Emergency Room where he died at 4:30 p.m. (December 14). He was such a sweet, gentle man who had lived longer than he wanted. It is very sad that he is no longer with us, but it is a comfort to know that he and our son are together. It is also a comfort to know that he is no longer trapped in a body that was worn out. Our Mother is 80 years old and in very poor health. We fear that she will soon follow him, but we know that they will both be happy together again.

Our friend C.M. Dupier, Jr. spoke at our Father's funeral as he had at our son's. He said: "I know that we are taught, by those who study the workings of the human mind that we must go

through what is called 'the grieving process' so that the impact of the loss of a loved one can gradually be assimilated into our subconscious awareness and the emotional wound can heal without festering, without permanently disabling us.

But what the practitioners of mental health don't tell us is that grief does not always have to be sad. In fact, healthy grief should move from sadness to thanksgiving, even to joy.

When a sweet and caring man like Lee Lynch begins to experience failing health and falls prey to that thief caned aging, it is indeed sad and during those years we all sadly grieved. But now the sadness is gone! Lee has been freed from that bondage and we have been freed from watching helplessly as he suffered. It is time now for a thankful kind of grief, during which we remember those special things he said and did. It is a time to remember what kind of a man he was.

Lee and Miss Margaret (our Mother) reared four fine children and provided them with a loving home. So, my grief must now turn to thankful ness, because Lee has blessed me with his memory and with his children.

Somewhere along the line, sadness and thankfulness must turn to joy. When I say that grief must turn into joy I don't meant to imply any thing trite. Death has no sting and the grave has no victory for a Christian. Lee has not come to the end of his life, but to the beginning of a new life with Christ. They joy of that knowledge should overwhelm us, for his suffering has turned to rejoicing.

The sadness we feel is born of pain; and when the pain passes it gives way to thanksgiving which is born of memories; and when we have been thankful long enough we cannot help but be overcome with joy which springs from the promises of God."

My wish for you (and me) this holiday season:

May we progress through our SADNESS

into THANKFULNESS and JOY! ! !

Love and Peace to each of you.

*DINAH*