

Kubler-ross' five stages of grief

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



Grief involves intense sorrow that may be attributed to someone's death or other situations that may include heartbreaks from a relationship. This may lead to depression, sadness, and suffering negatively impacting an individual's health (Kubler-Ross, 1969). An example may involve a husband grieving the death of his wife.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross defined the stages involved in the grief process which include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Kubler-Ross, 1969). This provides a better understanding to observers as well as healthcare professionals who may be addressing such cases. This paper analyzes Wolterstorff's reflections in *Lament for a Son* in respect to the five stages of grief.

Five Stages of Grief in relation to *Lament for a Son* by Nicholas Wolterstorff

Lament for a Son by Nicholas Wolterstorff is a story where the narrator explains the death of his son during mountain climbing. The book explains the grief that the author went through after losing his son as well as the healing process through faith in God (Wolterstorff, 1987).

The author also describes the events using the five stages of grief where the author finally finds joy and comfort through the hope of resurrection. The first stage is witnessed after the author receives a call on Sunday that Eric his son is dead, the narrator is negatively affected, as he believes it is wrong for parents to bury their children as children are the future and should bury their parents (Wolterstorff, 1987). The second stage of anger is witnessed when the author wonders why Eric had to climb the mountain alone.

He starts bargaining if his child would just have been sick so as to say goodbye. At the funeral, he feels the ache of his loss deep in his soul and his passion for life is cooled. This indicates the fourth stage of grief of depression where he also blames himself for failing to protect his child (Kubler-Ross, 1969).

The last stage is experienced when the narrator finds hope of reuniting with his son after resurrection where he will apologize to him for not taking care of him. The family visits Eric's grave one year later where they compose a requiem in honor of Eric a sign that they have already accepted that their son is no longer with them (Kubler-Ross, 1969).

How Does Wolterstorff Find Joy After His Loss?

Wolterstorff suffers grief due to the loss of his son who died while climbing a mountain alone. The author recalls some memories of his son which negatively affect him as he blames himself for failing to protect his son. He describes how his son occupied a special part in his heart which leads to the pain experienced after his death (Wolterstorff, 1987).

However, the author finds joy by having hope that he will reunite with his son after resurrection as promised by God through his word in the Bible (John 3: 16). He also finds out that Jesus suffers with those who are suffering just as he suffered while on this earth (1 Peter 4: 1). This means that God understands what he is going through and is ready to help him overcome the grief of losing his son.

God sent his only son to suffer so that everyone would have eternal life an aspect that frees him from his grief (John 3: 16). The author displays the last

stage of the grief process by accepting that his son is dead which leads to joy where is able to overcome some of the negative effects associated with grief (Wolterstorff, 1987).

What Is the Meaning and Significance of Death In Light of the Christian Narrative?

From the Christian narrative, death is a transition process to enter into eternal life where individuals will be able to see Jesus. Jesus Christ who is our savior came into this world and died resurrecting on the third day an indication that he has power over death (Shelly & Miller, 2006).

This gives hope to Christians that just as Jesus Christ arose from the dead, all individuals who believe in Him will also overcome death (John 3: 16). Death is not a punishment rather a process of life just as one is born. During this process, it is important to care, support one another, and still put our hope on God who loves us so much (Shelly & Miller, 2006).

This means that God understands grief as he too lost his begotten son. He grieves with those that are grieving. Death is not an end of people as the soul does not die and waits upon the end of the world where people will be judged according to their deeds on the earth (Shelly & Miller, 2006).

How Does The Hope of the Resurrection Play a Role In Comforting Wolterstorff?

The author is encouraged after understanding the perspective of resurrection where Jesus resurrected from the dead after three days. Jesus also promises to resurrect us as he has the power of death as well as life (John 16: 22). This gives the author reassurance that he will eventually meet with his son where

they will be reunited and he will apologize to him. Death was not God's plan as this came as a result of man's sin.

However, due to God's loving nature, he sent his only son to redeem his plan where people would not die but have eternal life (Shelly & Miller, 2006). This enhances his trust on God where the author increases his belief in God. Just as Jesus conquered death, Christians should have hope for a resurrection. This does not prevent Christians from undergoing some of the emotional trauma surrounding death. However, there is the hope that they will eventually reunite with their loved ones (Shelly & Miller, 2006).

References

- Kubler-Ross, E. (1969). *On Death and Dying*. Abington-on-Thames, UK: Routledge.
- Life Application Study Bible: New King James Version. (2013). Carol Stream, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers.
- Shelly, J. A., & Miller, A. B. (2006). *Called to Care: A Christian Worldview for Nursing*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Wolterstorff, N. (1987). *Lament for a Son*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.