



Bethel South Sermon Notes – “Life Through Loss”

Speaker: Ps Julie Gowans

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Scriptures: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 147:3, Genesis 25, Matthew 4

Main Idea

Loss is an unavoidable part of life, but we were never meant to walk through it alone. While the world offers temporary relief for our pain, Jesus offers true healing. The key is not running from our grief but inviting Him into it.

Loss Is a Universal Human Experience

At some point, every person will experience loss.

It may be:

- **The loss of a loved one**
- **A relationship**
- **A dream**
- **Your health**
- **A season of life**
- **A job or opportunity**
- **Becoming an empty-nester**

Loss is painful because it involves something being taken from us that we never intended to give away.

Key Thought: Loss is *inevitable*, but hopelessness is not.

Grief Is a God-Given Response

Jesus Himself experienced grief.

Scripture describes Him as:

"A man of sorrows, acquainted with grief."

Grief is not weakness.

Grief is not lack of faith.

Grief is not failure.

It is a natural response to loss.

Grief Often Includes:

- **Sadness**
- **Anger**

- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Loneliness
- Questions

Key Thought: The issue isn't whether we grieve—it's what we do with our grief.

God Comes Near to the Brokenhearted

Psalm 34:18

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

God does not observe our pain from a distance.

He draws near.

When our hearts are broken:

- He comes close
- He listens
- He comforts
- He strengthens

Key Thought: Your pain may feel isolating, but God has not abandoned you.

Jesus Doesn't Just Relieve Pain—He Heals It

Psalm 147:3

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

The Hebrew word for "bind up" is *habash*, meaning:

- to wrap a wound
- to bandage an injury
- to carefully dress a hurt place

Just as a physical wound must be cleaned before it heals, God desires to heal our hearts at the deepest level.

Key Thought: Relief and healing are not the same thing.

The Danger of Seeking Relief Instead of Healing

Because pain is uncomfortable, we naturally look for ways to escape it.

Many people turn to:

- Social media
- Shopping
- Entertainment

- Food
- Busyness
- Isolation
- Relationships
- Distractions

None of these things can heal what only Jesus can touch.

Key Thought: Anything we use to numb our pain instead of bringing it to Jesus becomes a substitute for Him.

Esau's Bowl of Stew

Genesis 25

Esau came in exhausted, hungry, and desperate.

In a moment of weakness, he traded his birthright for temporary relief.

His greatest mistake wasn't hunger.

His mistake was valuing immediate comfort over something eternal.

Key Thought: Don't trade God's healing for temporary relief.

Reflection:

What is my "bowl of stew"?

What am I running to when life becomes painful?

Jesus Chose Healing Over Relief

Matthew 4

After forty days in the wilderness, Jesus was physically exhausted.

The enemy offered Him shortcuts and immediate relief.

Jesus refused.

Instead of choosing temporary comfort, He chose obedience and trust in the Father.

Key Thought: Relief isn't wrong. Looking for it *apart* from God is.

The Practice of Healing

One of the greatest lessons Ps Julie shared from her own journey is this:

Sit with the pain.

Instead of:

- running

- numbing
- distracting
- avoiding

Invite Jesus into it.

Give Him access to every part of your heart.

Healing Begins When We:

1. **Acknowledge the pain.**
2. **Stop running from it.**
3. **Invite Jesus into it.**
4. **Allow Him to do His work.**

Key Thought: You cannot heal what you *refuse* to feel.

Time Doesn't Heal All Wounds

Ps Julie shared the story of losing her younger brother when she was thirteen years old.

During that season, people often told her:

"Time heals all wounds."

But over time she discovered something different.

Truth:

Time doesn't heal.

Jesus heals.

Time may pass, but healing comes from God's presence and power.

Key Thought:

Healing is not found in the passing of time—it is found in the presence of Jesus.

Don't Change Your Theology Because of Pain

One of the greatest temptations in loss is allowing our experience to redefine who God is.

When tragedy happens, people often begin questioning:

- **Is God good?**
- **Is God faithful?**
- **Does God still heal?**
- **Can God be trusted?**

Scripture reminds us:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Key Thought: Don't interpret God through your pain. Interpret your pain through the truth of God's character.

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

There is no:

- **heartbreak**
- **betrayal**
- **disappointment**
- **grief**
- **trauma**
- **loss**

that is beyond God's ability to redeem.

Nothing is too broken for Jesus.

Nothing is too far gone.

Nothing is beyond restoration.

Key Thought: There is no wound deeper than the healing power of Jesus.

Final Challenge

If you're carrying a broken heart or crushed spirit today, stop running to things that cannot heal you.

Stop searching for relief in places that only provide temporary comfort.

Instead:

- **Bring your pain to Jesus.**
- **Invite Him into your grief.**
- **Give Him access to your heart.**
- **Trust Him with the healing process.**

Key Thought: Relief may make you feel better for a moment. Jesus heals for a lifetime.

The Invitation

Today, Jesus is standing at the door of your pain.

He isn't asking you to hide it.

He isn't asking you to ignore it.

He's inviting you to bring it to Him.

Let Him:

- **Heal your broken heart**
- **Bind up your wounds**
- **Restore what has been damaged**

- **Walk with you through the process**

Because no matter what you've lost:

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.

And He is still a healer.

Discussion Questions

1. **When you experience pain or loss, what are you most tempted to run to for relief?**
2. **What is the difference between temporary relief and true healing?**
3. **How does knowing that God is close to the brokenhearted change the way you view grief?**
4. **Is there an area of loss or pain that you have been avoiding instead of inviting Jesus into?**
5. **What practical step can you take this week to stop numbing your pain and begin allowing Jesus to heal it?**