



## Grieving God's Way: He Feels Your Pain

**Buffy MacDonald Crabtree**

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*The risk of love is loss, and the price of loss is grief, but the pain of grief is only a shadow when compared with the pain of never risking love.—Hilary Stanton Zunin, Grief Expert*

Everyone feels grief during their lives, including the school-aged children Hilary Zunin works with. So how, according to author Buffy MacDonald Crabtree, does grieving “God’s way” differ from grieving without God?

When the author, a Christian, was notified that her husband had collapsed at work at Fort Jackson in 2002 she was devastated. And the pain only got worse when he died some weeks later. She discovered that God can help with the grief process in several ways: with forgiveness, spiritual comfort, validation, and by providing a sense of oneness with humanity. Crabtree illustrates all of these qualities in *Grieving God’s Way*, the story of her own journey through grief.

Mistakes made by the hospital, including giving her husband, Mac, a penicillin drug to which he had an allergy, led the author to believe that Mac suffered needlessly in the last weeks of his life. However, she did not bring a lawsuit against any of his doctors. God helped her to eventually forgive everyone involved.

As Mac lay unconscious from a cardiac arrest that had caused massive brain damage, Buffy drove home alone. Still in shock, she came around a curve in the road only to see a huge, colorful rainbow. Although saddened, she was comforted by the knowledge that God was still in control.

According to the author, the promises of God’s word do not forbid any emotional response you may have. You don’t need to feel embarrassed if you experience release or relief, as sometimes happens when your loved one suffered for a long time, if you labored as a caretaker, or if they caused you to endure pain as a victim of their physical or emotional abuse. Remorseful guilt too is normal. Hope may be found in Ephesians 1:18: “I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you.”

God can also provide mourners with a sense that they are not alone in their grief. Verses of comfort and inspiration from the Bible that are thousands of years old are sprinkled throughout Crabtree’s story, such as, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear.” (Psalm 46:1-2a)

According to the author, God can protect you throughout your journey of grief, through any emotion, including storms of uncontrollable rage, feeling like a ship without a rudder, and becoming vulnerable to Satan’s invitations to act stupidly. Trust in Him, she says, and He will send you healing such as a timely phone call from an old friend.

In addition to her own story, Crabtree provides practical suggestions for readers who are suffering. She suggests they seek help from sources like trusted friends, comedy DVDs, daily devotionals, soothing cups of tea and the power of song.

This compassionate, gentle, and non-judgmental story kit, packed with tools for people who are suffering, is sure to help ease readers’ pain.

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