



Helping Family Members and Others Affected by Disability

Jeff McNair



Points of discussion

- Stages of grief
- Being alone...not just feeling alone
- Uncertain future...new normal
- Special education and human services
- But what of the local church?

Stages of Grief

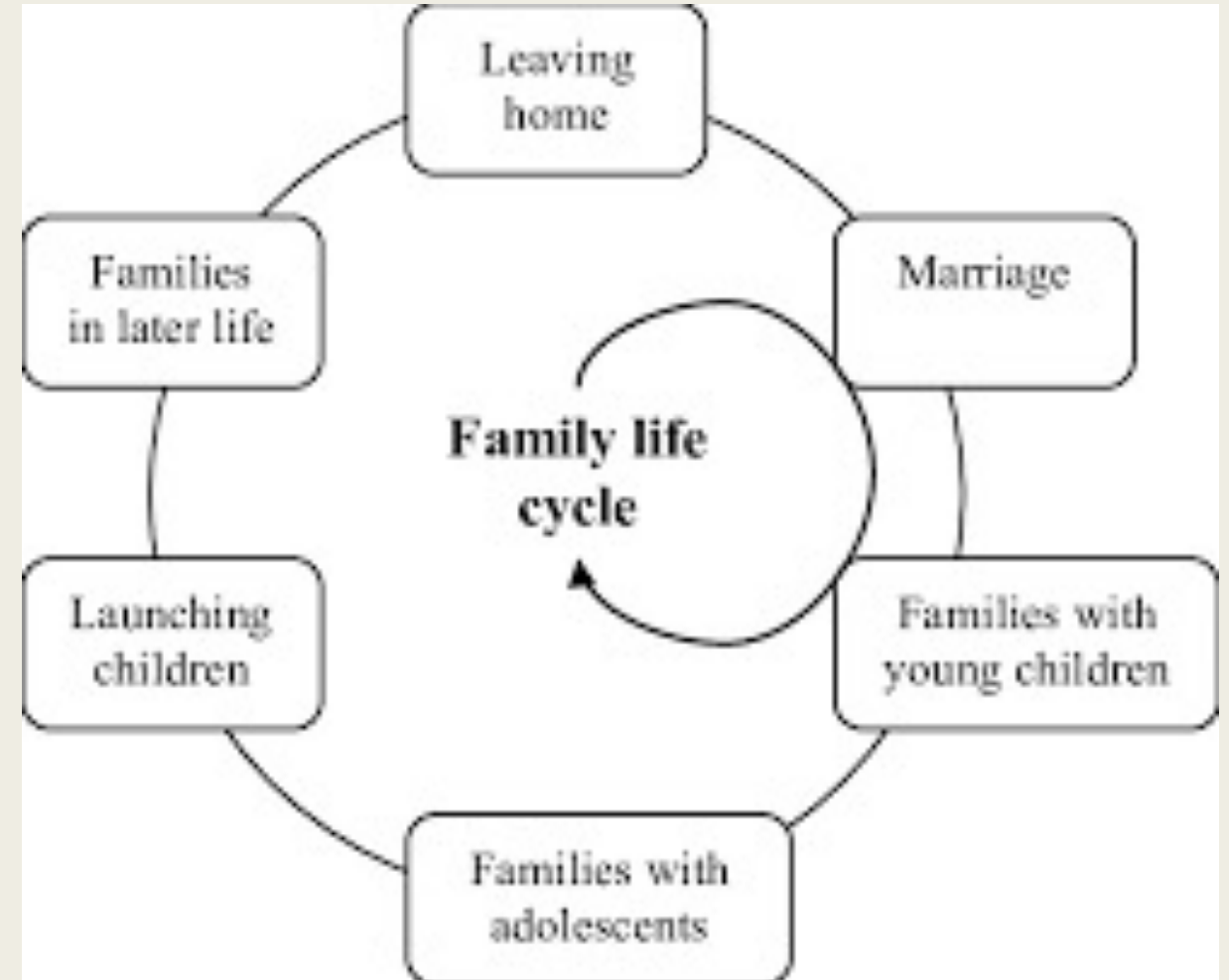


Being alone...not just feeling alone

- Social isolation
 - *Distancing*
 - *Self-isolation*
- Corporate faith vs. individual faith

Uncertain future

- Family life cycle
- “New normal”
- “Welcome to Holland”



Special education and human services

- Identification of child as disabled
- Seeking appropriate services and supports
 - *Not always what is best...pedagogy vs. administrative convenience*
 - *Curriculum leading to adult outcomes*
 - Employment, independent living, social relationships
- Moving into adulthood and adult services
 - *Which services?*
 - *How to receive them*
- Long term support

But what of the local church?

- God's sovereignty (Exodus 4:11)
- The Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)
- How might we support families and others affected by disability?

Responding to God's sovereignty... in Others



From the Lord of the Rings trilogy

“Come, Mr. Frodo!” he cried. “I can’t carry it for you, but I can carry you and it as well. So up you get! Come on, Mr. Frodo dear! Sam will give you a ride...”

Frodo opened his eyes and drew a breath... “Thank you, Sam” he said in a cracked whisper. “How far is there to go?”

“I don’t know,” said Sam, “because I don’t know where we’re going.”

(J.R.R. Tolkien, 1965, p. 218)

How do we “carry” others?

1. We can pray for change

Hebrews 4:16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy and find grace to help us when we need it most.

Jesus in the garden Matthew/Mark/Luke

Mark 14:35-36 He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by. “Abba, Father,” he cried out, “everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”

How do we “carry” others?

2. We can suffer with, wade into the suffering of others

We are a body

1 Corinthians 12:25-26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

We are called to suffer for doing good

1 Peter 2:20-21...But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.

How do we “carry” others?

2. We can suffer with others

Jesus gave an example of how he wanted to be helped

- Mark 14:34 He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”
- He came back twice and they were sleeping.
- Mark 14:41 When he returned to them the third time, he said, “Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest...”

Luke 22:43 Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him.

How do we “carry” others?

3. We can help people to hold onto their faith

Matthew 11:2-3 John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about the things the Messiah was doing. So, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”

Who was John the Baptist?

Predicted

Isaiah 40:3 “He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord’s coming! Clear the road for him!’”

The angel Gabriel appeared to his father Zechariah

Luke 1:5-23 V17 He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the godly.”

Who was John the Baptist?

Zechariah to the boy John

Luke 1 76-77 “And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins.”

Who was John the Baptist?

He baptized Jesus

John 1:32-34 Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him. I didn’t know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.’”

Luke 3:22 ...And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

Who was John the Baptist?

Jesus affirms John

Matthew 11:11 “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist.”

Reminds him of what he knows hold to faith

Matthew 11:4-6 Jesus told them, “Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen- the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor. And he added, “God blesses those who do not fall away because of me.”

Who was John the Baptist?

Verse Announcing verse...in your hearing Quoting Isaiah 61

Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord’s favor has come.”

How do we “carry”
others?

4. We change

1 Corinthians 12:22-23 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. (NIV)

If the sovereignty of God is not difficult in your life, reach out to those for whom it is and “carry” them.

If God’s sovereignty is difficult in your life, ask the Lord to help you to trust him.



Thank you for listening!

jeffmcnair@gmail.com
jmcnair@calbaptist.edu

