Welcome to week two of The Gift Exchange! We’re talking about the gifts God gives us in exchange for the humility of opening up to him and trusting him with our biggest hurts, habits, and hang-up’s.

Overview…

- Week One – Give God your worry and he’ll give you peace.
- Week Two – Give God your hurts and he’ll give you healing.
- Week Three – Give God your grief and he’ll give you joy.

My maternal grandfather died of cancer on December 1, 1991. My paternal grandfather died of cancer on December 1, 2002. Eleven years apart, but on the same day, and right before Christmas.

Those Christmases were especially hard for my parents and my family, but even now, every year at Christmas, I think of my grandfathers and others that I’ve lost.

This side of eternity, grief is a reality. If you live long at all, you will experience grief and pain and loss. Welcome to life on earth.

**Our normal plan for dealing with our grief is to wait silently.**

- We deny our losses.
- We delay our pain.
- We distract ourselves.

**God’s plan for our grief is to talk to him about it.**

- To acknowledge the reality of our pain. Grief is actually a gift.
- To tell him about our pain and losses.
- To hear from him about his comfort.
David wrote Psalm 30 as a song for the dedication of the temple, and he again bares his heart before God and reflects on his own life experiences…

Remember that David had lost his best friend, Jonathan; his mentor, Samuel; his first wife, Michal’s, affection; the first baby that he had with Bathsheba; and much more…

Psalm 30 NLT

A psalm of David. A song for the dedication of the Temple.

1 I will exalt you, LORD, for you rescued me.
   You refused to let my enemies triumph over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you restored my health.

3 You brought me up from the grave, O LORD.
   You kept me from falling into the pit of death.

4 Sing to the LORD, all you godly ones! Praise his holy name.

5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime!
   Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

6 When I was prosperous, I said, “Nothing can stop me now!”

7 Your favor, O LORD, made me as secure as a mountain.
   Then you turned away from me, and I was shattered.

8 I cried out to you, O LORD. I begged the Lord for mercy, saying,

9 “What will you gain if I die, if I sink into the grave?
   Can my dust praise you? Can it tell of your faithfulness?

10 Hear me, LORD, and have mercy on me. Help me, O LORD.”

11 You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing.
   You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy,

12 that I might sing praises to you and not be silent.
   O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever!

When you give God your grief, God gives you his joy.

That’s the deal he has promised. And it’s incredibly one-sided…

Isaiah 53:3 NLT

He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.
We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.
He was despised, and we did not care.
God comforts us NOW by reminding us that he has walked through grief himself and is willing to walk through it with us.

God comforts us LATER by removing every reason for grieving for all of eternity.

**Revelation 21:1, NLT**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” 5 And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!”