

How to Minister to the Pain of Miscarriage

My emotions were burdened recently when I discovered one of my friends would go through the pain and emotion of delivering her stillbirth baby. The loss of a child through miscarriage and stillbirth is difficult for the parents, especially for us who believe life begins at conception.

When a person loses a child, we try and console them and we try and say the right things, but often we don't say what the person truly needs to hear. As I told my friend recently there are no words. Having suffered a miscarriage myself years ago, I know that nothing anyone can say is going to help the loss or heal the pain; only our heavenly Father can do that.

One mistake we can make when ministering to a person is telling them that we know what they are going through. The truth is we don't know what they are experiencing. We may have had a similar situation, but we are not inside their body feeling their pain and suffering.

Everyone handles loss differently. I remember when I had a miscarriage; my friend also had a miscarriage around the same time. I went to God and relied on his strength and my faith and my friend ended up going to a counselor. Although we had similar situations, we processed it differently.

People don't want to hear you say, I know what you are going through. Therefore, when ministering, I say I have been through a similar situation. However, we shouldn't get caught up in our story, this moment is not about us; it is about loving on the person who needs healing.

In reaction to hearing devastating news for our friends or family members, we often say things without thinking. Some of the insensitive words out of our mouth can be:

- It's for the best.
- Now you have an angel watching you.
- God needed your little one.
- You will have plenty more chances to get pregnant.
- It happened for a reason.
- It is so common, these things happen.
- At least it was early in the pregnancy (for miscarriages).
- There must have been something wrong with the baby.

At the time of loss, these are the last things we should be speaking out. The Bible instructs us about being love and holding our tongue. When we hear devastating news, the best thing we can do is wait 10 seconds and not speak out of the reptilian, reactionary part of our brain. Wait 10 seconds, even longer before speaking, and allow your forebrain, the thoughtful center of our brain, to take over.

We can say something out of reaction because we are uncomfortable with silence. As Christians, we should get comfortable with silence. In those moments of silence the Holy Spirit can speak to our spirit and instruct us as to what the person really needs to hear.

In those times that you don't know what to say; few words are better than trying to console when you don't have the words. Words to be spoken to a person suffering loss can be:

- I'm sorry.
- God loves you.
- I'm here for you.
- If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know.

Be careful in the consoling words you speak. They are probably not ready yet to hear you'll get through this. Let your words be few and your prayers be many.

In the following days, send a card of sympathy. This is a

loss, and parents will appreciate it. We often focus on the mother during this time, but loss is also experienced by the father. Check in on the dad and see how he is holding up and pray for him too.

Sending flowers or purchasing a memorial gift, such as a cross, is a nice remembrance. People that have suffered miscarriage do not want this dismissed, ignored and not spoken of. This child is real to them and acknowledging that helps them in the healing process. Even if you don't believe in this the same way, look at it from their standpoint.

Bringing a meal to them after suffering a miscarriage or stillbirth is helpful, just like you would if they had the baby. Their body is still recuperating physically, and, emotionally, they are strained.

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you to what you can do to assist them in the following days. If they have small children offer to take them out of the house on an outing for a while or see if they need some housecleaning done. Love on them with the love of God anyway you can.

Encourage your friend or family member to seek God for healing. Give them tips to get through the healing process, such as forgiving themselves, if they feel they did something to cause this to happen. In inner healing ministry, I have seen a lot of people blame themselves or think the child is mad at them. Explain to them that their child is in heaven, isn't mad at them (if they feel that way) and is happy.

When a mother loses a child, she often feels she knows the sex of the baby. Ask her if she felt like she knew the sex and encourage her to name the baby. Naming the baby will bring closure and healing to most women. Assure her the baby is in heaven and spend time loving on this mother (and father) with the love of God.

Losing a child is never easy, but if we equip ourselves as

people of God to have compassion, put the other person ahead of our own feelings and support them in all ways, hopefully we can make a difference in the trauma they have suffered.

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