



**BE THE
CHANGE
YOU
WANT TO
SEE**

② *Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

As westerners, we're not big on mourning. For the most part, we take a day off, bury our feelings, paste on a smile and carry on with life. But if you journey to other cultures, you'll find a very different story.

In Mexico, they celebrate the 'Day of the Dead', picnicking graveside to remember the lost as part of the family and acknowledging the role of death in the circle of life.

Japanese Buddhists have a mourning period of 49 days following a death, or more, if the circumstances of death are unresolved.

And Judaism, where Christianity finds its heritage, has an elaborate set of codes and rituals to deal with grief and loss. These include feelings of anger about the death being expressed by a ritual tearing of one's clothing, or only sitting on plain, uncomfortable wooden benches throughout the grieving period. |

But given that mourning is born out of sadness, and sadness from loss, perhaps there is something more we need to think about. Like why or how we lost that something and to give it a few moments of down time.

Jesus said that those who mourn are blessed, for they will be comforted. This may not mean an easy, 'all-better' comfort. It may be the kind of cold comfort that a plain wooden bench offers a tired traveler; or a picnic at a gravesite to remember life and wrestle with absence.

It may be the comfort of sun on a teary face, or the ironic satisfaction of pulling on a black t-shirt to reflect a current state of mind.

Mourning means not needing to pretend we're ok. It's an ability to admit that we fall down. That honest reality in itself is a blessing. The knowledge that Jesus stands with us in our suffering means that the blessing is found in honesty and, also, in comfort.



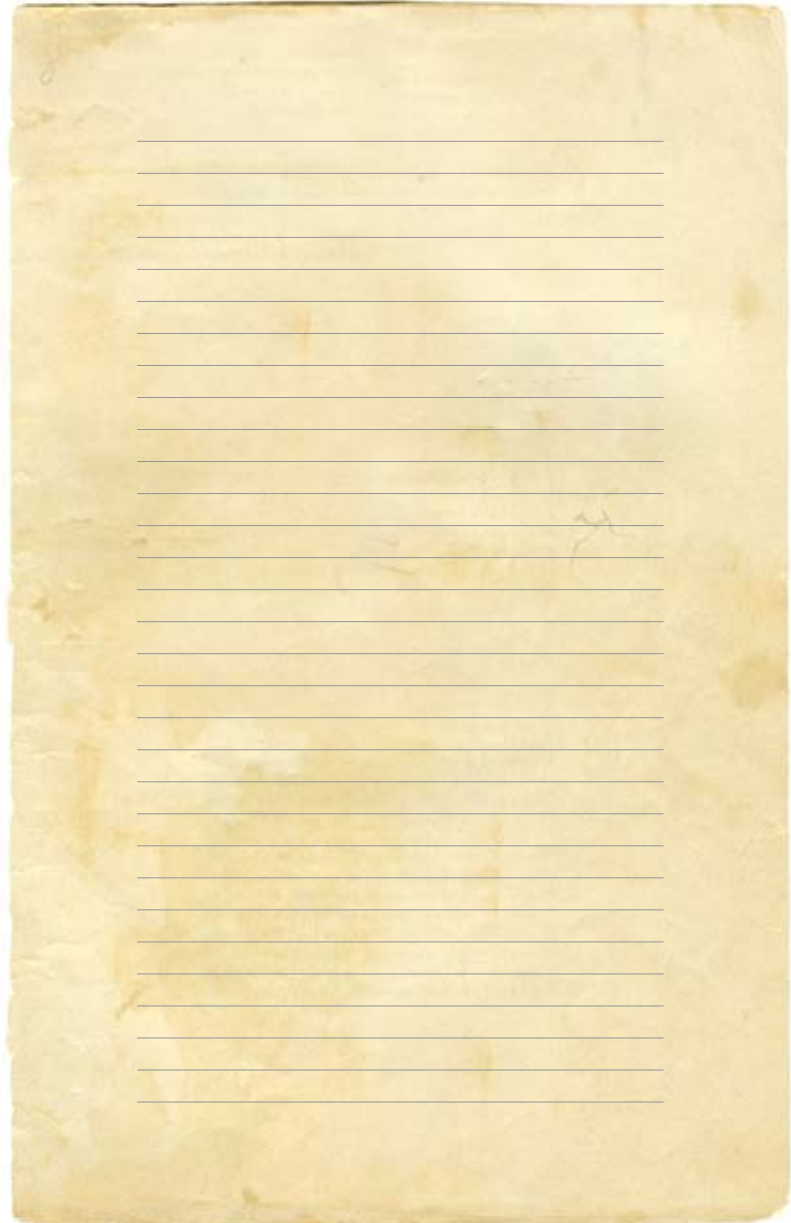
Monday

Jesus saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion on them, that they were as sheep not having a shepherd. - *John 11.35*

Watch the news or 'people-watch' in a public place. When something makes you feel moved – angry, sad, compassionate - write it down and pray sincerely for it.



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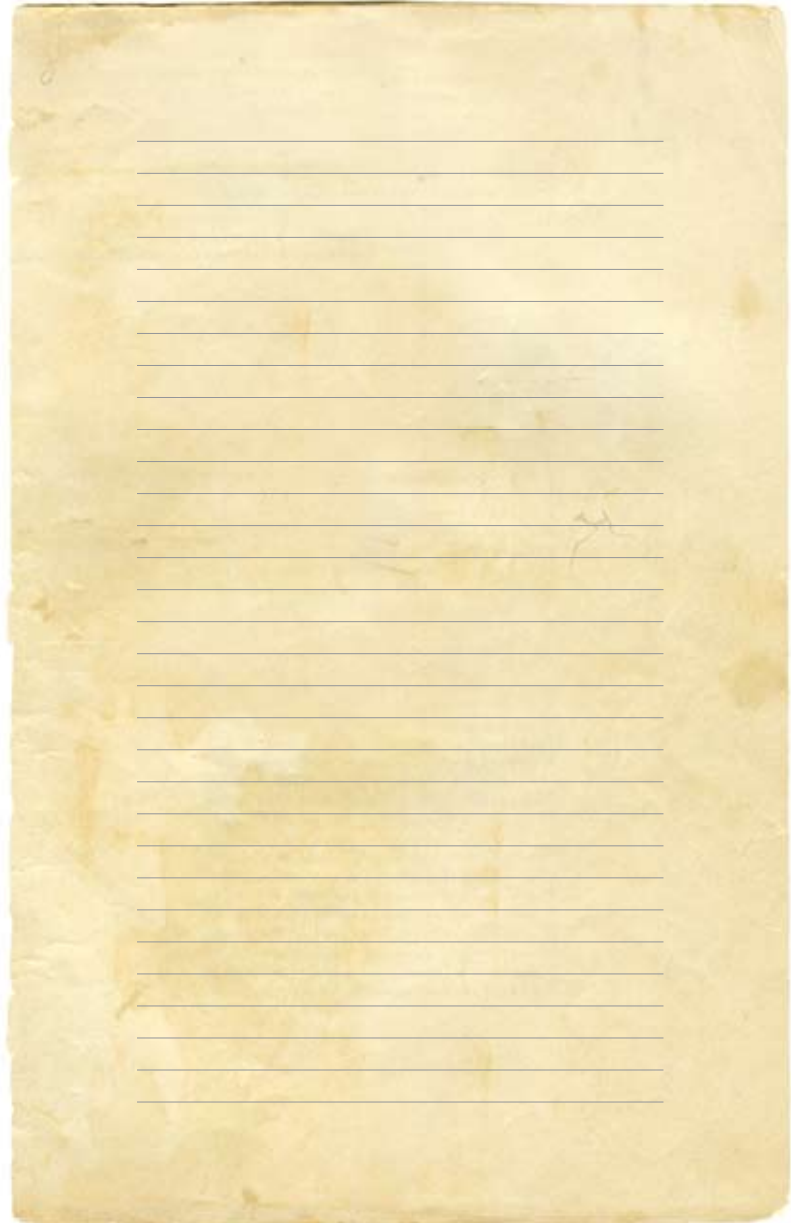


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Tuesday

'I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy.' - *Psalm 116.1*

What cry for mercy did you hear as you people-watched yesterday? Perhaps you should pray again for this, while discovering a way to get involved in a hands-on capacity also.



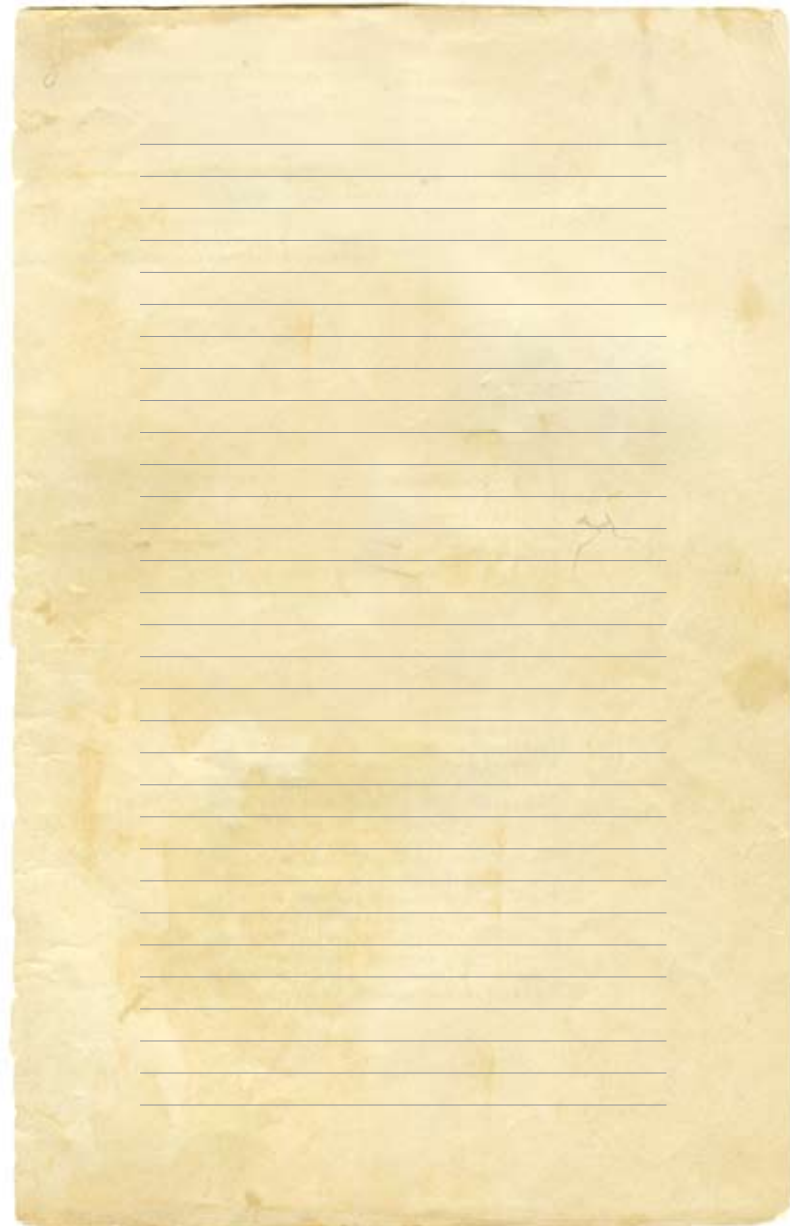
Wednesday

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. - *Proverbs 17.17*

Turn your attention to your family or closed friends. What is their current adversity? What can you do today to show your 'brother' you are born to be part of this difficult time in their life?



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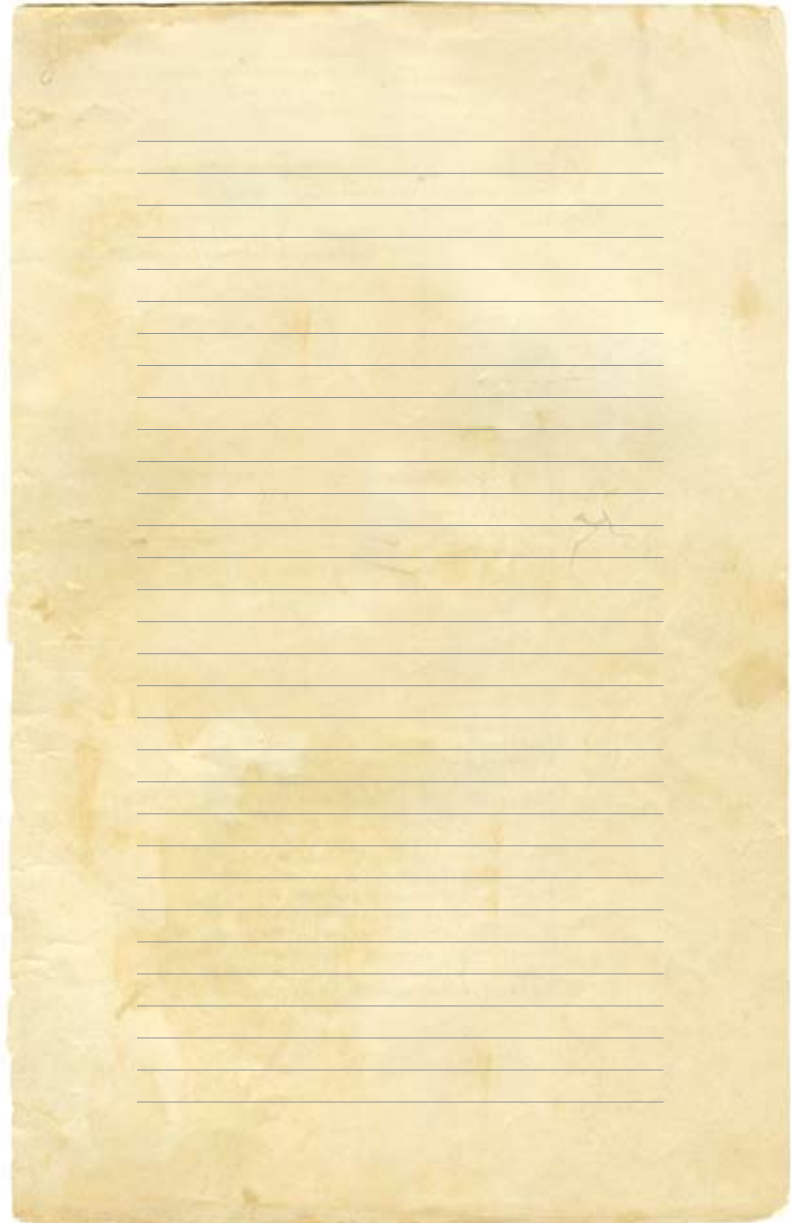
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Thursday

'Comfort, comfort my people,' says your God.

- *Isaiah 40.1*

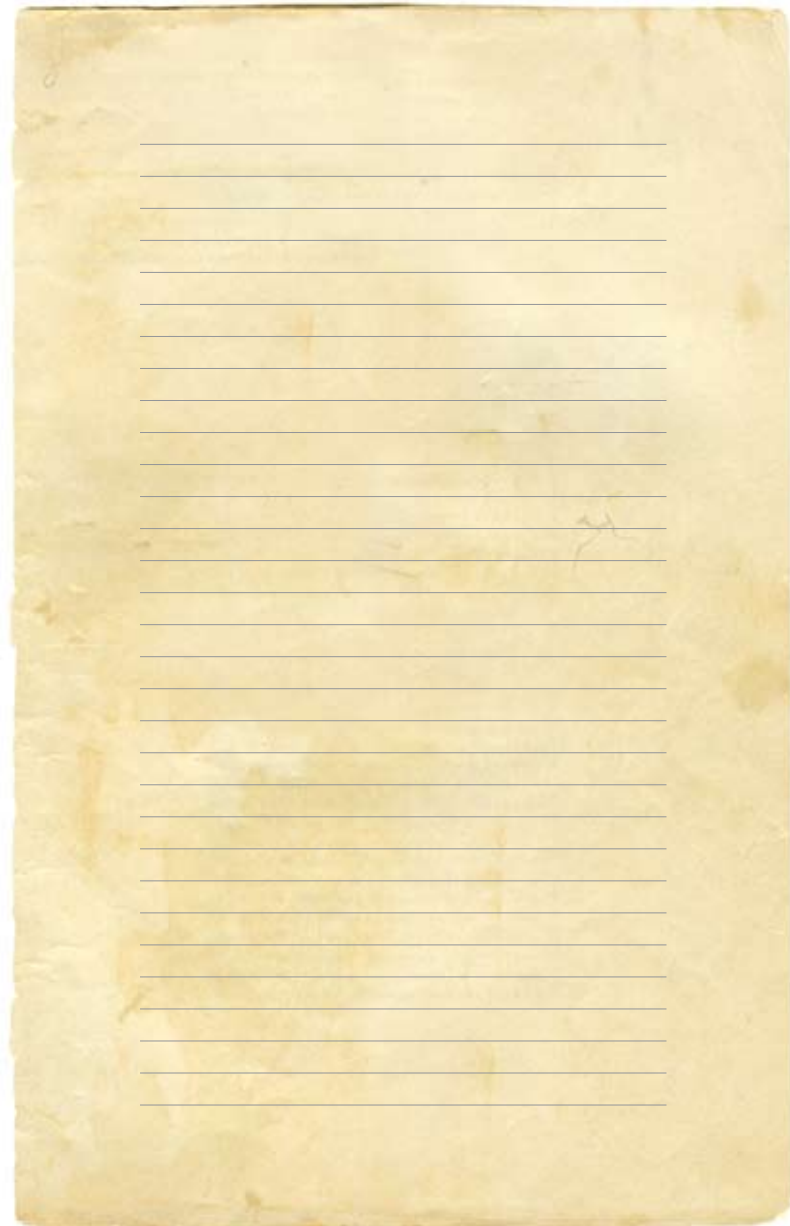
Comfort has many forms. Find someone poor – it may be a homeless man needing food, an elderly woman needing company or an acquaintance just needing a listening ear. Go out of your way to meet that need, even if it makes you uncomfortable.



Friday

'Yet if I speak, my pain is not relieved; and if I refrain, it does not go away.' - Job 16.6

Visit beyondblue.org.au and try to understand one of the most common forms of mourning in the West – the unshakeable and terrible lowness of depression. Remember what you learn here, read Job and learn the value of hearing someone, even if it fixes nothing.



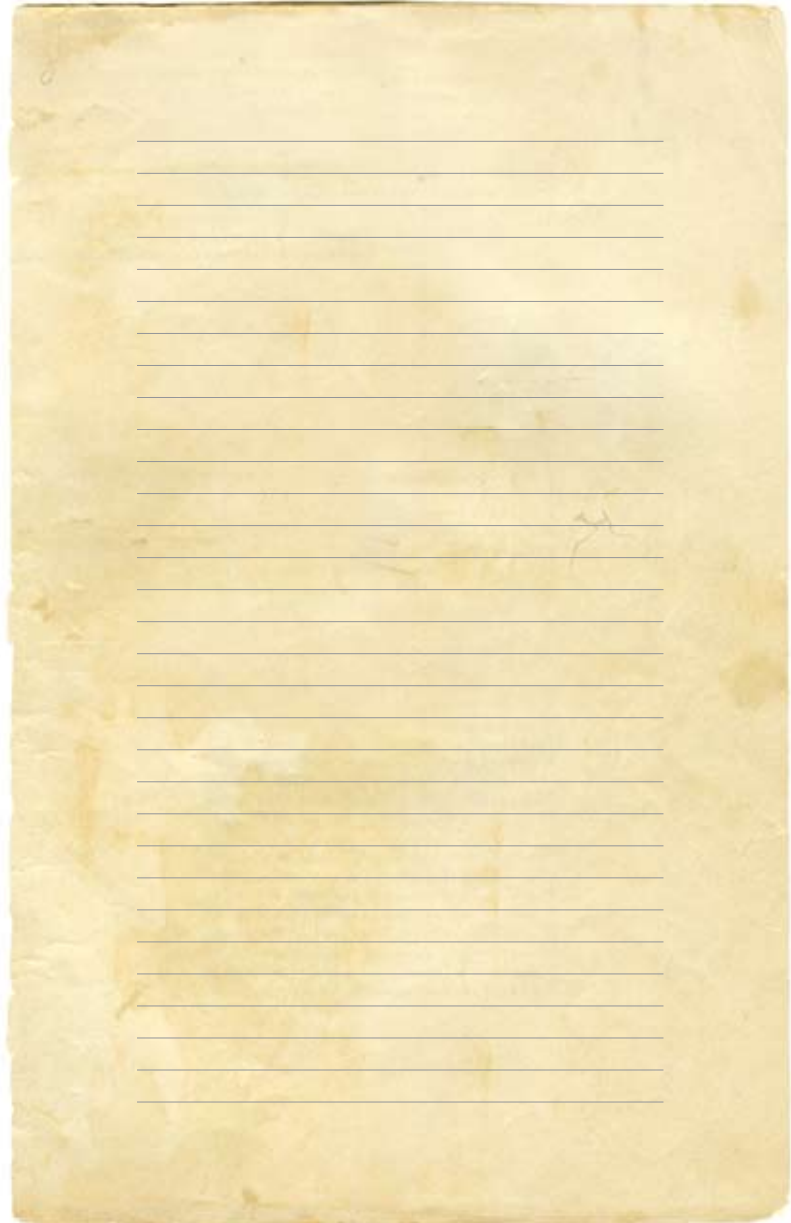
Saturday

**Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted. - *Matt 5.4***

Reflect on what this verse means to you personally, the community that you live in and the world as a whole. Make plans for how you can be honest and respectful in mourning, and how you can be a comforter.



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