

**WSS, Part 12**  
**Week 5**  
**Friday**

**A Sinful Heart**  
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Today's Treasure

*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.*

*I John 1:8-10*

Grief does not exempt me from sinning. I would love to have a “pass” that my sins would be overlooked because I am experiencing this loss! In this space between, grief has brought out some ugly, dark places in my heart. God has not overlooked them, but instead graciously revealed them to me and I have had the opportunity (sometimes more than once) to confess them.

**Jealousy**

One of the things I have had to guard my heart about is jealousy. When I see other couples my age, celebrating their wedding anniversaries or having family reunions, my thoughts lead to desiring what they have (that I do not) rather than rejoicing for them. When I see couples entering their retirement years together and traveling together, I experience a longing, a wishing for what might have been rather than being content with the plan God has had for me. These feelings and thoughts are normal, but if I do not guard my heart I sin with jealousy, anger, and bitterness. It becomes important to remember that God's sovereignty has this plan for me (and for Mike) and while it is different than the plan I wanted, I trust that He knows best for us both. It is helpful to repeat to myself the many blessings I AM experiencing which helps me rejoice with others and not be overcome with jealousy or discontentment. In addition, being intentional to celebrate my own milestones with family and friends has helped me navigate this emotion. My recent trip to Israel is an example of this. The trip was something Mike and I would have done together, but as providence provides, Mike's mom who is also a widow and I decided to do this trip together. Several couples on the trip were celebrating their anniversaries. It would have been extremely easy to fall into a place of jealousy. Yet, on the trip were also couples who had known Mike. After the first few days, people began to tell us how much they were enjoying Mike's mom being

on the trip because her mannerisms and speech reminded them of Mike. They began to share stories of Mike's care for them with us. What a precious gift to us both!

### **Kingdom of Me-Dom**

The other thinking process that leads me into dark places and sin is when I focus only on myself. Self-absorption and selfishness abound in the Kingdom of Me-Dom where I have elevated expectations that others will anticipate and meet all my needs. I have learned the hard way that no one can meet all my emotional or physical needs in this period of grieving. Nor can they read my mind to know what those needs may be. I set myself up for disappointment when I set expectations for those who love me around my own needs. The best example of this is how to manage holidays and special occasions after someone's death. Holidays and special days are simply hard!! Yet everything cannot and should not focus only on me. This leads to an ugly, demanding sinful heart!

When your emotional needs are great it is normal to want someone to understand and to meet the need, but rather than fall into the Kingdom of Me-Dom, we would do well to anticipate and communicate well.

My children are in the season of life of busy jobs and small children. It is wise for me to think about things from their perspective and not just my own. I need to realize that it may be easier for me to go to them rather than demand they come to me. I need to clearly communicate when I really do need help and how we might problem solve that together. As I anticipate having my right hip replacement surgery, I have been entering the Kingdom of Me-Dom a bit. This is the first significant medical procedure I have had since Mike died. More than the surgery itself, I am missing him. I am feeling a bit sorry for myself. While all these feelings are normal, they can lead to sin if I do not guard my heart. I need to communicate well with my children, my friends, and my church family about how I need them to help and to pray. Then I need to rejoice in how the Lord provides through them rather than expect them to just know!

*To Think About:* Are you living in the Kingdom of Me-Dom? Do you have unrealistic expectations of those around you? Are you thinking of others or just of yourself?

### **PRAYER**

Lord, in your graciousness, reveal sin to me in this season of grieving. Guard my heart from jealousy, anger, bitterness, selfishness, and self-pity. Help me to not put unrealistic expectations on others, but to sit in anticipation of how You will meet my needs.