

March 16, 2021



I want to share with you some reflections from **Joyce Rupp's book, "Praying Our Goodbyes"**.

**"Hellos"** and **"Good-byes"** are truly a part of our everyday lives. Life is filled with "hellos" and "good-byes". The cycle begins at birth: goodbye womb, hello world and continues throughout our lives. Sometimes "good-byes" are not so difficult but when death comes, it's final. **Letting go** is a part of the human condition.

**Grief** is also a part of life and a natural expression of **deep sadness**. We face minor grief almost daily as we experience the routine losses of life.

**Grieving** is highly **individualized**. No one can predict the **time span** for healing coping strategies or the manner in which grief is expressed. The **intensity** of our grief is often dependent on the significance of the person or thing lost.

What is a **goodbye**? It is an **empty place** in us. It is **any** situation in which there is some kind of loss or some incompleteness, when a space is created in us that cries out to be filled. Goodbyes are any of those times when we find ourselves without a **someone** or a **something** that has given our life meaning and value or when a dimension of our life seems to be out of place or unfulfilled. Goodbyes are all of those experiences that leave us with a **hollow feeling** someplace deep inside

Goodbyes are a part of every single day. Sometimes we choose them, and sometimes they choose us. Usually they are small, not so significant losses that do not pain us very much, but at times they are deep, powerful, wounding experiences that trail around our hearts and pain inside of us for a long time.

All these little goodbyes are in some way a **rehearsal** for that **final** goodbye. The way we accept them and move on is a preparation for the time when we say. **"Goodbye earth, Hello God"**. When we learn **how** to say goodbye, we truly learn how to say to ourselves and others: "Go, God be with you. I entrust you to God. The God of strength, courage, comfort, hope, love, is with you. The God who promises to wipe away all tears will hold you close and will fill your emptiness."

In our lifetime we will have many little and sometimes big goodbyes, so it is important to learn how to say goodbye and acknowledge the pain that is there for us so that, eventually, we can move on to another hello.

---

The word **"goodbye"** originally meant, **"God be with you"** or **"Go with God"**—which was a recognition that **God** was a **significant** part of the going.