

Use “The Scene” to introduce “God Is There” the High School Sunday school lesson for August 27, 2017. The lesson is found on page 81 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



What surprised me the most was the anger. I was ready for sadness. I had been stuck in sadness for a long while, even before my father passed away. But I was caught off guard by my own anger.

It shouldn't have been such a surprise. I had first learned about the stages of grief long ago in some high school Health text book. But knowing and living through it are two very different things.

So I was angry. I was angry at the doctors who couldn't fix him, angry at the people who did the funeral, angry at the people who came and said inane things, angry at the people who didn't come. I was angry at my family (for no reason at all)—I was even angry at my dad. And boy, was I ever angry at God.

I had no right to be, of course. There was nothing particularly unexpected about my father's death. He had been sick a long, long time. He was not shot as a youth in battle, or taken in a sudden car accident, or mowed down while walking along in a peaceful protest. There was no one to blame. And I think I was angry about that too.

Now, looking back, what really fired me up was being stuck in a decaying, broken world, where we were constantly having to face these ever-surprising goodbyes. That was the part that felt the most wrong. *We shouldn't have to say goodbye. We shouldn't have to be separated. We shouldn't have to lose each other.* And that was the part that hurt so much.

But in that hurting and that fury, I learned more than I ever had before about God. I learned that He is strong enough to take my rage. I learned that He loved my father more than I ever could. And I learned that He didn't like any of this either. His original plan didn't have Death in it. We invited that one in.

I also learned that He would never leave me. That He was totally in control, at every moment. And that He had figured out a way for us all to be together again.

So if you are hurting right now—if you've lost someone or something—stay in that hurt. Don't run away from the suffering. It's OK to be angry. God can take it. And He's got so much to teach you.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the article. Then discuss in this way:

Have you ever lost someone close to you? What feelings do you remember about that time?

Do you think it's OK to be angry with God? Why or why not?

Go back and read over some of the things this author learned through suffering. Have you ever felt that God was teaching you about similar ideas? What have you learned through your own periods of suffering? What have you learned about God through those times?

In the Bible, Job never got the explanation for his suffering that he was hoping to get from God. In the end, Job had to trust God, and he learned some things through doing that. Let's look at what he learned.



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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