

The Five Remedies for Sorrow

St. Thomas Aquinas

Treat yourself

A new book, a cute blouse, a cold beer. Man is both body and soul and God has given us appropriate pleasure as a gift. A spoonful of sugar helps the bitterness of sorrow; spoonful being the key. What would cheer you up just a bit right now? It's okay to feel better.

Weep

We don't grieve well in our culture, stuffing and minimizing our natural sorrows. Just as we have rituals for celebration, we need rituals for cleansing, purification, and sorrow. Listen to music; go into the night and wail; take a long walk and cry. Sit on a hillside with the Lord.

Share with a trusted friend

The Lord told us to take up his yoke (see Matt 11:29), meaning he will carry this heavy load with us. Find one or two friends who will not judge you nor encourage you into any type of sinful response. Talking with too many will keep the wound open and festering.

Contemplate reality

Distinguish between emotions and intellect. Ask yourself what happened and why. Being willing to be honest and to check your thoughts and emotions against reality and all that the Lord has told us. Get help with this important interior work or you will stay stuck.

Have a hot bath & a good night's sleep

Thomas Aquinas taught we are an integration of body and soul, not a spirit in a shell. Our minds and hearts need rest and so does our body. The cleansing and release that come with bathing and sleeping well opens the door for the same in our hearts. Repeat as necessary.

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