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## LESSON 2

### GRIEVING BEFORE DEATH

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#### *Discussion Questions*

1. Describe how your parents or grandparents prepared for their deaths. Were you aware they were dying? Was there anything they did to prepare you for their deaths?
2. How did Jesus show his love for his disciples as he prepared to die on Passover Eve? How was he thinking of them even as his own suffering approached? See John 13:1–15, Luke 22:14–20.
3. Wangerin discusses how his wife was exhausted by his approaching death. Often her silence and withdrawal was a necessary part of her work in dealing with her fears about his death. See Psalm 41 for a description of the suffering that occurs in the presence of serious illness.
4. Wangerin contends that attention in a terminal illness is often focused on the person who is dying. But in actuality the caregiver is in greater need of help. Discuss this concept. How might this understanding change your approach to caring for a terminally ill person?
5. Reflect on how in John 19:25–27, Jesus ministered to the grief of his mother in the midst of his own death.

How can we learn from his words and actions in caring for the family members of someone who is in the midst of a terminal illness?

#### *Exercise*

Read 1 Kings 19:1–8. On a blackboard or on newsprint, have the group describe the elements where death is present in Elijah's life. How is death affecting him? How does he suffer? How does the angel minister to him? How do the angel's actions speak to specific situations that exist among the members of your class? How could these common actions be useful examples for people who are caregivers?

*Journaling Verse*  
Philippians 2:4