

# Lifelines

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Topic: Fires in Southern California

## Uniquely Yours © 2025 by Dr. Ed Jordan

Think of a deep-felt heart experience you have had in your life. Perhaps it was caused by a traumatic loss or hurt, or by an elated experience you have had, or just an overwhelming flood in your heart and mind from being loved, or enjoying a wonderful lifetime of blessings. Take a moment to think about that heartfelt experience.

As you reflect upon that experience, why do you think it was, or is, difficult to share the full spectrum of moods and feelings associated with that event? Often we don't share it because we realize that few people would grasp and understand the depth and breadth of our experience. Sometimes there are just so many thoughts and feelings that come together in that event that it is difficult to share succinctly.

In Proverbs 14:10 (CBS) we read: "The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy." This passage tells us that each of us are unique, and whatever we have been through we feel on a deeply personal level. Does that mean that we should not attempt to share our perspectives or experiences with others? No, it doesn't. It means that we are complicated beings, with our own unique experiences and perceptions of events. This might be why different witnesses to the same accident, while agreeing upon the main happenings, also have differing nuances about what they saw or experienced. One's personal thoughts or moods at that moment, as well as similar memories, seem to all collide and aid the individual in interpreting what just happened.

Inevitably, when we enter the room of a newly born baby being held in its mother's arms, our emotions jump to the joy we experienced the first time we held our newborn in our arms. We are overwhelmed with what we felt. We also probably recalled our personal history of events that led up to that amazing experience, and even these are going to differ slightly from the experiences of others involved in that same occasion.

Each new experience we have is woven together by an interpretation of other similar experiences in our lives, to make a unique tapestry of our lives. Our experiences powerfully impact us in different ways and make us unique individuals. Trying to share our pain, or even our joy, with another person can be difficult. We automatically assume that they won't understand what we are really feeling. In many ways this is true, but it is also true that they have had similar experiences, so as you share they really can empathize with what you are feeling.

For this reason, some people keep their treasured experiences within themselves, believing that no one could possibly understand them the way we do. As a result, we rob the world of so much joy, because we are reluctant to share our joyful memories, let alone our painful ones. We embrace part of the line from the old spiritual: "Nobody knows, the trouble I've seen; nobody knows but Jesus." We agree that nobody knows or understands what we have gone through, so we stop there. But the song continues: "Nobody knows but Jesus!"

We need to share our experiences, when we are moved to do so. Yes, many will not understand why we are sharing it, and won't be able to understand it like we do. But it is important to express it. And if it is too deeply painful, or too gloriously inexpressible, then share it with Jesus! He knows exactly how you feel, knows all the things that shaped your understanding of your own life, and knows some things about your personal happenstance that even you don't know or realize.

Jesus is the friend above all other friends. Jesus, the one who endured the bitterness of rejection, the pain of suffering, the darkness of death, and the frustration of being misunderstood, is concerned about you and your life. Jesus, the one who created joy and laughter, delights in sharing joyful moments with you! Why not spend some time today, dialoguing with Jesus about the things you haven't shared because no one would understand? Why not talk to Jesus about the joy and delight that you experience, and the wonders of the thing or person which brought that rush of joy into your life?

Enjoy your heartfelt experiences, but when appropriate and when you are moved to do so, consider enriching someone else by sharing your treasured memories with them.

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