

**HEALING THE PAST GOD'S WAY**  
**CHAPTER 11 TEACHING NOTES**  
**MOURNING AND GRIEF: BROKEN VESSEL**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,  
2 Corinthians 1:3

Sorrow is a part of *this* world. It is a condition unleashed as a result of the Fall. Just as we noted that suffering entered this world through sin, so did sorrow. Neither will be a part of our eternity (Revelations 21:4), praise God!

As you teach on sorrow, emphasize two things: first, sorrow is neither a sin nor is it unique; and second, God uses the sorrows in our life to draw us into a deeper dependence on Him and to teach us how to grow in our relationships with others.

Sorrow is not a sin. Amazingly, some people believe or act as if they believe that something is wrong with sorrow. Remember, we are created in God's image and emotions are a part of that creation. Sorrow, tears, mourning – those are a natural and appropriate reaction to suffering, trials, loss. Sorrow can become sinful if it becomes our focus or our defense. Sorrow is an expression just as a thought is an expression. What we choose to do with it will determine if it is a blessing in our life – to express sorrow to God and receive His comfort for example – or if it is bondage, that is, something that holds us to a moment in time, for example.

Sorrow is not unique. We all experience it at different seasons in our lives. This is a great point to communicate to anyone who believes or acts as if they believe that their pain, their sorrow is greater or different than anyone else. Isolation is a danger that allows the evil one an opening in our lives.

Sorrow is an opportunity to develop a deeper intimacy, a deeper dependence on God. Just as we noted that peace is not about the circumstance but rather it is confidence in God who allows the circumstance, sorrow is not about the event that produces it but rather it is a conduit into the arms of the God who allowed the situation and who is the only resource to meet our needs for comfort. Sorrow brings with it a chance to choose focus on God or focus on self / sorrow.

Finally, sorrow is also an opportunity to grow in relationship with one another. Time and vulnerability binds our hearts together.

## **SORROW IN THE WORLD: SORROW IS A PART OF THIS LIFE:**

Jesus was called a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering in Isaiah 53 and Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet. To walk this earth is to be familiar with sorrow, pain, loss and death. Even in the Book of Revelation, we are promised, as our hope, an eternity in which there will be no more tears. Sorrow is a part of this life.

Remember my affliction and my wanderings,  
the wormwood and the gall!  
My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me.  
But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope;  
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;  
His mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.  
Lamentations 3:19 - 23

## **GOD IS OUR COMFORT: 2 Corinthians 1:3 – 7**

Sorrow has many functions. It shakes the dust and cobwebs from our routine. It heightens our joy. It sharply defines our need for a God who is greater than our pain. It invites us into a deeper, more intimate relationship with our Father. It teaches us to notice the hurting around us and to offer the only comfort we have to give – the life and hope found in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. 2 Corinthians 1:3 - 7

## **SORROW OF THE WORLD**

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to grant to those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;  
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.

Isaiah 61:1 - 3

## **MODEL FOR WORKING THROUGH SORROW IN A BIBLICAL WAY: Psalm 77**

The Scripture, in Psalm 77, relates a simple model for how one walks through a deep and abiding sorrow. In the first 9 verses, the writer honestly relates what and how he is feeling. It is not pretty or neat or tidy; it is raw and real and filled with emotion. Then, in verses 10 and 11, the writer makes a decision. He chooses to speak out the truth of who God is and what God has done. He chooses to focus his attention on the truth and the power of His Creator, Sustainer, Provider and Friend. In that recitation of fact, the Psalmist finds the ability to go on.

Each sorrow is unique and uniquely experienced. As you walk through it, remember these two steps – tell God how you feel then follow that unburdening with a proclamation of all that God has done for you and how He has forever been faithful, true, good, almighty and just. He is your comfort through every season.

If you are carrying sorrows that you have never given over to Him, remember that in Isaiah 61, He promises to comfort those who mourn. Take some time and walk through those pains, giving over to God what only He can carry.

## **ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS**

### **PROCLAIM THE TRUTH OF WHO GOD IS**

### **INVITE OTHERS INTO THE PROCESS (Ecclesiastes 4:9 – 12)**