



GRIEVING - A PROCESS NOT AN EVENT

I. GIVING PERMISSION

- a. The first thing to know is that both as a church and as an individual we must give ourselves permission to grieve. We know that Jesus wept and felt every bit of grief when his good friend Lazarus died.
- b. Grieving is a natural and normal reaction to pain and suffering.
 - I. Not all grieving looks the same.
 - II. Grieving is both individual and communal - we are not to walk through it alone but in community. God, church, family, friends etc.
 - III. Examples we offer at Northside include Celebrate Recovery, Divorce Care, Grief Share, and Advancing Through Adversity.
- c. Grieving is a process (2 years on average).
 - I. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross created the word DABDA to help remember the stages in the process.
 - II. The stages are Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance.
 - III. These stages are not chronological nor are they exhaustive.

II. SUFFERING AND PAIN: PART OF LIFE (CHRISTIAN LIFE)

- a. We know that we will suffer not only as Christians but because we are Christians and that we are to consider it joy to participate with Christ in His sufferings.
- b. We struggle with this because we detest feeling weak and powerless - recovering people; people that have pushed through the pain and suffering know - it is by surrender and acceptance that we allow Christ to do for us what we could not do for ourselves.
- c. Since God is most interested in our Character, in being like Christ, we may not always see the point to our or someone else's suffering but there is; there will be fruit in this life or in the next; God doesn't waste anything.

III. THE TAKEAWAY

- a. "It's okay to not be okay" and to admit it.
- b. Grieving is a non-linear process which looks a little different person to person.
- c. We are to share our grief, pain and suffering with our brothers and sisters and to help carry one another's burdens Galatians 6 just as Jesus invited us to share in his sufferings to be yoked with Him. Philippians 4 and Matthew 11 :29.

* OUR SUFFERING HAS PURPOSE WHEN WE ARE ROOTED IN JESUS
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