



Leading People into a Growing
Relationship with Jesus Christ!

Antioch CELEBRATION Message: "To Tell the Truth" About Sadness

Sermon Series: "To Tell the Truth: Talking Openly with God"

Dates: January 28-29, 2017

Suggested Conversation Starter (10 minutes)

What does this say about God's kindness?

For he (God) gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. **Matthew 5:45b (NLT)**

LEARN / live / love / lead (10 minutes)

Jesus taught his followers to 1) EXPECT sadness, and 2) PRAY HONESTLY to God about it!

Jesus said to his disciples, "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." **John 16:33 (NLT)**

Pray your sadness because it is safe to do so. God honors honesty!

Pray your sadness because God understands. Jesus experienced our pain!

Pray your sadness because God cares. Jesus came to give you a relationship, not a religion!

Pray your sadness because God is trustworthy. Consider David's prayers:

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help? Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer. Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. Our ancestors trusted in you, and you rescued them. They cried out to you and were saved. They trusted in you and were never disgraced. **Psalm 22:1-5 (NLT)**

The Lord is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? When evil people come to devour me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident. **Psalm 27:1-3 (NLT)**

learn / LIVE / love / lead (10 minutes)

Do you believe sadness is a sign of being unspiritual? Why or why not?

What is a prayer that you have wanted to pray, but you are not sure it is “acceptable” to God?

Prayers prayed when life is going smoothly are often focused on getting more of what we want or keeping what we enjoy secure. Prayers prayed when life is full of sorrow and uncertainty are often focused on the only real relief—God’s presence, provision, and power. Have you experienced both in your life? Which type of prayer helps you feel closer to God?

learn / live / LOVE / lead (10 minutes)

Sometimes God shows us love by relieving sadness. Other times, God shows love by remaining actively present with us through our sadness. How do both teach us to actively show love to others?

learn / live / love / LEAD (10 minutes)

The Apostle Paul had an unnamed sadness. Consider what he wrote about God’s plan:

Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. **2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (NLT)**

Strong spiritual leaders often go through great sadness. How has God shown his power through sadness in your life?

Pray! (10 minutes)

Consider praying the “Serenity Prayer” by Reinhold Niebuhr together:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is; not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.