

Study F: Facing Emotional Pain

*"There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven.
A time to weep and a time to laugh. A time to mourn and a time to dance."
Ecc. 3:1,4 NASB*

Why: Reasons for the study

- We all face emotional pain.
- Our secular culture deals with pain in two ways: get rid of it by sinful means (denial, escapes, suppression, people-pleasing, etc.) or dwell on it and allow it to control you.
- Their goal is to get rid of pain: to "feel good" or be healed, rather turn to God and His resources in the midst of pain.
- Unfortunately, some Christian counseling methods have adopted these goals.
- There is a great need to teach people to handle pain in a biblical way.

What: Principles to grasp

- You can grieve biblically or you can grieve unbiblically.
- Dangers in handling pain: dwelling on it and developing sinful responses or suppressing, denying and minimizing it in an attempt to numb ourselves to it.
- We must turn to God and His resources and not depend on our own abilities to navigate through painful circumstances.
- Though God never promises to remove us from a painful circumstance, He does promise His presence in the middle of our painful circumstances.
- God IS the healer of past pains.

How: Path to a changed life

- To face the reality of emotional pain and deal with it biblically
- To turn to God and His resources in the midst of pain rather than depending on their own approach and resources

Helpful ideas:

- Be sure to discuss the *Facing Emotional Pain* diagram – it presents key concepts.
- Ask your disciple, "Which column in the diagram best reflects your life right now?" – "Which do you want to represent your life?" (The only path from column one to column two is the path of suffering God has ordained for them.)
- Help identify which attitudes and behaviors *presently* characterize their lives.
- Explain that the *Facing Emotional Pain* diagram is an expanded description of *4 Approaches to a Problem* diagram. Approaches 1-3 are "wrong decision;" Approach 4 is "right decision."
- Assign/watch together *Four Approaches* video.

Tools and additional resources:

- Promises of God in the midst of affliction at end of lesson
- *Renewing Your Mind Outline (Renewing Your Mind)*
- *Renewing Your Mind video* (ctousa.org/media/CTO TV)
- *Steps to Releasing Fears To God (Releasing Fears)*
- *Who's in Charge?*, Study Three gives biblical reasons for emotional pain/suffering
- *Four Approaches* video (ctousa.org/media/CTO TV)