



SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact [Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:jperrin@woodlakeumc.org).

Sermon Title: | " Valley – Valley of Grief" WEEK #2

01.

INTRODUCTION: Grief hurts; it can even feel wrong. We like to push it aside or shy away. But there will be times when we live in the valley of grief. Even Jesus experienced the gamut of human emotions and when his friend Lazarus died, Jesus wept. Jesus teaches it is acceptable to grieve and it is okay to cry. Today's sermon teaches how we can grieve like Jesus; have hope in Jesus; and be transformed in our compassion for others.

02.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Pastor Josh started his sermon with reference to grief as the "uninvited guest." Grief sits with us when we want happiness and joy. Can you share a time when grief suddenly triggered sadness and sorrow?
- He described grief as "bitter-sweet", something we need to accept "as a tax on loving people" reminding us of the blessings and memories of departed loved ones. Have you experienced this "tax"? Also, discuss the differences between "positive" grief providing comfort and "negative" grief that continues to tear down and hurt.
- Pastor Josh emphasized the Jesus model for grief. In our own lives, how can we grieve like Jesus did for Lazarus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross?
- Jesus was not afraid to cry. He cried in the company of His Disciples, Mary and Martha. Pastor Josh spoke about men not doing well with crying. Why do men struggle with sharing

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emotions and how can men be encouraged to share emotion / cry in the company of close friends or family?

- Shiva is Hebrew for seven (7). Our Jewish brethren sit together, often in silence, to mourn the death of a family member or friend. Have you participated in Jewish Shiva? Or, have you sat silently with one who is grieving? Did it bring comfort to those experiencing loss? Did it bring comfort to you?



- Pastor Josh shared the image of "Rising Cairn", a sculpture by Celeste Roberge. Think about a time of burden in your life. What helped you "rise when ready from your crouching position?"
- We must learn from grief and one of those learnings is God's call to share our experience with others. How can you share your grief experience with others in a Godly manner? Is God making this call on your life now?



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NEXT STEPS:

- Grieve Like Jesus – His Model.
- Cry in (and with) company.
- Sit in Shiva.
- Use your personal grief experience in ministry to others.

Practical Steps:

- Connect with Congregational Care Ministry.
- Participate in Grief Share.
- Participate in Surviving the Holidays.