



December 3rd, 2017: LIFE OUT OF LOSS

MAIN IDEA: Our hope in the midst of pain is a person.

- What are some things that we lose throughout our lifetimes that cause us to grieve?
- Most of us respond to grief in one of two ways: denial or despair. How do you tend to respond to pain—do you tend to ignore it or feel hopeless because of it?
- [Read John 12:23-24](#). What was the comparison that Jesus drew between himself and a grain of wheat? How was his death more fruitful than his life?
- Jesus' resurrection from the dead gives us a new paradigm for grief: tragedy and loss is not the final word. What are some examples in life where loss leads to greater beginnings? How can Jesus' death and resurrection give us hope that our grief is part of a greater purpose?

APPLICATION STEP ONE: Speak with honest emotion about your pain.

- [Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12](#). What does Paul mean when he says, "we have this treasure in jars of clay"? What are some qualities of a "jar of clay"? Why would we not typically put a treasure in a jar of clay?
- What in your life makes you feel like a jar of clay? What has caused you deep pain and grief?
- Paul clearly went through a lot of physically and emotional suffering. What did clearly stating his grief allow him to do immediately after? Why do you think it's important to openly acknowledge our grief?
- What good did Paul see in his suffering? What is one way that suffering has made you a better person? What is one way that you can help others through the ways that you have grieved?

APPLICATION STEP TWO: Resist the temptations we face in the midst of grief.

- What kinds of temptations do we typically face when we are grieving? Why do you think we try to excuse inappropriate behavior when we are grieving?
- What is one temptation that you are currently facing that we can pray for?

APPLICATION STEP THREE: Run to where hope can be found.

- In this prayer time, we are going to pray for ourselves. Going around in a circle, share with God a way in which you are grieving and how you are feeling. Ask for his help to resist temptation and to see hope in the midst of the pain. If you would like, feel free to say "pass".