

Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death - Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

John 11:17-27, 32-44, 53

Have you ever tried to help someone see a harsh _____ that would help them avoid pain or suffering? Have you ever just sat with someone in their _____ because that was the only thing to do? How do you determine which approach is _____? How do you know what to _____ and when, if you say anything at all? How do you even find yourself in a _____ where you CAN offer your support or advice?

The answer is _____. To further the mission of God we must be available to develop relationships. In fact, life is almost ENTIRELY about relationships. No matter how much you may have, if you have trouble with the relationships that matter most to you, you will be _____. Relationships are EVERYTHING.

That's why the Open ARMS book is all about relationships! And the _____! God himself embodies this too!

Relationships require PROXIMITY and _____ to build _____ where TRUTH is not _____ or IGNORED but WELCOMED and _____. *Truth moves at the speed of relationships.*

Jesus is summoned to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus because they were close _____. So, close they could express _____, _____ and immense _____ in Jesus' presence. They were beyond politeness.

Jesus knows them well enough that he doesn't respond to them the _____ way. He knows they each need something _____. He also _____ enough about them to communicate effectively. Martha gets the truth. Mary gets tears. Both receive the resurrection and the life Jesus offers.

Truth without compassion is _____. Compassion without truth is _____ and _____. Jesus unites them together perfectly here...and on _____. Hard truth and immense compassion is Christ's M.O.!

"_____" Christians lean into love and compassion, but often at the expense of _____.

"_____" Christians lean into truth, but often neglect the _____ which opens hearts to it.

Jesus is neither, so the valley neither distracts him from his mission of truth nor diminishes his compassion.

If we never ___ with people in their grief and suffering, we can't expect them to _____ to our truth telling. If we only sit with people in their suffering and never share the truth our help is only _____.

The Jesus who raises the _____ compels us to trust his life and teaching as authoritative truth that must be shared. The Jesus who _____ alongside a family in grief compels us to smother the truth in love and patience.

Are you more of a truth teller or someone who shares tears? Which is more natural?

Where is the Spirit revealing a need to supplement tears with truth or truth with tears?

What opportunities is God providing to develop stronger relationships?

What strong relationships could grow stronger with a little more truth?

What are you going to DO about it?