

World Orphans and Together for Adoption Gospel Hope in a Hopeless World

Thursday August 23, 12 - Laying a Gospel-centered Biblical Foundation

9:00– 9:30: Welcome (Scott Vair) - Devotion

9:30–10:00: Worship

10:00–10:45: Session 1 – Created for Delight (Dan Cruver)

11:00–11:45: Session 2 – Created for Delight (Dan Cruver)

12:00–1:00: Lunch

1:00–1:45: Session 3 – Weary and Heavy Laden (Dan Cruver)

2:00–2:45: Session 4 – Jesus for the Bruised and Broken (Dan Cruver)

- (Q and A – Small group processing/prayer)

2:45-3:15: Coffee Break

3:15–3:45: Session 5 - Biblical View of Orphans and Adoption (Scott Vair)

- A deeper understanding of God
- A deeper understanding of orphans

4:00–4:45: Session 6 - Biblical View of Orphans and Adoption (Scott Vair)

- A deeper understanding of adoption
- A deeper understanding of following Christ

Friday August 24,12 - Loved to love - blessed to bless - graced to grace

9:00– 9:30: Welcome (Scott Vair) - Devotion

9:30–10:00: Worship

10:00–10:45: Session 7 - Our Calling to Care for Orphans (Scott Vair)

- God commands us as followers of Christ to care for the orphan
- Love compels us to care for orphans: The importance of doing the right things for the right reasons

11:00 – 11:45: Session 8 - Our Calling to Care for Orphans (Scott Vair)

- Love must be focused on the Gospel of Christ
- Why the church?

12:00 – 1:00 - Lunch

1:00–1:45: Session 9 - Finding Rest Each Day in Jesus (Dan Cruver)

2:00–2:45: Session 10 - Evil and the Healing Power of God's Love (Dan Cruver)

2:45-3:15: Coffee Break

3:00–3:45: Session 11 - Christian Microenterprise Development (Jeremy Resmer)
4:00–4:45: Session 12 - Christian Microenterprise Development (Jeremy Resmer)

Saturday August 25, 12 – Grace-filled Holistic Care

9:00–9:30: Welcome (Scott Vair) - Devotion
9:30–10:00: Worship

10:00-10:45: Session 13 - Biblical Foundation for Holistic Care (Kathy Davis)
• Grace-filled Communication/Active Listening

11:00 – 11:45: Session 14 - Grace-filled Instruction and Discipline (Kathy Davis)

12:00 – 1:00: Lunch

1:00 – 1:45: Session 15 – A Child’s World in the World of Adults (Frank Chavarria Diaz and Jeannette Silva Bravo)

- Small group processing

2:15 – 3:00: Session 16 - Serving Each Day in the Blessing (Dan Cruver)

Closing - Communion

Created for Delight

(Part 1)

Genesis 1:27-31

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”

Introduction:

I. God is a God Who Blesses

A. What kind of tone do we hear in Genesis 1:27-31?

B. What comes with God's blessing?

1. A command

2. A provision

3. A rhythm

C. What does this mean for you?

1. You are here on purpose!

2. You have been claimed!

3. God wants to be with you!

Jesus for the Bruised and Broken

Luke 1:26-38 and Matthew 1:23

“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!’ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’

And Mary said to the angel, ‘How will this be, since I am a virgin?’ And the angel answered her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.”

Luke 1:26-38

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us).” Matthew 1:23

I. God Comes to Mary

A. The Miracle of the Virgin Birth

B. The Miracle of the New Birth

II. God Comes to Us

A. God's Self-Giving Love

B. God's Hope-Giving Love

Jesus' Wounds for Us

Weary and Heavy Laden

Matthew 11:28

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

I. Why is Life So Hard?

A. The Way Things Were Before the Fall

B. The Way Things Are After the Fall

1. Blessing Became Curse

A Biblical View of Orphans and Adoption

(Part 1)

The Great Commission, to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28), and the Great Commandment, to love God with our whole being (Luke 10), are fulfilled through the church, so it is our desire to help churches and individuals understand and apply God's word and to express His love to the people in their communities. We believe that caring for the orphan and needy is a reflection of God's grace and love toward us.

To better understand a Biblical view of orphan care, we must first try to see things the way God sees them, not the way man sees.

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF GOD

In order for us to have a proper view of orphan care ministry, we must first understand the character of God.

Discussion Question:

What is God like?

- **God is Creator**
- **God is Love**
- **God is Compassionate**
- **God is Just**
- **God is All-Sufficient**
- **God is our Father**
- **God is our Redeemer**
- **God Cares for the Orphan**

The more we understand God and His character, the more we understand that orphan care is not a duty or obligation that we must do.

- It is a privilege.
- It is a calling.
- It is an opportunity for us to become more like Christ and to glorify God, which is the purpose of our life.
- We love because He first loved us.

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF ORPHANS

Discussion Question:

What do you think of when you hear the word “*orphan*”?

We are orphans in need of adoption

In the beginning, man was created in the image of God and with relationship to the father in the garden. After the fall, the image of God in us was marred by sin. We are now born as “children of wrath” and “sons of disobedience,” separated from our Father God because of sin. We are like an abandoned and orphaned child desperately in need of rescuing, hope, love and care. Those without a relationship to our Heavenly Father through His son Jesus are true orphans for eternity.

- **Ephesians 2:1-5**
- **Romans 3:23, 6:23**

When we better understand what we are like without God’s grace and forgiveness through Christ, it should change our passion for God and for those who are lost.

- **Psalm 103:2-4**

Biblical View of Orphans and Adoption

(Part 2)

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF ADOPTION

Discussion Question:

What do you think about when you hear the word “*adoption*”?

We usually think of adoption as a man taking a fatherless child into his home to be a part of his family. Adoption is not an idea of man, but originally an act of God. Adoption goes back before the beginning of creation. Before He created the world, God predestined us for adoption into His family for eternity.

- **Ephesians 1:4-5**

Although we are all born into the world separated from God by sin, God through His love and great mercy, chose to make a way through adoption to bring us back into His family through the sacrifice, death and resurrection of His only son. Our adoption as sons and daughters of God should motivate our calling to care for orphans.

- **Ephesians 2:8-9**
- **1 John 3:1a**

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF FOLLOWING CHRIST

Discussion Question:

What does it mean to follow Christ?

We are saved by grace through faith and not by works. Because we are saved, we are continually being transformed to the new life that Christ has given us. God, through Christ, created us for good works done in love to others. When God adopts us, we are given a new nature. With that new nature comes a new calling – to become conformed to the image and likeness of Christ. If we say we abide in Him, then we are to walk the way He walked.

- **Ephesians 2:10**
- **John 13:34-35**

Our Calling to Care for Orphans

WHY CARE FOR THE ORPHAN?

Discussion Question:

Why should we care for the orphan and widow?

We may often believe that orphan care or adoption is a “special” calling for certain individuals. However, throughout scripture, God commands all of His people to care for the orphan, widow, poor, alien, and stranger. God shows compassion and love to us and calls us to love others as He has loved us.

1. God commands us as followers of Christ to care for the orphan

God instructs us as individuals and the church collectively to “Learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow”. (*Isaiah 1:17*)

Deuteronomy 10:18-19 - He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. So, show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

James 1:27 – Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Although the command of God should be enough for us, we must understand that God gives us commands to follow because He loves us. God does not need us to care for the orphans. He knows what is best for us and His goal is to transform us into the likeness of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 - Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

When we visit and care for orphans, God works *through us* to show love to our neighbors, while at the same time, He works *in us* so we might be transformed into the image of Christ.

Philippians 2:1-8 – Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of

others. Have this attitude in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

2. Love compels us to care for orphans: the importance of doing the right things for the right reasons

God models love and care for the orphan and the widow. We, as His adopted children who are made in His image, should desire to follow His example.

Psalm 68:5 – Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in His Holy habitation.

Caring for those in need should be motivated by love; not guilt, duty, or obligation.

1 Corinthians 13:3 - And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

1 John 4:7-12 - Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this, the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

God saved us by His grace so that we would bring glory to Him. His great love for us should compel us to love others. One way we can do this is to be Christ's ambassadors as we visit orphans in their afflictions.

3. Love must be focused on the Gospel of Jesus Christ

As Christians, orphan care must focus on the gospel. There are many good NGO's that give food, clothing and school fees to children in need. But we believe there is so much more to orphan care than just meeting physical needs.

Our response to the Great Commandment to love God and love others should compel us to live out the Great Commission – making disciples. If we truly love others, we will want them to know and follow Jesus.

Caring for orphans is an opportunity to share Christ's love and spread the gospel. All who do not know Jesus are spiritual orphans who will be separated from their Father God for eternity.

John 14:18 – I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

WHY THE CHURCH?

God has ordained the church as the light of the Gospel and the instrument of love and compassion to the world.

“...so that ***through the church*** the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.” **Ephesians 3:10**

God has equipped the church with every resource necessary, and every gift needed, to meet the physical and spiritual needs of His people

God shows us a model for the church in the book of Acts. They gathered together for teaching, preaching, worship, prayer, fellowship and meeting each other's needs.

Acts 2:42-47 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

God equips the body of Christ, the church, with every resource and every gift needed to meet the spiritual and physical needs of His people. We are responsible to be good stewards of the gifts he has given us. We all have various gifts and all the gifts are needed.

Romans 12:4-8 - For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:12-28 - For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Discussion Questions:

What spiritual gift(s) has God given you? Are you using them to build up the body of Christ?

HOW TO CARE FOR ORPHANS

Caring for the orphan should be holistic.

James 2:14-17 - What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself.

1 John 3:16-18 - We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Matthew 4:4 - But Jesus answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Jesus' compassion was for their whole being.

Matthew 9 - And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Pray about it

- Pray individually
 - Pray corporately as a church
 - Pray for the harvest
 - Pray for the “laborers”
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Preach about it

- Preach often about orphan care
- Preach passionately - show excitement for the ministry

Themes and related passages to consider using:

- God’s heart for the orphan – Deut. 10; Isaiah 1; James 1
 - Being doers of the word – James 1
 - Our Spiritual Adoption – Ephesians 1 and 2
 - Spiritual Gifts and serving the body of Christ - Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12
 - Great Commission and Great Commandment – Matthew 28, Matthew 22: 36-40
 - Contentment and Generosity – Matthew 6; 1 Timothy 6
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Plan it

- Incorporate other ministries in the outworking of care for the orphan and needy in the community.
 - Engage with other churches or groups to find ways to do this regularly.
 - Plan for meeting physical and spiritual needs.
 - Teach about and develop spiritual gifts within the church and encourage people to use these gifts to accomplish the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.
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Finding Rest Each Day in Jesus

Matthew 11:25-30

“At that time Jesus declared, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

I. Jesus Knows that You are Burdened

A. We are Burdened by Daily Life

B. We are Burdened by What is Required of Us

II. Jesus' Yoke Eases Our Burden

A. Jesus Speaks to Us

B. Jesus has Come to Us

Christian Microenterprise Development (CMED)

I. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 1:27-31

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Stewardship – refers to a person who oversees, administers and preserves another's property or financial affairs

- Creativity
- Work
- Authority
- Protection

2 Thessalonians 3:6-10

“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat’.”

Ephesians 4:28

“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.”

II. SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL POVERTY

The Poverty Pyramid

Entrepreneurial
poor

Live on slightly less than \$2 a day. Benefit from loans and often create additional jobs.

Self-employed poor

Meet their basic needs by running small businesses. Regular source of income, but it is not enough to meet the family's daily needs.

Laboring poor

Farm laborers, domestics, and casual low-skill workers who often live on the brink of destitution. They do not have a regular, stable source of income.

Ultra poor

Own few, if any, assets and limited opportunities to earn money, often surviving by scavenging and begging.

These 4 levels of material poverty represent **46% of the world's population**, or **2.8 billion people** that survive on less than \$2 a day.

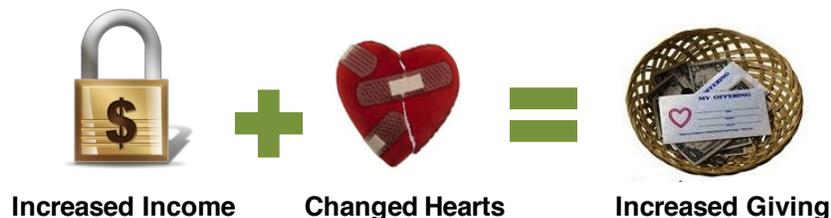
Source: www.un.org

III. A HAND UP, NOT A HANDOUT

“The church’s mission is to simultaneously alleviate physical and spiritual poverty” – Phil Smith

Employment and economic development (with a clear presentation of the gospel), not handouts, are the most effective and lasting ways of addressing physical and spiritual poverty.

- A. All humans have the RIGHT and DUTY to work
 - 1. Through work (enterprise), we use our divinely given abilities to creatively participate with God in the development of the community
 - 2. Become fruitful and part of the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God
- B. Christ offers the poor a new identity
 - 1. The only real solution to the fundamental causes of poverty
 - 2. As free, responsible beings with dignity and self-worth
 - 3. Able to serve God and others in society as God intended
- C. Local Church
 - 1. The best distribution system
 - 2. Help the poor help themselves



IV. MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

“The church is the best distribution center in the world” – Phil Smith

Microenterprise works to provide funds, training and education to poor and disadvantaged groups so that they can eventually become self-sufficient. Christian microenterprise development provides even more than solutions for the poor that go beyond physical and emotional needs; it provides the gospel.

- Business, financial, and job training
- Micro-finance loans
- Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA)
- Savings and Internal Lending (SAIL) Group
- Micro-insurance
- Micro-pharmacies
- Micro-schools
- Housing improvement loans
- Agricultural finance
- Clean water

V. MEASURING SUCCESS: TRANSFORMATION

“For the people earning a dollar a day, a second dollar can make a world of difference” – Peter Greer

1. Shared vision
2. Leadership
3. Ownership
4. Cooperation
5. Volunteers
6. Dignity
7. Learning, Skill, and Resources
8. Christian Community and Witness
9. Multiplication
10. Accountability

Visitations

An Expression of Grace

The Biblical Foundation

We are saved by grace to do good works. Love comes from God, by His grace, which empowers us to love others. The greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbors.

- We are saved by grace through faith; this is a gift from God so that no one can boast. We are created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which were prepared in advance for us to do. (*Ephesians 2:8-10*)
- We are commanded to love one another. This love comes from God and we love, because God first loved us. (*1John 4:7-19*)
- The Great Commandment tells us that we are to Love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and love our neighbor as ourselves. (*Matthew 22:34-40*)
- The Great Commission tells us that we are to go and make disciples; teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded. (*Matthew 28:16-20*)
- James tells us that we are to visit orphans and widows in their distress. (*James 1:27*)

The Concept

God has graciously chosen to use us in an amazing way – to express His love for creation through our love of His children. Caring for children is an awesome privilege.

- Making disciples (teaching them the ways of the gospel), and visiting orphans and widows are expressions of our love for God and our neighbors. They are expressions of God's grace.

The Importance

It is important that we minister out of God's strength, not our own.

- If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him, be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (*1 Peter 4:11*)

Sometimes our involvement in ministry can come from a misguided motivation. It can come from a sense of legalism; it can simply be a “job.” It can be a way for us to try and earn God’s favor and earn God’s grace.

- Our involvement in ministry should be in response to the grace that has been given to us through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- We are empowered by God’s grace to do good works and we do not do good works to earn His grace.
- We are involved in ministry because He loves us, not so that He will love us.

Because God loves us and because He has shown us such amazing grace, we visit and care for orphaned and vulnerable children. This love shows the children that God also loves them. In caring for orphans, we seek to meet their spiritual, emotional, physical and mental developmental needs.

Spiritual and Emotional Elements of Visitation

As a practical expression of the Gospel, we visit children and their caregivers, first and foremost, to display our love for them. This is an expression of the love we have received in Christ.

The goals of visitation are:

- To be more than just ‘a visit.’
- Promote a sense of compassion, love, belonging, and the reality that these families truly matter.
- Demonstrate loving care and allow for ongoing conversations about who the children and their families are in Christ.
- Make meaningful connections with people in deeper relational ways with the hope that they will be drawn closer to one another and closer to Christ.

Spiritual Development:

Families who are visited may or may not be believers in Jesus Christ. Visitations are a form of outreach, evangelism, mentorship, and discipleship.

Visits should:

- Encourage regular church attendance.
- Look for opportunities to share the Gospel with non-believing parents.
- Seek active discipleship in an effort to promote the growth of children (and caregivers) in their understanding of, trust in, and love for God.
- Seek to have the Gospel shared with children in a clear way.
- Encourage families to teach the whole Bible with daily application and foster reliance upon God through regular prayer.

Emotional Development:

There can be long-lasting negative impacts from severe trauma and loss experienced by children. The long-term impact of these experiences can be increased by not having an opportunity to share those experiences in a loving environment.

- Ongoing care is a key component to the home visitation strategy.
- Only when trusted relationships are formed will children feel free to share their experiences and begin to experience healing.

Application - Discussion Question:

What are some ways that you can display the love of Christ to children during visitations?

1. Visitation – A Platform for Ministry

Churches are constantly looking for opportunities to meet with children and families in relational ways that allow for open and honest communication about the Gospel and the hope that is found in Jesus Christ. This is particularly true for children and families from hard places that have endured much suffering, trial, and tribulation.

Visitations provide a wonderful opportunity to go and sit in someone’s home twice a month – to share the Good News of the Gospel and mentor a way of life and worldview that is different than the culture they live in.

As we continue to make visits and consistently show that we care about the children and their families (often in a way that they are not used to), relationships are formed and trust is built. The story we have to share has more significance when we first share the Gospel with our actions and then share it with our words.

For the families that God has already graciously given believing hearts, we have the opportunity through trusted relationships, to mentor and disciple families as they continue their walks with the Lord.

Visitations provide a great ministry to involve other groups from within the church.

- Men’s ministry can organize outreach events aimed at serving vulnerable families. For example, the Men’s ministry could go and visit to repair the roof or other needs around the house.
- Women’s ministry can plan discipleship events geared towards engaging single mothers. For example, the Women’s ministry or individual families in the church can fix a meal or go to help around the house for the sick widow/single mother.

- Youth ministry can participate in visiting others and giving them an opportunity to learn and grow as they serve others.
- Children’s ministry workers can encourage the children and fellowship with the family.
- An evangelist can go with a visitation team to look for specific opportunities to share the Gospel.
- Prayer ministry can have times of prayer for the specific orphans, families, those in their community, or go on visits to pray in their homes.
- Special offerings can be gathered for those who are most needy in the community and congregation as they did in the early church.

Discussion Question:

What are some ways other ministries within your church can participate in visiting others?

2. Practical Tips for Visiting

- Feel comfortable, relaxed, and confident in visiting - what you are doing is important and it matters.
- Your mannerisms and your attitude are very important.
- Ask open-ended questions. You will learn more this way than if you simply ask ‘yes or no’ questions.
- Listen more than you talk.
- Try to build a relationship and rapport for future visits.
- Start with some of the practical reasons for the visit, moving to the spiritual and emotional objectives as relationships are formed.
- Offer to say a prayer for the family as you leave the home.
- Ask if it’s ok to pray with them. Ask for specific things to pray about or just pray for blessing over the family.
- “How we do, matters as much as, what we do” *Francis Schaefer – True Spirituality*

Other Resources for Visitation:

1. **My Hope Children’s Book:** The *My Hope Children’s Book* is designed to be used in the relational setting of visiting others. This is a practical tool to help the children begin to talk about their feelings and experiences.
2. **Short-Term Team Visits:** During short-term trips, we encourage church members and the short-term team members to visit homes together. We have found that the children and their families are tremendously encouraged by visits from short-term teams. Remember, we visit the children and their caregivers, first and foremost, to display our love for them - an expression of the love we have received in Christ.

Biblical Foundation for Grace-filled Holistic Care

Grace comes from God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ

We call our approach to engaging children throughout our Holistic Care materials 'grace-filled.' We use this term to talk about our care for others, especially children. God has shown grace to us in Jesus Christ so our role as followers of Jesus is to point people to Him and reflect His grace in our interactions with everyone, specifically as we care for children.

- **John 1:17** – For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- **Ephesians 1:5-6a** – In love He predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will and to the praise of His glorious grace.
- **Ephesians 2: 8-9** – It is by grace you have been saved through faith, this is not of your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast.

We are ministers of grace and our continued growth is important

As we communicate, counsel and coach children, we desire to grow in our understanding of the grace we have received from God and rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit to minister His grace to others.

- **Ephesians 3:7** – Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given to me by the working of His power.
- **2 Peter 3:18** – But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.
- **2 Corinthians 8:7** – But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you – see that you excel in this act of grace also.

Grace-filled ministry involves our speech and actions

Our speech and actions toward the children in our care help them see and hear the grace of God in Christ. Talking about how to apply the following scriptures to childcare will guide our interactions with edifying speech and effective listening.

- **Ephesians 4:29** – Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.
- Gentle correction for wrong behavior is loving and gracious. Words in communication should be kind and truthful.
- **Colossians 4:6** – Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
- **James 1:19** – Know this my beloved brothers; let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

Grace-filled Communication

The Concept:

Grace: Extending love through Christ that does not have to be earned and does not end. (John 1:17)

Communication: Verbal and nonverbal interactions that reflect and give God's grace in our care for others. (Ephesians 3:7)

Grace-filled communication: Interactions that seek to grow and advance an individual toward finding help and hope in Christ through: prayer, active listening, encouragement, biblical instruction and forgiveness for the glory of God and the benefit of the individual. (Ephesians 4:29)

The Importance:

Grace-filled communication combines God's grace with intentional instruction. Through grace-filled communication, an individual has the ability to guide another person beyond their fears, doubts and past experiences by encouraging them in truth, hope and help that are found in the Gospel of Christ. A grace-filled communicator consistently uses words and actions that benefit the individual and glorifies God. (2 Peter 3:18)

1. **Recognize** the need for grace

A grace-filled communicator consistently attempts to find ways to encourage the hearts of others.

Hebrews 4:15,16 – For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

2. **Identify** the real source of the issue, discover what is in the heart and listen in a way that is helpful and healing.

James 1:19 - Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

Active listening

- An active listener focuses their full attention on what is being said

- Active listening helps to establish trust in the relationship. Active listening allows one to look beyond what is seen on the surface in an effort to identify the true nature of what is in the heart.

Observe - The way a person acts when they speak can tell a listener as much, if not more, about the speaker's feelings than actual words.

Discover – Be curious about what is being communicated and ask additional questions.

Repeat – Seek to understand by summarizing and restating what has already been spoken.

Notice - Nonverbal communications:

- Body language
- Tone of voice
- Eye contact
- Attitude
- Facial expressions

Every person comes into a conversation distracted by his or her own thoughts, ideas and surroundings. These distractions are called barriers (walls). When physical and emotional barriers (walls) are identified before they become distractions, the individual can be engaged more fully.

- **Common physical barriers:**

- Noises
- Visual distractions
- Tone of voice

- **Common emotional barriers:**

- Thoughts and feelings
- The person's attitude
- Past experiences

Discussion Questions:

What are some different emotions that get communicated through body language?

Identify possible barriers (walls) that prevent active listening and discuss how you can work towards breaking down barriers to promote effective listening.

3. **Encourage** reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit for guidance through prayer and the application of God's word.

- **Romans 8:26** - Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14** – Encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all...the grace of our Lord be with you.
- **Romans 15:4** – For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus that together you may with one voice glorify the God of Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **2 Corinthians 1:9-11** - Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. You also much help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:14-16** – And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

There is an undeniable truth that everyone who loves a child from hard places must remember: the past affects the future...but it does not have to determine it. It is this foundational truth, and a steadfast faith in and dependence on the One who delights in redeeming and restoring the brokenness of this world that we pray will sustain and offer you lasting hope as you travel to the mountaintops and through the valleys of this journey – Dr. Karyn Purvis

Discussion Question:

What is the importance of helping others depend and rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit?

4. **Instruct** and pray through matters of forgiveness.

It is important to be willing to model repentance as well as to lead others to a place of confession.

- **1 John 1:9** - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It is our desire as we communicate, to guide others in finding their greatest *help* and *hope* in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- **Psalm 32: 8** – I will *instruct* you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

Discussion Questions:

What are ways to encourage prayer and forgiveness in our communication with one another?

Why is it important for a child to see their need for forgiveness? How can we model that for them?

Grace-filled Instruction and Discipline

The Concept:

Grace: Extending love through Christ that does not have to be earned and does not end. (John 1:17)

Instruction and Discipline: Forming and directing a child's heart through the impression of biblical truth and corrective discipline that reflects God's grace. (Ephesians 3:7)

Grace-filled Instruction and Discipline: Loving care and biblical instruction that uses corrective discipline and intentional nurture. When orphaned children have been shaped by loss and grief, biblical instruction and corrective discipline seek to help children see and rely upon the forgiving, transforming, empowering grace of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:29)

The Importance:

Gracious biblical instruction and loving discipline that are empowered by the Holy Spirit:

- Provides caretakers the opportunity to shepherd children's hearts as well as correct misbehavior.
- Requires words and actions that benefit the child and glorify God.
- Allows those caring for children to point them to the greatest joy they can experience – delighting in their heavenly Father and the greatness of His ways. (2 Peter 3:18)

1. **Recognize** the need for grace and listen in a way that is helpful.

Only God's grace can change the heart. Everything we need, empowered by the Holy Spirit is found in the Gospel of Christ: forgiveness, cleansing, internal change, and empowerment. The more fully children understand what is in their hearts; the more profoundly they will understand their need for grace.

- **Romans 3:23,24** – For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Children who have lost parents often feel alone, withdraw, and misbehave. There are times when children negatively act out of sorrow, trauma, fear or grief.

"It is often difficult, sometimes seemingly impossible, to see beyond our children's behaviors. And yet, that is exactly what children – particularly those from hard places – need for us to do. Our children desperately need parents who can see beyond their behaviors to the real child that is locked inside a fortress of fear, confusion and shame." Dr. Karyn Purvis

- **Psalm 27:10** – For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in.
- **Hebrews 13:5b-6** – I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

Discussion Question:

Why is it important for us to understand that we are all in need of grace?

What are ways that help us recognize a child’s need for grace?

2. **Identify** the real source of the issue and listen in a way that helps the child understand what is in his heart.

The Bible ascribes reasoning and thinking to the heart because the heart is the center of one’s being. The heart is where we think, grieve, rejoice, love, hate, desire, fear, pray, and so forth.

- **Proverbs 4:23** – Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Children’s needs are the same as our needs. Wounded children will have a tendency to misbehave and wound others out of the pain they have experienced.

- **Ezekiel 36:25, 26** - I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols, I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

The Lord looks at the heart. Often, a great deal of time is devoted to the outer man, but God is concerned with the heart. Children will not interpret life correctly until they understand that it is the heart that directs all of life.

- **1 Samuel 16:7** – Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.
- **Mark 7:21-23** – For from within, out of men’s hearts (children’s), come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly.
- **Luke 6:45** – The good man (child) brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man (child) brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Obedience and worship come from the heart.

- **Deuteronomy 10:12** – And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
 - Moses asks a great question:
 - What does God want from us?
 - God wants wholehearted devotion to Him.

The heart is greatly emphasized in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for acts of performance that appeared to be righteous because He is concerned with the heart.

- **Matthew 5:8** – Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
- **Matthew 6:21** – For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- **Matthew 15:8-9** – These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.

Discussion Question:

Why is it important to understand what is going on in the heart of a child?

3. **Discipline** and correct misbehavior with grace and love.

God's correction is better than that of an earthly father. The act of discipline is not the main content of God's fatherly teaching. Disciplining children seeks to shape the will through loving nurture and training.

- **Hebrews 12:6,7** – It's the child he loves that he disciplines; the child he embraces, he also corrects.

Those caring for orphaned children are entrusted with the minds, feelings, and bodies of tender lives who bear the divine image of God. Children do not exist for parents but parents exist for children – to help them come into their own personhood before God.

- **Ephesians 6:4** – Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Every parent (caretaker) needs to answer the fundamental question 'what is my primary goal?' ... Is it merely to achieve good or right behavior? If our primary goal is to build a strong and healthy relationship – a connection with our children that serves as a strong foundation and enables them to develop trust, heal from past wounds and experience a deep sense of felt safety, self-worth and empowerment – then our approach and interactions will likely look different. I believe this is God's goal for us – that we grow deeper in our relationship with Him (Matthew 22:37) and from that our desire, thoughts and actions begin to reflect the character of

His Son. The key, therefore, is to not allow your child's bad behavior to distract you from building this foundation that will allow true healing and growth to occur." Dr. Karyn Purvis

Discussion Question:

What do you find most challenging in bringing gracious discipline to the children within your care?

What is the primary goal of discipline?

4. **Encourage** reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit for guidance through prayer and the application of God's word.

- **Romans 8:26** - Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
- **Luke 11:11** – What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!
- **2 Corinthians 1:3** – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Discussion Question:

What are ways that you can encourage reliance on the Holy Spirit for the children within your care?

5. **Instruct** and pray through matters of forgiveness

The goal of instructive discipline is restoration. It may be tempting to respond to a child's behavior with anger and impatience, but children need restoration. They need to know that there is grace, forgiveness, and mercy for those who turn to Christ.

- **1 John 1:9** - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Galatians 6 is a call to humility. Have the children been unkind, unwilling, angry, deceitful or prideful? Adults have struggles in these sins, as well. Through the process of restoration, we have the wonderful opportunity to stand alongside the children within our care and identify with their failures as we seek to point them to the powerful Savior to forgive our sin.

- **Galatians 6:1,2** – Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Discussion Question:

Knowing that we are all in need of forgiveness, what do you find most effective in leading a child to confess sin and forgive others?

Grace-filled Counseling

The Concept:

Grace: Extending love through Christ that does not have to be earned and does not end. (John 1:17)

Counseling: Guidance that encourages and helps individuals identify and freely share their thoughts and feelings with the goal of finding their hope and help in Christ. (Ephesians 3:7)

Grace-filled counseling: Gracious guidance that encourages individuals to identify and freely share their thoughts and feelings. Those caring for children must be trustworthy and willing to guide the process through love that is unearned and limitless for the glory of God and the benefit of the individual. (Ephesians 4:29)

The Importance:

Using grace-filled communication in counseling is more effective than communicating through criticism.

- It is important to encourage individuals with the truth that they are loved by their heavenly Father and are His delight.
- This process can lead to lasting change and long-term benefits.
- A grace-filled counselor should take the role of a helper, not just an authority figure, always remembering to counsel the individual toward grace and truth in Christ.

1. **Recognize** the individual's need for grace

The challenges, problems and pain that our children face are real, and as a result, they affect us as parents as well. These challenges impact the whole child; and therefore, we must be willing to engage and embrace our children (and ourselves!) holistically. At the same time, we must always remember there are no quick fixes—merely changing behaviors will not accomplish what is needed. Our goal must be nothing less than healing for the whole child. Much like our own journey of spiritual healing and maturity, the healing we desire for our children will be a process, and it must be anchored by hope—real hope. Dr. Karyn Purvis

- **Hebrews 4: 15,16** – For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- **Psalms 18:19** – He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

Discussion Questions:

What are examples that come to mind where a child is struggling or misbehaving that cause you to recognize their hurt and need for grace-filled counseling?

What does it look like to see healing for the whole child, and not just a change in behavior?

1. **Identify** the real source of the issue, interact with compassion, and listen in a way that is helpful and healing.

- **James 1:19** - Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

We must be willing to approach our children with genuine compassion, both for their histories as well as the challenges they are still facing. As we lead our children along the journey toward healing, this compassion must always be our touchstone. That is not to say that our children do not need appropriate levels and expressions of structure and correction—they most certainly do. But we must never forget that our children need this structure and correction expressed compassionately, in ways they can understand and in ways that promote lasting healing and connection. Dr. Karyn Purvis

- **Colossians 3:12** – Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Discussion Questions:

What is helpful to think about when showing compassion to the children within your care?

What are things that make it difficult to show compassion to the children within your care?

2. **Encourage** reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit for guidance through prayer and the application of God’s word.

- **Romans 8:26** - Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

As we begin to understand the loss and pain of children within our care, we have the opportunity to put our compassion into action and help bring them with much needed encouragement, hope and healing through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is this kind of compassion that will help children more fully realize their God-given worth and value that was previously hidden by the pain, confusion and frustration from their difficult past.

- **Hebrews 10:23-25** – Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:11** – Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:14** – And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

Discussion Question:

What are ways that we can encourage children who have come from hard places move forward and begin to realize their God-given potential?

3. **Instruct** and pray in matters of forgiveness

- **1 John 1:9** – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Kids will stumble and fall frequently thereby providing us with ample opportunities to correct, teach, and forgive. The truth is that we as parents will do the same, providing our Heavenly Father with no shortage of opportunities to correct, teach and forgive us. Just as God does with His children, we need to proactively plan and prepare to help our children succeed, and we need to be sure to praise them when they do. Dr. Karyn Purvis

- **Colossians 3:12** – Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Discussion Questions:

Discuss with one another ways that you help children understand the importance of forgiveness from their own sin and the sin of others committed against them.

What is an example of planning and preparing to help children succeed and then praising them when they do?

Dealing with Trauma

The Concept:

Trauma is what happens when a person experiences or observes a difficult, hurtful or damaging event.

We will talk about traumatic experiences using four categories (groups):

1. **Persecution**: rape, exploitation, kidnapping, trafficking
2. **Experiencing the loss of**: home, parents, family, security, basic needs
3. **Family problems**: addictions, poverty, abandonment, abuse
4. **Natural disasters**: earthquakes, floods, fires, storms, tornados

The Importance:

People respond to trauma many different ways. Understanding these responses can help individuals take the first steps toward dealing with a traumatic experience.

Some of the responses are:

- Choosing not to talk about the trauma by turning their feelings inward.
- Reverting to early childhood behavior (mainly children). Example: Acting or talking like a baby.

- Using aggressive behavior. Example: Fighting with other children or showing disrespect to authority.
- Getting involved in harmful or dangerous activities with friends and/or using drugs, and/or alcohol.

When individuals have experienced trauma, they are left feeling vulnerable and defenseless because they are unable to change themselves or their circumstances.

Application Steps:

1. **Identify** Symptoms

Some individuals who experience trauma will display noticeable, outward symptoms while others may not show their feelings.

Noticeable/Outward Symptoms:

- **Aggressive behavior** - punching, kicking, throwing objects, yelling
- **Regressive behavior** – bed-wetting, baby talk, the need to constantly be near another individual
- **Physical reactions** - weight loss, stomach problems, headaches, loss of appetite, fatigue

Hidden symptoms:

- Acts like nothing is wrong
- Claim to have no sense of sadness, fear or negative feelings
- Does not want help from others

2. **Encourage** communication

Using the Faces sheet, a journal, leading questions or story telling, encourage the child to communicate their experience.

Discuss how to best communicate with children through some of the methods listed above.

Additional Application

Grief in Trauma

When working with individuals who have endured loss it's important to understand there is a grieving process that takes place. When a caretaker understands the process, they are able to relate to the individual and help facilitate their healing.

Five stages of grief:

1. Denial - There is the tendency to deny the loss took place and to act as if it never happened.
2. Anger - The grieving person may become upset and angry at the world, other people who may have been involved, or at themselves for allowing the pain and loss to take place.
3. Negotiating - The grieving person may try to negotiate or bargain with God asking, "If I do this, will you...?"
4. Depression - The person who suffered the loss may have little desire to get out of bed in the morning. They may have times of uncontrollable crying or want little or no social interaction.
5. Acceptance - A person may still feel the loss, but they have accepted its reality. Through acceptance, the individual can find peace.

Additional symptoms of grief:

- Physical pain such as stomach aches or headaches
- Sleeping problems, bad dreams
- Eating problems, eating too much or too little
- Being destructive
- Acting like a younger child
- Angry play or playing the same thing over and over
- Not being able to concentrate
- Problems with school work
- Being easily upset
- Being mean to others
- 'Switching off,' (acting as if they haven't taken in what has happened)
- Acting more like an adult
- Showing fears
- Anger or aggression towards others
- Temper tantrums
- Being unhappy and blaming themselves
- Crying and laughing without obvious reason
- Not wanting to separate from those caring for them and wanting to be near adults
- Running away, avoiding school, stealing

Discussion Question:

Think about how you or someone close to you reacted after a loss. Re-read the five stages of grief and discuss.

My Hope Children's Book Faces

The Concept:

'Faces' is a helpful activity to allow children to begin the process of interacting. This exercise has proven to be successful because it allows children to express their emotions and works toward building an open relationship.

The Importance:

Children from difficult backgrounds have trouble talking about their feelings. By using *Faces*, a child can identify and discuss their emotions without having to start the conversation on their own.

The benefits of the *Faces* exercise are:

- To confirm that their thoughts and feelings are important and valid
- To help them put words to their negative feelings
- To encourage them to ask questions
- To express grief, loss, or sadness
- To talk about their anger

Application One:

1. Show the list of faces to a child or group of children.
2. Ask them, "What face are you today?"
3. Give them a few minutes to look through the faces.
4. When they have found one or more faces ask them, "Why did you choose this face?" Allow them the opportunity to explain their choice.

Note: Active listening is important in this exercise. Some children may still have trouble talking about their feelings, but their physical actions may indicate feelings they want to express.

Discussion Question:

Practice this exercise yourself by selecting a face that describes your feelings and write an explanation of why you chose that face. This can also be done with partners using a verbal explanation.

Application Two:

1. Give the children a piece of paper and ask them to choose a pen or pencil.
2. On the piece of paper, ask the child or group of children to draw three boxes, and put one face in each box.
3. In the first box have them draw the face they felt that morning.
4. In the second box have them draw the face they feel at the moment.
5. In the third box have them draw the face they want to feel at the end of the day.

Once they draw each of the faces, see if there are any similarities between the three chosen faces. Ask them to explain why they chose each face.

Activity:

Try this exercise yourself and write an explanation to go with your drawing. This can also be done in partners, using a verbal explanation.

Application Three:

Faces is a good way for a child or group of children who have been in a crisis situation to express their internal pain.

Be creative with *Faces* and ask the child or group of children:

1. "What face were you before the crisis (hard time)?"
2. "What face were you during the crisis (hard time)?"
3. "What face are you today?"

Again, look for any connections, similarities or differences that stand out.

Discussion Questions:

Identify other situations where *Faces* can be helpful for communication.

Additional Examples:

- Faces can be used to describe relationships or feelings towards another person.
- If the child places a sad face in the first and second box, but a happy face in the last box, you may ask, “How do you think you can get from the sad face to the happy face?”
- When a child has a difficult time choosing any of the pre-drawn faces, using the last circle on the sheet called “Undecided,” ask them to design and name their own face. Have them explain that face to you.
- If a child is not willing to verbally share even though they have seen the *Faces* sheet, spend time explaining what each face means to you. Point out which faces you currently feel or have felt. After shifting the attention away from the child, they feel more comfortable. Finally, reword the original question to the child.

Faces - How do you feel?

Identify the face that best demonstrates your feelings and emotions.



Nervous



Shy



Bored



Determined



Disappointed



Angry



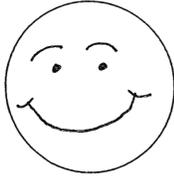
Scared



Frustrated



Grieving



Happy



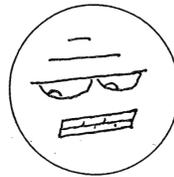
Sad



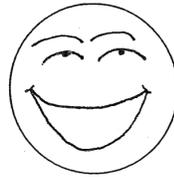
Hurt



Interested



Jealous



Joyful



Lonely



Regretful



Relieved



Puzzled



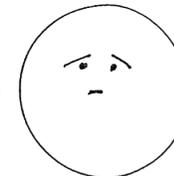
Struggling



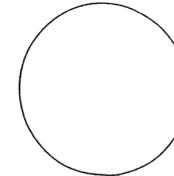
Sympathetic



Thoughtful



Worried



Undecided

Story Telling

The Concept:

Most individuals have endured some type of hardship. Relationship is key to transformation and healing. One of the first steps toward emotional wellness is the ability to communicate difficult experiences through the telling of stories within a trusted relationship. The ability to open up and share hurts from the past most effectively happens in the context of relationships that are built on love and trust.

The Importance:

Story telling is crucial in the process of healing. When an individual hides his pain, it is likely to continue to grow and hinders healing and freedom. When internal pain is released, steps of healing take place.

Application Steps:

1. Developing trust

A consistent loving relationship is important when seeking to develop trust. An individual will be more likely to share their story with someone who has provided kindness, comfort and stability over time rather than someone they do not know.

“There is a difficult truth that we must be willing to face if we are serious about loving our children the way that God would have us love them and the way they need to be loved. That truth is that biblical love is costly—very costly. In fact, it is a call to die to ourselves, and we should not pretend that it will be easy or even come naturally. God demonstrated His love for us by giving nothing less than His Son (John 3:16), and He has called us to live a life of love by giving ourselves. We have been called to love as He has loved us.” (John 15:12) Dr. Karyn Purvis

2. Active Listening

In order to encourage an individual to share hurtful places in their hearts, active listening is very important. The listener should focus on what the individual is saying instead of trying to offer immediate advice.

Note: Use the active listening sheet to review the active listening directions and identify any barriers that might be present before meeting with the individual

3. Encourage storytelling

Through active listening and asking questions, encourage the individual to talk openly. Once the individual is comfortable with the process of talking about their story and feelings, this can lead them to help others tell their stories. God is loving and kind and gives us the great privilege of helping others open up and share their deepest struggles. We love because He first loved us.

Our God is a nurturing God. We see this throughout Scripture as He nurtures His children in many different ways:

- *By comforting those who are hurting and troubled*
 - ***2 Corinthians 1:3-4*** – *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*
- *By providing for our physical needs*
 - ***Matthew 6:33-34*** – *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*
- *By encouraging us*
 - ***Romans 15:4*** – *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Dr. Karyn Purvis*

Additional Application:

Sometimes an individual has difficulty finding words to explain a painful situation.

By using these tools, the individual can express their story.

- Allow them to use the faces on the faces poster to show their emotions as they explain past experiences.
- Instead of starting with a verbal explanation of past events, have the individual draw images or scenes to illustrate their story.
- Have the individual write their story in a journal before telling it out loud. If they have trouble explaining the events, have them read from the journal instead of simply trying to talk about the events.

Activity:

With a partner, use one of the three methods listed above to tell your story. Then have the partner do the same and practice active listening skills

A Pathway to Forgiveness

The Concept:

Forgiveness does not come naturally. It can be a long process that involves emotions and memories. Forgiveness is difficult, but it can occur when an individual chooses to accept that forgiveness is part of the healing process.

The Importance:

Many struggle with forgiveness, because they either have no desire to forgive or they do not think they can forgive. But God calls us to forgive just as we have been forgiven. (Colossians 3:13).

II. Jesus' Blessing Comes to Us from His Resurrection

A. Who Comes through Locked Doors?

B. Where does Jesus Send Us?

III. Jesus' Blessing Comes to Us from His Ascension

A. What Did Jesus Do When He Ascended?

B. What Does Jesus' Blessing Do to Us?
