



MOOD

MOOD TEACHING SERIES

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Lesson 3



Week 3: Depression



Bible: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18



Bottom Line:

Sadness is temporary, but God's goodness is forever.

OPENING GAME

Supplies:

- A way to show a YouTube clip (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsG2S_1PRnk) to your group.
- The clip is the scene from Pixar's Up where Carl is looking at old photos of him and Ellie while the song "Married Life" is playing. The clip is available at the time of publishing, but we cannot assure that the video will continue to be posted on YouTube. If the video is taken down, try to find a similar sad video.

OPENING GAME (In-Person and Online Versions): Ch-ch-changes

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

- Say
 - *I need one volunteer to come up front and stand in front of the group for 20 seconds.*
 - *Then, I want you to go out of the room and change ONE THING about your appearance. **NOTE:** For the online version, have the volunteer go off camera and return.*
 - *It can be a small thing, but it must be significant enough that someone in the back of the room would notice.*
 - *For example, you can't pluck one hair out of your head. No one will notice that, and you'll end up bald.*
 - *The group will have 20 seconds to shout out their guesses about what you changed.*
 - *If they get it right, that person gets to come up and try the same thing.*
 - *If they don't get it right, go out of the room and change something else.*
 - *We'll keep going until someone guesses right or you've run out of things to change.*

TEACH

Welcome to the third week of our “Mood” series, where we’re talking about how to manage your emotions in a healthy and godly way.

In the first lesson, we defined “emotion” as a natural, instinctive state of mind deriving from one’s circumstances, mood, or relationships with others.

Emotions are “natural states of mind,” meaning they happen to all of us as we live life, and they connect all parts of our life: what’s happening, how we feel, and our relationships with people.

Our emotions are powerful. They can be a gift to help us fully experience life, or they can make a mess in our circumstances, mood, and relationships.

We ended the first week by looking at a story about Jesus.

We learned that there’s no such thing as bad emotions, only bad responses.

And we learned that Jesus experienced the same emotions we experience.

Last week we dove a little deeper into the story as we talked about how to manage our anxiety.

We’re going to start in that same story again this week, but this time from a different record of the same story from **Matthew 26**.

The Bible has four books that talk about Jesus’ life on earth – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

They’re called the “gospels,” and they’re the first four books in the New Testament.

This week we’re focusing on the emotion of sadness or depression.

Instead of describing what it means, I’m going to show you a clip from a movie and see if I can’t make you feel a little sadness and depression.

[Show Up YouTube clip from 1:47-2:47]

Is everyone feeling nice and sad...or at least everyone with a soul?

That scene puts me in my feels more than any other scene in any movie...except maybe “Remember Me” from the movie Coco. That’s another tear-jerker.

We all experience sadness and depression, but sometimes it seems to grab ahold of us.

By the time we’re done tonight, you’ll have a plan for dealing with these emotions when they show up in your life.

Would someone read **Matthew 26:36-39** for the group?

[I LOVE having students read from the Bible. If it doesn't work for your group, feel free to read it yourself or have another adult read it.]

As you listen to this passage, try to identify phrases that reveal that Jesus was experiencing sadness or depression at this moment.

36 Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." 37 He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. 38 He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

39 He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Matthew 26:36-39

What in this passage points to Jesus experiencing sadness or depression in this passage?

[Give appropriate time for students to respond, encouraging them for sharing their thoughts.]

Before we go any further, I do want to acknowledge that some people – maybe even some of you – have medical reasons for experiencing depression.

Your medical doctor can guide you on that, and you should take it seriously.

What we're talking about tonight is a sadness that comes from circumstances and experiences, and it's different than depression that has medical causes.

If you have more questions about that, come see me after and we can talk about it.

[If you have volunteers who are more qualified to help students navigate this issue, you could invite them to be a part of the meeting as well.]

In this passage, Matthew writes that Jesus was anguished and distressed.

He also writes that Jesus said His soul was "crushed with grief." That is a deep sadness.

I asked the same question about anxiety last week, but how many of you are surprised to hear that Jesus was sad and depressed?

Why are we surprised to hear that?

[Interact with students' answers.]

I think the main reason that this surprises us is the same as last week. We have unhealthy assumptions.

We think, "If I were healthy, I wouldn't ever struggle to shake off feelings of being in a funk."

We think, "I'm sad, so I must be overly fragile."

We think, "If I struggle with sadness and depression, I must be broken."

The reality is, just like I said last week, we live in a broken world, so we will experience pain,

and it will make us sad and depressed.

Remember Jesus' words from **John 16:33**?

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NLT)

Jesus knew we would experience sadness because the world is broken.

And He knew we needed encouragement, so He tells us to take heart because sadness won't have the last word.

Don't get me wrong. Some things will happen in life that will make you sad.

If you never became sad, that would be bad.

When a friend betrays you, you become sad...even if it wasn't your best friend.

When a loved one dies, you become sad...even if he or she is a follower of Jesus.

When you read stories of injustice around the world, you get sad ... even if you don't know the victims.

There are real experiences we will all have that will make us sad.

And sometimes the sadness will last for a while. You don't get over a broken heart overnight.

Sadness becomes an issue when we stay sad for too long when we get stuck in sadness.

One thing that's unique about sadness is that it's rooted in the way we think.

I want us to read three verses together that explain what I mean.

All three are in the New Testament and were written by a guy named Paul.

Paul was a follower of Jesus who traveled around starting churches.

Once things got off the ground, Paul would pack up and go to another town and start another church.

Sometimes, Paul would send letters back to these churches to encourage them.

The verses are in letters Paul wrote to the churches in Rome, Colossae, and Corinth.

Let's start with the first one; would someone read **Romans 12:2** out loud for the group?

[Again, I love having students read, but if it doesn't work for your group, have you or another adult read.]

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:2 (NLT)

First, Paul says to **let God renovate your imagination.**

We live in a world of reaction; if someone does something to you, pay it back.

If you don't like what someone says, tell them off.

Paul says if you're a follower of Jesus, stop thinking like everyone else, and let God change not only what you think, but also the way you think.

When we played our game earlier, we changed one thing about our appearance at a time.

We've got to let God change the way we think, one Bible verse, one conversation, one experience at a time.

Now would someone read **Colossians 3:2** out loud for the group? [Same as before.]

Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. Colossians 3:2 (NLT)

Other translations say think about "higher things."

First, Paul says don't think like everyone else.

Second, Paul says, **think about things from a heavenly perspective.**

Don't get bogged down by the critical, judgmental, gloomy culture around you.

Don't get stuck being discouraged and sad by the things that are broken around you.

Don't have an earthly perspective; have a heavenly perspective.

Which probably leads you to ask, "Okay, what is a heavenly perspective?"

That brings us to our last verse.

Will someone read part of Paul's thoughts in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**? [Same as before.]

16 That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. 17 For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! 18 So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT)

Right now, things are broken, and we experience pain and heartache, and sadness. If we're not careful we can get stuck in a deep depression.

Paul says one day, all the things that make us sad will be gone – no more death, no more sickness, no more goodbyes, no more jealousy or hatred or selfishness.

One day, God will take everything wrong and make it right; He'll take everything that's broken and fix it.

First, Paul says don't think like everyone else.

Second, he says to think about things from a heavenly perspective.

Third, he says **focus on what God will do**.

We will experience things in this life that make us sad.

It's healthy to be sad when things hurt us; it's not healthy when we stay sad too long.

We mustn't run from it. We must face our sadness, feel it deeply, and ask God to walk us through it.

We can endure the darkest times because God is with us.

Even when it feels like He's absent.

And as we endure these times of sadness and allow God to walk us through it, God changes us. He causes us to grow up.

That's what Paul means when he says our troubles produce in us a glory. God brings us in a little closer every time we trust Him to lead us through tough times.

So, no matter what you're going through now or what you might go through tomorrow, remember that **sadness is temporary, but God's goodness is forever**.

Go have some great conversation in your small group, and we'll see you next week.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the saddest movie you've ever seen and what made it so sad?
2. What are some things that make most teenagers sad?
3. What is your saddest memory?
4. We said it's healthy to be sad when things hurt us. Why is it healthy to experience sadness?
5. We said it's unhealthy to stay sad too long.
 - a. Why is it unhealthy to stay sad?
 - b. How do we know how long is OK to be sad?
 - c. How can our community help us know?
6. How can we allow God to renovate our imagination?
7. How does God want us to think about sadness? (i.e., what is a "heavenly perspective"?)
8. How can Paul say our present troubles are small and won't last very long when they feel huge and all-consuming?
9. How can you help someone who is going through a sad time right now?
10. How can enduring times of sadness draw us closer to God?