



EHS5 At A Loss

A Triad is made up of three people at LWF who seek to *encourage, discern, and intercede* in each other's lives.

The goal is to become friends who meet weekly to help each other be apprentices of Jesus: learning to live with Him, become like Him, and walk in His ways. This is done in the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the transformative presence of Jesus in us.

In today's Triad meeting, we will discern how we tend to handle loss or disappointment in our life. We'll also encourage one another towards a healthy model of grief with the humility of Christ Jesus.

Use the schedule below as a basic guideline, not a rigid framework.

- 0:00 – 0:10 Catch Up and Check In – How is everyone doing?
- 0:10 – 0:15 Cover Basic Logistics
- Any concerns or questions for your triad leader to relay to the LWF team?
- 0:15 – 0:20 Open with Scripture (Job 42:1-6), a 45-second period of silence/personal reflection, and then Prayer
- 42** Then Job answered the Lord and said:
²“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.
³‘Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?’
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.
⁴‘Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.’
⁵I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;
⁶therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”
- 0:20 – 0:40 **Discern:** Handling Disappointment, Loss, and Grief
- In chapter five, *EHS* invites us to consider how well we handle disappointment and loss. While we tend to think of grief only within the realm of death, we can grieve losses of all kinds. We can grieve the loss of any anticipated future, whether that anticipated future involved the presence of a loved one now departed, a vision for a career that has had a setback, the hope for a fulfilling relationship in the midst of conflict, or any circumstance thrown into uncertainty. And, of course, we can grieve the pain, hurt, brokenness, sin, sickness, injustice, and/or loneliness in our own lives or in the life of another.
- How was loss or disappointment handled in your childhood home? In your own life growing up?
 - As you reflect on your story, what is an example of a *recent* loss or disappointment in your life? Do you discern you handled this circumstance in a healthy way, or not? Why?
 - Look over the common defense mechanisms we are tempted to deploy when pain/grief arises in our lives, (pp. 124-5). Into which one or two of these defense “traps” do you have the tendency to fall?
- 0:40 – 1:10 **Encourage:** A Blueprint for Grief
- Scazzero offers a model of healthy grief based on the life of Job, (pp. 125-136). The first step in the blueprint is for us to “Pay Attention.” He writes, “Grieving is not possible without paying attention to our anger and sadness,” (127). Later, he shows us that, “[Job] paid attention to both God and himself, choosing to enter the confusion of his personal ‘dark night of the soul’ rather than to medicate himself,” (129). Eugene Peterson, in his book *Under the Unpredictable Plant*, a book about



the prophet Jonah, offers similar advice concerning the value of paying attention to our anger:

“Anger is most useful as a diagnostic tool. When anger erupts in us, it is a signal that something is wrong. Something isn’t working right. There is evil or incompetence or stupidity lurking about. Anger is our sixth sense for sniffing our wrong in the neighborhood. Diagnostically it is virtually infallible, and we learn to trust it. Anger is infused by a moral/spiritual intensity that carries conviction: when we are angry, we know we are on to something that matters, that really counts. When God said to Jonah, ‘Do you do well to be angry?’ Jonah shot back, ‘I do well to be angry, angry enough to die,’ (Jonah 4:9).

What anger fails to do, though, is tell us whether the wrong is outside or inside us. We usually begin by assuming that the wrong is outside us – our spouse or our child or our God has done something wrong, and we are angry. That is what Jonah did, and he quarreled with God. But when we track the anger carefully, we often find it leads to a wrong within us – wrong information, inadequate understanding, underdeveloped heart. If we admit and face that, we are pulled out of our quarrel with God into something large and vocational in God.”¹

- When is the last time you found yourself really angry? Was the anger because of something wrong *outside* or *inside* of you? How did you hope the circumstance had played out instead? (In other words, what disappointment or loss were you grieving?)

The other aspects of Scazzero’s blueprint for grief are to “wait in the confusing in-between, embrace the gift of limits, climb the ladder of humility, and let the old birth the new.”

- Which parts of Scazzero’s model for grief do you find most easy? Which do you find most difficult? (look over the descriptions in the book as necessary)
- Paul takes great pains to point out the humility of Christ (Philippians 2:1-11) and the value of humility in our own lives, (Philippians 2:1-11 and Romans 12:3-5). As you look over St. Benedict’s ladder of humility (p. 134), on what rung do you normally stall out? Why?
- How have you seen loss give way to or allow for something new? Discuss circumstances in your life or in another’s where a disappointment or loss made way for a new circumstance that you have come to value.
- What, if anything, are you grieving now? Is there any circumstance that you anticipated playing out one way, but is currently in a different place? How can your Triad offer courage to you during this season?

¹ Peterson, Eugene. *Under the Unpredictable Plant*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992, p. 157



1:10 – 1:25

Intercede: Praying for One Another to Close

Based on the discussion and final questions of the previous section, pray for one another. As you pray, don't restrict yourself to the stated prayer requests alone, but allow yourself to be guided by the Spirit (i.e., *discern!*) to pray for God to work in one another's life.

Pray God would meet opportunities for growth with Christ's transformation by the power of the Spirit. Intercede, seeking God's best for one another. *Ask God to do what only He can do.*

1:25 – 1:30

Preview Your Next Triad Meeting

Before your next Triad meeting, **read chapter six of *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality***. These final chapters of EHS focus less on past or present experience and more on how to build emotional and spiritual health in the future. You will have the opportunity as a Triad to use these chapters as a platform for future discussions, should you desire. Until you meet again, be praying for one another as you read and consider your next Triad discussion.

