

How to Lead in Difficult Situations

Three things to do:

- 1) **Do be presence** - Your presence is most important. Assure them that you will walk through the situation with them; don't promise anything else. Your words are less important than your presence. Try to resist promising anything you can't fulfill
- 2) **Do pray** - Use Scripture and pray; select Scripture that encourages worship. Psalms are especially good. Pray using God's Word; pray Scripture back to God. Thank him for his character and for His Word. Thank him for who he is and for what he has done
- 3) **Do dwell on God's character** - Encourage the person by using the nature of God's character. Remind the person that God is good, merciful, loves us unconditionally, etc. Encourage the person to rely each day on the unchanging nature of God's character. God's character will never change; is a good place to rest during a tragedy. Encourage the person to read God's Word where he will learn more about God.

Three things to not do:

- 1) **Do not talk too much.** We tend to talk more when nervous or uncomfortable. Try to avoid talking too much; I'm so sorry is always an appropriate response
- 2) **Do not self-disclose.** Each situation is unique; concentrate more on the other person rather than yourself. Ask how they feel; don't tell them how you felt in a similar situation
- 3) **Do not try to explain.** Do not try to explain or offer platitudes. You will not be able to explain sin or evil but can acknowledge feelings. As questions arise, always tell the truth; never guess if uncertain. Don't predict that the person will feel better after a period of time. Don't guarantee heaven unless you are certain

When should I suggest additional services?

Suggest additional services from the church only after you have ministered to the person. Remember to offer comfort and reflect God's character first. Offering counseling, grief care and other services comes later. Do not mention these as your first way to care for someone.

Additional CCC Resources Available:

Pastoral Counselling

Licensed Professional Counselling

Both available by appointment; call CCC office

Grief Care

Eight-week class repeats quarterly; check CCC website for start date

Divorce Care

Check CCC website for start date

Courage to Change (Addiction Recovery)

Monday 7:00 PM at The Block

Families Facing Addiction (Support group for loved ones)

First and third Saturday 9:30-11:00 at The Block

Common Questions with guideline answers:

Why would this happen? Sometimes, we simply don't know. Comfort and hope come directly from God's character. I encourage you to look directly at the character of God. How? Read God's word and pray. Spend time meditating on God's word. Pour out your emotions on God. Ask Him to settle your soul.

Is my loved one in heaven? The question of heaven depends on how the person responded to Christ. Yes, in the case of an infant who has not reached the age of accountability; always give hope while being truthful. David said of his infant son "I will go to him, but he will not return to me." 1 Sam 12:23. Can always go to God's character; He is just, fair, loving. In heaven not of their own merit but because of the character of God.

Responding when someone is angry at God. The antidote is worship. Continue to pursue God by reading His word. I suggest psalms as one of the most worshipful parts of Scripture. No need to serve at this time. The best approach is to listen to God's word, sermons, encouraging friends.

Is God punishing me? No, this tragedy is not punishment from God. God does not work that way. Sometimes God will "prune" areas of our life and other time He will even chastise us but God does not punish in a hurtful, vindictive way such as this.

Why did my loved one take his life? I'm sorry but I don't know. What I can promise is that I will walk with you through this. I can promise you that God will not change.

Could I have done something to prevent this? It's not likely you could have prevented this tragedy. Your loved one is in heaven if they trusted the finished work of Christ.

Is my child an angel now? No, angels are created beings that serve God. People do not become angels when they die.