"Finding Hope in Pain"

Gina Nicola, lmft, September 17-18, 2016

INTRODUCTION

Real hope is not wishful thinking, real hope is found in the truth of God's Word. Last week we began a series called "Anchored: We Have This Hope" and we looked at the hope we have for our future. This week we ask how a Christian finds hope in the midst of grief, pain and loss.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

How do you typically handle pain? (hide it, express it, deny it, mask it)

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Confidence that Jesus understands our despair Q1. Read John 11:1-43; Hebrews 4:15

When we lose a loved one and begin to mourn, we may experience a wide array of emotions. In chapter 11 of John, we see Jesus experiencing the death of his friend. Even though he was able to raise Lazarus from the dead, what were Jesus' reactions described in verses 33, 35 and 38? The stages of grief commonly include denial/shock, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Which of these do you find in this passage? If you have personally experienced grief, which of these would you say characterizes the most difficult or most prolonged period of your grieving? Hebrews 4:15 tells us that Jesus (our high priest) is able to sympathize with us in our weakness. How did you experience His sympathy and comfort in your time of grieving?

God promises that healing will come Q2. Read Mark 5:1-18; Psalm 147:3; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Revelation 21:4

In His encounter with the man in the tombs (Mark 5) Jesus delivered the man from the pain of oppression and restored him to "his right mind." What do you think of as common sources of pain in our lives? For those of us suffering the emotional pain of a broken heart, what does God promise in Psalm 147:3? God is able to, and may, heal us of physical illness and disease, but if He does not heal our body, what are we promised will sustain us in 2 Corinthians 12:9? Pray for the members of your group, that "the God of all comfort" will bring healing to their pain, whatever the source.

Believing God has the victory in our suffering Q3. Read Jeremiah 32:27; Psalm 34:18-19; Matthew 5:3-12; Psalm 144:2

Even in our times of suffering God holds the key to victory. How does Jeremiah 32:27 assure us of this? If you find your spirit crushed or if you are suffering afflictions of any kind, what are you promised in Psalm 34:18-19?

In Matthew Chapter 5, Jesus addresses the crowds in what is known as the Beatitudes. Here we see a series of promises that give hope to those who need hope. Are there any of these promises that you feel applies specifically to you? No matter what our needs, God is the answer. How does David describe the Lord in Psalm 144:2? Which of these roles gives you the greatest comfort or confidence as you face the pains in life?

Wrap-Up

In times of grief or pain or loss we can become hopeless. But God, not our circumstances, is the source of our hope. We are confident that Jesus understands our despair, because he experienced the same sorrows and pain when He walked the earth. We know that He promises healing in all of our pain, and power to sustain us through it. And we believe that there is victory in our suffering because all things are possible with God. He holds the key to our victory and is our hope even in our times of pain.

Memory Verse

 $\label{the brokenhearted} \textit{ and binds up their wounds.}$

Psalm 147:3 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life:	
Pray for your group members' needs:	
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Challenge: Pray that God will touch any area of pain in your life and bring you victory and hope.

Q1

Read John 11:11-43 in your Bible

Heb 4:15 ESV - 15 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.

Q2

Read Mark 5:1-18 in your Bible

Psalm 147:3 ESV - 3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV - 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2 Corinthians 1:3 ESV - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

Revelation 21:4 ESV - 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

$\mathbf{Q3}$

Jeremiah 32:27 ESV - 27 "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?

Psalm 34:18-19 ESV - 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

Matthew 5:3-12 ESV - 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you

and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Psalm 144:2a ESV - 2 he is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, ...

Prayers Con't:	 	 	
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