

## The Truth About Heartache, Grief, Pain, And Suffering

### Last Words:

*They're Usually The Most Important Words!*

### Your Grief Will Turn To Joy

John 16:16-33

### Five Things We Need To Know About Heartache, Grief, Pain, And Suffering

1. It's **NORMAL** to be **CONFUSED** when God is at work.

John 16:18/ Proverbs 3:5-6/ Isaiah 55:8-9/ Acts 16:6-10

2. In this fallen world, heartache and grief are **UNAVOIDABLE**.

John 16:20/ 1 Peter 4:12/ Psalm 73

3. If we stick with Him, Jesus promised that our **GRIEF**  
will be turned to **JOY – LATER**.

John 16:20-22/ Revelation 6:9-11/ Revelation 21:4/ Romans 8:28

4. Our faith is often a lot **WEAKER** than we **THINK**.

John 16:31-32/ 1 Peter 1:6-7/ 1 Corinthians 10:13/ Proverbs 24:16

5. God's grace and mercy are always a lot **GREATER** than we **THINK**.

John 16:33/ Revelation 12:10/ 1 John 2:1-2/ Isaiah 42:3

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will be turned to \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Life Group Study Questions

For the week of September 24, 2023

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Jesus tells the disciples an important part of the plan in this weekend's passage. Are you someone who likes to go with the flow or know the plan ahead of time?
2. This weekend, we talked about how Jesus promised that our grief will be turned into joy later. Can you think of some things in life that are painful but pay off later?

**Quick Review:** Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

### DIGGING DEEPER

Larry unpacked the truth about heartache, grief, pain, and suffering, noting that it's normal to be confused when God is at work. Let's take a look at a story that captures this.

When the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk cried out to God asking why He wasn't punishing the sinful nation of Judah, God responded in a way Habakkuk did not expect—with the news that He would raise up an enemy nation to punish them. Read the story in Habakkuk 1:1-6.

#### ***Habakkuk 1:1-6 New International Version (NIV)***

**1** *The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received.*

##### ***Habakkuk's Complaint***

**2** *How long, LORD, must I call for help,  
but you do not listen?*

*Or cry out to you, "Violence!"  
but you do not save?*

**3** *Why do you make me look at injustice?  
Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?*

*Destruction and violence are before me;  
there is strife, and conflict abounds.*

**4** *Therefore the law is paralyzed,  
and justice never prevails.*

*The wicked hem in the righteous,  
so that justice is perverted.*

##### ***The Lord's Answer***

**5** *"Look at the nations and watch—  
and be utterly amazed.*

*For I am going to do something in your days  
that you would not believe,  
even if you were told.*

**6** *I am raising up the Babylonians,  
that ruthless and impetuous people,  
who sweep across the whole earth  
to seize dwellings not their own.*

1. Habakkuk is not the only person in Scripture to ask how long God would take to respond to something. Have you ever been in a situation where it felt like God was delayed in answering you? If so, how did you respond during that time? Looking back, do you wish you would have responded any differently?

2. God's answer confuses Habakkuk, which we see later. Larry talked about how this is normal because God's ways are not our ways. Have you ever been surprised by something God has done in your life? What did it teach you about Him? What did it teach you about yourself?

3. Larry mentioned sometimes the bad guys win for a while, and joy often comes "later." We see this in Habakkuk. Take a look at God's response in Habakkuk 2:3. How would you encourage a friend to wait when "later" isn't here yet? What would you say to them?

***Habakkuk 2:3 New International Version (NIV)***

*<sup>3</sup>For the revelation awaits an appointed time;  
it speaks of the end  
and will not prove false.  
Though it lingers, wait for it;  
it will certainly come  
and will not delay.*

4. Larry pointed out our faith is often weaker than we think, but it is shown when we do what God says even though we don't think it will work. Read Habakkuk's final words in 3:17-19. Are there any ways you remind yourself that you can trust God?

***Habakkuk 3:17-19 New International Version (NIV)***

*<sup>17</sup>Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
<sup>18</sup>yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.  
<sup>19</sup>The Sovereign LORD is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,  
he enables me to tread on the heights.  
For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.*

## TAKING IT HOME

Read the following verses Larry shared with us this weekend. Is there one you want to store in your memory bank for this week or this season?

### **Proverbs 3:5-6 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> *Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
<sup>6</sup> in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.*

### **Isaiah 55:8-9 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>8</sup> *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup> "As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

### **Romans 8:28 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>28</sup> *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

### **1 Peter 1:6-7 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup> *In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Do you have any prayer requests regarding this weekend's message or for you personally?

## TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Life Group. Over the years, we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

**WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME** - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request, either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

**PRAY MORE THAN ONCE** - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

**WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE** - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.