SESSION 6
COFFEE HOUSE JOURNAL PAGE

OPEN

The following story is told by Barry, the founder of InWord Resources, the publisher of this Bible study. The event happened after his wife, Dana, had died from cancer.

> Having been widowed for six months, I was in the epicenter of grief. One evening while in a mountain cabin in Montana, I found myself asking the question: 'How would Dana comfort me if she knew how much I was hurting?' Soon a conversation was taking place in my mind, or my heart. I wasn't sure which. Things came to my mind that were a bit unusual, things I would not have already had in my mind. Here is what I wrote down from that "conversation":
>
> > *Bear (what Dana called me), about your heartache and your pain: I've seen where this all leads, and it really doesn't matter how much you hurt. I've seen how and where you will end up. It doesn't matter how hard things are for you now. It will be worth the pain. Bear, of all the crap I endured to try to beat that crazy cancer, it was worth that pain. It's actually not even on a comparable scale. It doesn't matter how much worse things get for you on earth; it doesn't matter how much deeper the heartache gets; it doesn't matter if you get a bad disease yourself. In fact, just to stress the point: I won't even waste time trying to comfort you. All I can say is, it really doesn't matter! I can't wait until you see how worth it it all is!! I SEE it. I SEE the forever! It's real! Bear, it's worth the pain. It was worth all my pain/suffering. It doesn't matter how hard it gets. It WILL be worth it.*
>
> That was not what I was expecting.
>
> A couple days later I hiked a one-hour, rather boring switch-back trail that ended in a breathtaking overlook. I stayed there for over an hour processing the conversation and the concept that all our suffering 'will be worth it!' Hiking back down, I passed two others on their way up. As hikers do, they asked for recon (information or strategy). First, in a nod to the boring trail, they asked, "How far to the overlook?"
>
> "You're about halfway," I answered.
>
> They took a couple steps and then asked, "Is it worth it?"
>
> After returning to my car, I realized I had just lived my "conversation" experience. I felt I had been given a giant confirmation to trust it, and realized the conversation was simply a merciful reminder of what God has been saying to us all through Scripture.

TAKING IT INWARD

1. What do you need to do so that the promise of eternal hope actually impacts things like:
   a. Your behavior?
   b. Your outlook on life?
   c. How you process bad news?
2. Referring back to the hiking story:
   a. What parallels can you draw between that story and our faith journey?
   b. In our faith, what represents the hiker coming down from the summit? How can we get good recon on what's "up there?"
   c. How can we gather as much information as possible from our recon sources?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that's coming when Jesus arrives.
I Peter 1:13 (The Message)

1. What is God teaching you about hope and glory?

2. What do you need to do to fully put your mind and heart into believing God's eternal hope and glory is worth the suffering we have to endure now?

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SESSION 6
COFFEE HOUSE SCRIPTURE SHEETS

DIGGING IN

2 Corinthians 4:13-18

13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith,
we also believe and therefore speak,
14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us
with Jesus and present us to himself.
15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may
cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.
16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we
are being renewed day by day.
17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far
outweighs them all.
18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is
temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Romans 8:18-21

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be
revealed in us.
19 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.
20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the
one who subjected it, in hope
21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the
freedom and glory of the children of God.

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PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Psalm 73:2-3, 23-24

2 But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;
I had nearly lost my foothold.
3 For I envied the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

23 Yet I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.

2 Timothy 2:8-10

8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my
gospel,
9 for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But
God's word is not chained.
10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain
the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

I Peter 1:3-5

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has
given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from
the dead,
4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you,
5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation
that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

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