

SESSION TITLE: Enlarging Your Soul Through Grief and Loss

BOOK READING: Chapter 7

KEY SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 26:31-44

CONNECTING (10 minutes)

1. The last time we met, we discussed “journeying through the wall.” Have you had any new insights or reflections since then?
2. This week we are discussing grief and loss. Briefly share one loss you have experienced this past year and how that loss has impacted you.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Loss is a place where self-knowledge and powerful transformation can happen--if we have the courage to participate fully in the process. We all face many “deaths” within our lives. Our culture routinely interprets these losses and griefs as alien invasions and interruptions to our “normal” lives. The choice is whether these deaths will be terminal (crushing our spirit and life) or will open us up to new possibilities and depths of transformation in Christ.

[PLAY THE DVD VIDEO MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LES (SESSION 5)]

DISCOVERING (35 minutes)

[Matthew 26:31-44]

3. We often use different defenses to protect ourselves from grief and loss. We see that in Peter’s response to Jesus in this passage (vv. 31-35). As you read through the following list of common defenses, which would you most identify with when you are faced with a loss or a setback?
 - denial/avoidance
 - minimizing (making things seem less serious than they are)
 - blaming (others or God)
 - over-spiritualizing
 - blaming yourself
 - rationalizing (excuses or justifications)
 - intellectualizing (giving analysis and theories to avoid personal feelings)
 - becoming hostile
 - medicating (numbing the pain with things – food, alcohol, TV etc.)
4. How do you see Jesus dealing with and moving through loss and grief in vv. 36-41?

APPLYING (15 minutes)

5. How do you think grief can enlarge our souls?
6. One of the central messages of Christianity is that suffering and death is a doorway to resurrection and new life. Are there losses you have not yet embraced where new life is still waiting to be birthed?

HOMEWORK

7. Take time this week to fill out the **Grief Chart** on the back to evaluate the losses and disappointments you’ve experienced. When finished consider your responses to discover areas that need further healing or attention.

