

Meeting the Ups and Downs of Life – Week 15

Lesson 5.5 – When a Loved One is Diagnosed with a Terminal Illness

LIFE EXAMPLE – Depression

Bargaining with God didn't work. Eunice gives up. Deep in self-pity, she sees no hope for her future. Since she doesn't sleep well, she is listless and lies around all day. She forgets things easily. She neglects to take care of much of anything, including herself. She says, "What's the use if I'm just going to die soon?"

1. Depression is a nasty thing to deal with. Where does depression focus people's attention?
 - a. What else does depression do that makes it so hard to deal with, both personally and as a loved one of someone who is in this stage of grief?

Light from the Word

2. In many ways, the thoughts in **Psalm 88:13-18** reflect the thoughts of a person suffering from depression. Using this psalm as a guide, describe some of the feelings Eunice might be feeling.
3. How might you use this psalm as you talk with Eunice?
4. When Paul wrote **Romans 8:37-39**, he and many other Christians were suffering. List the comforts that you can share with Eunice as she suffers.

Prayer CW 783 Abide with Me v. 3

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings, but kind and good, with healing in thy wings, tears for all woes, a heart for every plea; come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me. Amen.

LIFE EXAMPLE – Acceptance

As time passes, Eunice begins to accept the fact that she is going to die. She trusts that her Savior loves her and that she will be in heaven. When she sees a tear in your eye as you visit with her, she says, “I know. It’s been a rough road. But I’m in the best hands. And this pain is going to be over soon, whenever the Lord decides to take me home.”

5. Is your work of encouraging over once Eunice reaches this stage? Why or why not?

6. In **2 Corinthians 4:7-15**, God reminds us that he uses frail, ordinary human vessels to convey his precious gospel. He follows with a description of the hope every Christian has. Look at each “comparison” in verses 8 and 9. How are each of these things true for someone like Eunice?

7. What light do these verses shed on the purpose of human suffering?

8. How might Eunice’s suffering be a benefit to others?

9. At each stage of grieving, Eunice has needed help in slightly (or majorly) different ways. What does that tell you about what our first step should be as loved ones who want to help?

10. What does this tell us about the process of offering help to those who suffer from terminal illness?

Prayer CW 783 Abide with Me v. 6

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless; ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.

Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory? I triumph still if thou abide with me. Amen.