

LESSON 5: One Man's Story – Study Guide & Discussion Questions

Lesson Overview: Wayne Hannah is interviewed concerning the role of suffering in our lives, sharing from a lifetime of experience with physical pain. While we all would choose the Healing Story, sometimes God give a different, richer story.

Discussion Questions

I. **Read II Corinthians 12:9-10**

While the Story Wayne wanted initially was a miraculous and complete healing, Wayne says, "I wonder if God's greatest gift was to *not* heal me..." This is because, among other things, it has forced him to depend daily on God's grace, and because this story that God has given him is richer and more helpful to others.

Has God's answer to you ever been as it has been to Wayne and the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness"? Is there a scenario where you, like Wayne, have wondered if God's greatest gift to you was to *not* provide the quick, big "fix" to your need? Elaborate.

II. Suffering is "fellowship" an opportunity for community to serve the sufferer, and for sufferer to provide testimony to others of God's sufficiency even in great hardship.

- a. Describe times when you have been on either side of giving-receiving equation".
- b. What unique blessings come to the giver?
- c. What unique blessings come to the receiver?

III. Wayne says, "God suffers, too," and a view of God that does not include this truth is a "graven image", meaning an inaccurate view of God.

- a. Jesus suffers as His Body, the Church suffers
- b. Holy Spirit suffers ("groans")

How does the knowledge that God suffers, too, strengthen and comfort us in our suffering?

IV. Wayne comments that everything must be redeemed – no impure, incomplete thing can enter heaven. Our new, redeemed body will fit us for heaven because they will be whole, and will have the capacity to worship God and savor the pleasures of heaven.

V. "God intended this" Wayne says about his one-more-surgery or whatever the hardship is. "If He didn't, then He's not God. In the right circumstances that should really bring a peace to us." Does this truth give you peace and comfort? Discuss.

VI. **Survival Tip #5:** Do the next thing (Elisabeth Elliot). Take a baby step towards getting out of your grief and taking a positive step forward. Have you ever experienced the steadying effect of this Survival tip when you have been hit hard by suffering and grief?