

Suffering Makes One Sympathetic

The apostle Paul wrote of the value of affliction as to how it can help one to be better able to comfort others in their affliction (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). A person may think he can sympathize with someone but until he has “been there” personally, there is no true understanding of their hurt. Experiencing suffering makes one more likely to “weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15) and makes him better able to serve others.

Suffering Teaches One How to Pray

While a Christian is commanded to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17), in the midst of suffering, one learns how to pray “earnestly” with “perseverance” and “with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26).

Conclusion

Can you begin to see why a righteous and merciful God would allow suffering, even to the innocent? If one looks at suffering purely from man’s point of view he will not understand why it is permitted but if he looks at it from God’s point of view, from the viewpoint of His plans for us in preparation for eternity, he can then begin to appreciate why God would allow suffering to occur.

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“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory.”
(2 Corinthians 4:17)

Why Does God Allow



Suffering?

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Why Does God Allow Suffering?

There is a question which is as old as the first tear and as recent as the latest 911 call. “Why? Why does God allow suffering, sorrow, heartache and death, even among His own children?”

The question was asked by Job (Job 3:11-19). It has been asked by every person who has walked upon the face of the earth who believed in God. It has been asked by those who watch a child suffer in an Intensive Care Unit. It has been asked by young children as they bury a parent. It has been asked at the funeral of one who dies after years of suffering.

The purpose of this tract is not to determine the origin or cause of suffering but to better understand why God allows it and why Christians can rejoice even in the midst of trials.

Suffering Keeps This World From Becoming Too Attractive

The Bible states that Christians are but “pilgrims” and “sojourners” on the earth (1 Peter 2:11-12) that this world is truly not their home (Hebrews 13:14). God has prepared something better for the Christian (2 Corinthians 5:1-5).

If there were no suffering in it, no one would want to leave this temporary world or desire the eternal home and, therefore, prepare themselves for it.

This life is so ordered that the world soon loses its attraction. While most young people may want to live on the earth forever, by the time a person reaches the fullness of age, he begins to desire something better.

Suffering Can Bring Out One’s Best

Those who suffer from illness often see that this is the case. They see it in the constant support of friends, emotionally, spiritually and physically in financial support.

Such occurs frequently in times of natural disaster—when someone loses a house and belongings to a hurricane, tornado, fire, etc.

This may be one reason why early Christians rejoiced in their trials—they understood that tribulations could develop character, not only their own but also that of others (Romans 5:3-4).

Suffering Gives an Occasion to Silence the Enemies of God

Do you remember the story of Job? Satan wanted to prove that God was wrong about

Job—that he served God only because God had blessed him (Job 1:9-11). Job’s patience and perseverance under suffering silenced Satan.

Likewise, God desires that Christians silence “foolish men” (1 Peter 2:15). They are those who ridicule the teachings of Christ as foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18) or those who say people become Christians only for what good they can get from being one.

By patiently enduring or doing good in times of suffering, the value of being a Christian shines through in the faith one has that sustains him when suffering and in the love he shows towards those who suffer.

Suffering Makes One Appreciative

All receive so many good things in this life that it is easy for one to take them for granted instead of receiving them with gratitude toward God. Suffering can help a person appreciate more fully good health, good friends and a loving family.

A good example of how suffering can make one appreciative is that of the apostle Paul while he was in prison (Philippians 1:3-8). Though in chains, he was filled with joy as he wrote to the members of the church in the city of Philippi.

Suffering Helps Purify

Suffering can be like fire purifying gold (1 Peter 1:6-7; Job 23:10-12). Maturity can be developed through trials (James 1:2-5). 🕯