

Why Does God Allow Suffering?

John 16:33

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." – *C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain*

1. I wonder today how many of us can relate to the words of C.S. Lewis. I wonder how many of us have been afflicted by pain and suffering in such a way that we have been left with a wound that does not feel like it will ever heal.
2. We have all been brought to our knees at some point, struck down by grief, pain, or suffering and we have all faced the question that makes or breaks your faith in Christ: ***Why? Why me? Why have you allowed this to happen?***
3. I wonder how many have cried out that prayer through tear stained eyes and have yet to receive your answer and so you let your heart be calloused by that which you do not understand! I wonder how many of you here today are wounded in search for healing!
4. I hope that you understand that this is not a message about answering the question: ***Why does God allow suffering?*** This is a message about deliverance, about your salvation, about your healing that is immediately at hand. ***Behold, he stands at the door and knocks!***

Four Observations About Suffering

Observation #1 – God is not the Creator of Suffering

1. Today, we look at four observations about suffering. Four observations that are meant to bring about your healing not merely your knowledge.
2. The first observation that we draw our attention is seen as we examine where suffering comes from. It is easy for us to look around this world, to reflect upon our own lives and see that suffering occurs. Not only does it occur but it abounds.
3. Cancer, War, Natural disasters, children cut down in the youth of their days, rape, murder, torture... Why? Why does such a good God allow such suffering?
4. In the midst of our most tumultuous times, mankind as a whole has the tendency to point fingers... We need someone to blame... We need someone to judge... We need someone to talk the fall... When we are hurt, we are wounded, when wounded, we suffer. Many times we respond in anger to the one that has caused us suffering...
5. For some this may be vengeance, it maybe slander, it maybe false accusations... When we respond to our affliction with anger and we cannot find someone or something to blame then we cast our wounded hearts upon the Lord but not seeking healing rather casting blame.
6. The very question: "***Why does God allow suffering?***" carries with it a hint woundedness and anger. My heart goes out to all who wrestle with this question because so many have sought their lifelong for the answer to this question and have departed life with bitterness and hatred toward the one that gave them life.
7. My prayer for you today is that you will walk away from here with comfort, peace, and healing. My prayer is that God will ***Heal*** your ***Wounded Soul***, that He will take away the ***Anger*** in your wrestles heart and ***Replace*** it with ***Peace***, and that He will ***Consume*** your ***Unforgiveness*** with His ***Unconditional Love!***

John 16:33 – "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Observation #1 – God is not the Creator of Suffering

8. There are two points I want you to understand here!

- **Genesis 1:31** – God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.
- God created mankind perfect, created mankind in His own image. He also created mankind to make their own decisions. He did not make them as robots because where is the honor, glory, and praise in that.

Point #1 – God gave man Free Will

- When God created perfect mankind with perfect free will then He gave them the choice to continue living in perfection, living in His presence or sinning against Him and being cast out of His presence. Adam and Eve chose to sin against God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...That first in by mankind started a snowball that would continue to grow out of control until it is what we see today.
- **Romans 3:23** – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. **Moral Evil**
Point #2 – Mankind is Responsible for Evil and Suffering
- We may cause suffering by the choices that we make today? Lie, cheat, steal, murder...Or the suffering may be caused by natural disasters which in turn were brought into this world because of the choice of mankind... Genesis 3:18/Romans 8:22– Death is a result of our sin!

Observation #2 – God Can Use Suffering to Bring About His Glory

1. The second observation that we come to is simply stated: **God Can Use Suffering to Bring About His Glory**. Now this does not mean that God is the cause of suffering but that He may allow suffering to take place to achieve His greater glory.
- **Point #1 – God Uses Pain to Draw People to Him**
 - **2 Corinthians 7:10** – Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death...
 - I have ever mentioned how I became a Christian...God used pain and suffering to draw me to Him. What Satan meant for evil God meant for Good.
 - Joni Erikson Tada states: “I would be in my wheelchair with God than on my feet without Him.”
 - **Point #2 – God Uses Pain to Sharpen People**
 - **Romans 5:3-5** – Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us...
 - Great character, virtue, and wisdom is not produced in times of cohesiveness but in times of difficulty. The tough decisions are what make you stand out not the easy ones.
 - **Point #3 – God uses Pain to Discipline People**
 - **Hebrews 12:10-11** – Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.
 - God loves us so much that sometimes he will use suffering with a less severe consequence to avoid a much greater consequence down the road.
 - **Point #4 – God Uses Pain to Bring About His Glory**
 - **Romans 8:28** – And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

- Understand once again that Satan does not have the ultimate authority, God does. But you have to choose as to whose authority you will live under day by day. Even though Satan may intend for something to harm you, God can use it for His glory.
- **Genesis 50:20** – You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Observation #3 – God Will Overcome All Suffering

1. The third observation that we make is very important for us to believe, embrace, and apply in our own lives. It is of paramount importance that we not only state that the words but that we believe the Words as what they actually are: a promise that will come true.

Observation #3 – God Will Overcome All Suffering

2. Friends, I am here to tell you God will overcome evil and suffering in this world. There are many people out there that sit back and mock God saying: If God is a good God and All powerful then why does He not rid the world of evil and suffering. Since He has not already done this then He must not be good or all-powerful therefore He must not exist.
3. Here is the point: **Point #1 – IF verses WHEN**
 - I am here to tell you that God is very much REAL, ALL POWERFULL and the World will soon see His power and glory.
 - If God would honor the request to immediately destroy all evil then we would all be destroyed (God back to Romans 3:23.)
 - We also must understand that the time of reckoning is coming. It is not a matter of *If* it is coming but a matter of *When!*
 - **2 Peter 3:9** – The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
 - *I wonder will you be ready?*

Observation #4 – God Will Replace Suffering With Joy

1. We end our time together by drawing our attention to three very important passages:
 - **2 Corinthians 4:17-18** – For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.
 - **Romans 8:18** – I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
 - These two passages challenge to ask ourselves how we ultimately define suffering. Is the suffering that we are going through in this world truly suffering? If our time on this earth is merely a dot in the scheme of eternity then is the current suffering sustainable knowing that we have eternity to live in peace, comfort, and ultimately joy with the one that created us?
 - **Revelation 21:1-7** – Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to

drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Observation #4 – God Will Replace Suffering With Joy

- **Mt. 11:28-30** – Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.
- 2. I wonder today how many of you are ready to trade in your sorrows, suffering, agony of heart, mind, and soul for healing, comfort, peace, and joy?

Challenge

This week ask God to deliver you from the suffering you face and claim **Romans 8:28** until God shows you how this is being accomplished in your life.



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