

**Tonight, we are going to look at Suffering and Especially Suffering for the Christian.**

This is a very difficult and hard truth that we can't completely understand. I am not here tonight to solve and know all the mystery of Suffering but we do have special revelation in the scriptures that tell us about suffering but to know the infinite my of God in his dealings with man in suffering and when and why suffering happens no man can know.

Romans 11:33: Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! With our tiny, small pea brains that has been affected by sin we have no capability of knowing the wisdom of God and his judgments, including suffering! You and I will suffer and many times we will not know the reason for the suffering or the timing of the suffering when it comes in the future.

I also do not want to diminish anyone's suffering that you have experienced or will experience, suffering is painful, heartache, loss, and I haven't walked in the shoes of your suffering.

Tonight I want to give you 4 Pillars of Truth from the scriptures that will help us when we suffer, it will not remove the suffering but it will sustain us in our sufferings.

This will seem like a Debbie Downer Sermon, and I don't intend it to be that, but we must accept reality that we are going to suffer. My desire is not to preach at you tonight but to come to you in love, compassion, mercy, grace because suffering is hard and painful.

**PILLAR # 1: Why is there Suffering?**

**Why is there Suffering in the World for both Christians and Non-Christians.**

We have to go back to the beginning of the story of Creation of the World and Man

Genesis 1 – Creation Week. Light, Darkness, Food, Sun, Moon, Stars, Animals, Seas and Sealife, Crawling Things, Cattle and Man and Woman.

Genesis 1:31: After His Creation God said everything was VERY GOOD! Everything was perfect, holy, and Adam & Eve was King and Queen over the Earth and was given dominion to rule and reign with God.

Everything was made to reproduce, and Adam & Eve were to reproduce and fill the earth and everything was VERY GOOD! In this Perfect World and Perfect Environment, the World would expand from the Garden of Eden and Man and Woman would live and enjoy God's Intimate Personal Relationship with their Creator in every moment and enjoy His creation and it would be Utopia Forever!

They were in the Garden of Eden and Yahweh was there with them in intimate fellowship and they had everything for life and purpose to love God and enjoy Him forever!

Genesis 2:9: God created man from dirt, and we must never forget that in questioning God about anything

In the Garden of Eden was all that Man and Woman and Creation needed to sustain life but also in the Garden of Eden (Modern Day Iraq) God placed “The Tree of Life” and “The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.” The Tree of Life (Represents Eternal Life was there possession forever). The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was there to Test Adam & Eve and God also Tests every human being to show our love and obedience to Him. God is Love and because of that Man & Woman are made In the Image of God so God as Creator had the right and privilege to Test his image bearers to see if they would be obedient and love their Creator.

Just like your children, family, friends. you want them to love you from their heart and not to love you mechanically, you want them to love you because you love them and not because they have too. So, God created us with emotions, will, conscience, heart to love Him and He tested Man so they would prove their love for Him and Trust Him and His Word.

Genesis 2:15-16: For in the day you eat of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil YOU SHALL SURELY DIE! The Test, The Prohibition.

Remember every thing was VERY GOOD, they had everything for life and fellowship with their Creator and needed nothing else.

### **THE FALL OF MAN**

Genesis 3: You know the story; they disobeyed God, and it brought DEATH. Adam and Eve was saying in their disobedience I don't believe you God, I don't believe your prohibition of eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is wrong God, and We don't believe we will Die. Satan had deceived them and ultimately, it was more than just eating a piece of fruit from the tree, they ultimately wanted to be like God and didn't want God to be their God and because of Pride like Satan they rebelled, and the Fall of Man happened.

Sin always has consequences, and the result was disastrous and if brought all Suffering and Death for the Whole World.

Romans 5:12: One Man's Sin (Adam) condemnation has come to the whole world because we are all sinners. Yes Adam was the Federal Head but all of us sin against God and we all deserve Judgment in suffering and death.

Genesis 2: Satan's punishment, Woman's Punishment, Man's Punishment is pronounced and is still in effect today as we are living under the Curse of God, and we all know that because we all suffer, and we will all die. (Rapture, death maybe then also)

### **You Shall Surely Die:**

Death has 3 Aspects:

1. Physical Death. Heb 9:27 God in His Grace and His Sovereignty let them live so they could reproduce and fill the earth.

2. Spiritual Death. Isaiah 59:2: Your sins have separated you from God. Romans 6:23 - Wages of Sin is Death. Immediately they were Separated From God and the Intimate Fellowship that had with God before they sinned. He walked in the cool of the Garden and Heard (They were familiar with God being with them, Pre-Incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, God now appears only to pronounce judgment and now all men must live by faith and not by sight. We don't see God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit because of sin and because God is Holy. Holy, Holy, Holy.
3. Eternal Death. Rev 20: 14-15 Second Death (Lake of Fire) Hell not Hades

So all men and women will die physically, all men and women are separated from God and all are Destined for the Lake of Fire.

God in His Mercy and Grace then clothed Adam and Eve, remember based on Genesis that the Seed of the Woman (Eve) would come the Messiah and Satan would bruise His Heel (Crucify) but Jesus would Crush His head and conquer death. So God provided a covering for their sin that would be eventually in time and space be fulfilled in Christ going to the Cross.

So, God in his Love and Grace rescued man from eternal and spiritual separation thru his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, but you must come to Christ to be rescued from the Curse of God of Eternal Separation in a place called Hell or the Lake of Fire. Come all who are thirsty to the Water of Life, Christ.

Not only did man bring suffering upon himself thru the Fall and our Sin it also effected the Whole World and Creation. 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics, everything living is dying.

Romans 8:20-23: The Creation was subjected to futility, not willingly but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. The whole creation HAS BEEN GROANING together the pains of childbirth (Since the Fall) until now waiting for the Adoption as Son the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES.

So all of man and creation is suffering and dying because of Sin.

So Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden of Eve and no longer had access to the Tree of Life(Eternal Life and Fellowship with God). God in His mercy didn't want to leave us in that state eternally.

#### Examples of Suffering and Death:

Death in the Womb, Miscarriages, Deformities, Mental Retardation, Limbs Missing, Arthritis, Alzheimer's, Cancer, Heart Disease, Death of Family Members, Young and Old, Car Wrecks, Murder, Evil, Immorality, STD's, Depression, Anxiety, Job Loss, etc. etc.

#### Natural Disasters:

Tsunami's, Hurricanes, Earthquakes, Evil Social Justice, War, Persecution, etc.

As sin and immortality increases it brings more judgment and suffering in the world

Jesus presupposes and knows the result of the Curse of Suffering and Death

Luke 13:1-5: Galileans offering sacrifices and were killed, are they worse sinners than the rest of the Galileans who didn't die. NO

Tower of Siloam fell on 18 people walking by in their daily life, were they worst sinners than the rest of people that the Tower didn't fall on. NO. Repent. Because of sin God has the right to take life at anytime with no explanation. Christians and Non-Christians.

Proverbs 27:1: Do not boast about tomorrow for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

## **PILLAR #2: There is Mystery in God's Providence for Suffering**

### **JOB**

Blameless, Upright, and Feared God

God brought suffering to Test Job and Job knew nothing about WHY this was happening to him. His suffering, heartache, loss was Mysterious to Him, but God in His Providence ordained and allowed it to happen.

Lost his children 7 boys – 3 girls -possessions, cattle, sheep, oxen, donkeys

His 3 friends accused him of sin for the suffering and His wife told him to Curse God and die.

Job 1:21: Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. At this point He trusted God and that the Lord is in charge of giving and taking away and his suffering and loss.

Job wavered and so will we, we have a human nature, a sinful nature that doubts God.

Job 42:1-6: You do all things (Suffering and Death) No purpose of yours can be thwarted (Trust even though we don't know or understand our suffering and the big picture of what God is doing.

Hides counsel without wisdom is Job admitting His pride and presumption of God's counsel. THEREFORE, I have declared which I do NOT UNDERSTAND. Things so wonderful for me, WHICH I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

I REPENT, repent of sin here is Job repenting of his presumptions and allegations to God about his unfair suffering against God's providence in his suffering.

Romans 11:33:

## **PILLAR # 3: God has a Purpose for Suffering for the Christian!**

God is ordaining and orchestrating every event in our lives, our suffering, temptations and even our sins to accomplish both TEMPORAL and ETERNAL BENEFITS.

Ephesians 1:11: He is working all things according to the Counsel of His Will.

Romans 8:28: God CAUSES ALL THINGS to WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD to those WHO LOVE GOD, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Christians only)

Romans 8:29: To Conform us to the Image of His Son. Holy, Godly, Humble, Obedient, Loving, Live for God's Glory.

God cares more about us becoming like Christ than in our comfort and pleasure because it brings glory to Him and it has also eternal benefits. Every headache, heartache, illness, loss, death, that we endure and accept as God's providence in our lives is being stored up for rewards and blessing.

Some will suffer differently in various ways, Health, Job Loss, Spouse Divorces you, Loss of possessions, loss of friends but it is individually designed to each Christian individually because of His intimate love for you individually. I admire Christians who suffer but they will be recomposed some day in eternity.

Discipline: Love us for our good for temporary and eternal blessings

James 1:3: Becoming more like Christ

God will do whatever it takes to conform us more and more to be like Christ, from one glory to another and sometimes its painful but it is producing glory for us.

Suffering is our Teacher

Psalms: 119:71: It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn your statutes.

**C.S. Lewis Quote in your bulletin**: God WHISPERS to us in our PLEASURE in our consciences but shouts to us in our PAIN.

It gets our attention and causes us to seek Him and rely on Him more.

II Corinthians: 4:16-17: Don't lose heart, the inner man is being renewed day by day. Heart, Soul, and Mind

Momentary AFFLICTION (Compared to Eternal Glory) is producing and Eternal Weight of Glory far BEYOND ALL COMPARISON.

Romans 8:17: Our suffering is producing Glorification for Us, rewarding in our faithfulness

Romans 8:18: Can't be compared with the Glory that is awaiting us

I Corinthians 2:9: No Eye has seen  
No ear has heard

nor entered the heart of man  
ALL that God has prepared for those who love him

**PILLAR #4: All Suffering and Death will be Done Away With Forever!!**

Titus 2:11-13; Blessed Hope (Future) JESUS IS COMING FOR US

I Thess 4:16-17: Rapture

John 14:1-6: Jesus is preparing a place for us and he's coming back to catch us in the air

Revelation 21: 1-4;

1. A New Heaven and a New Earth
2. Holy city New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven
3. God and Jesus will dwell with us forever. Matt 5: Shall see God
4. He will wipe away every TEAR from their eyes, and there will be no longer any death, there will be no mourning or crying, or pain, the first things have passed away.

**REVIEW:**

**Pillar #1**: Why is there Suffering. All sin, suffering, and death is the result of man rebelling against God and it brought consequences and this is the world we live in now.

**Pillar #2**: There is Mystery in God's Providence for Suffering for the Christian.

We will not always know the mystery in God's in allowing suffering in our lives in various ways.

**Pillar # 3**: God has a purpose for Suffering for the Christian.

Ultimately conforming us to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ that has temporal and eternal benefits.

**Pillar # 4**: All Suffering and Death will be done away with Forever!

God will end all suffering and death when he creates a New Heaven and New Earth and we will live in the presence of God and Jesus and enjoy heaven and earth forever.

Romans 8:29: Don't quote too soon when someone is suffering, weep, mourn, love, comfort when we see suffering in our brothers and sisters.

**CONCLUSION:**

It all comes down this my friends, we must believe God's promises in the scriptures, we're going to suffer but God has a purpose in it and we must endure and look forward to that day when all suffering and death will end but until then we must TRUST GOD, THAT HE IS A GOOD GOD, A HOLY GOD, A LOVING GOD, AN ALL

WISE GOD and all the events in our lives our HOLY AND RIGHT EVEN THOUGH WE DON'T UNDERSTAND THEM NOW.

Psalms 145:9: The LORD is good to all and his mercy is over all that he has made.

Ephesians 2:4-7: Mercy, Love, Grace, Kindness toward us.

Deuteronomy 31:8: It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Heb 13:5: He will never leave or forsake you.

Hebrews 11:1: Now FAITH is confidence(trust) in what we hope for (Eternity) and assurance about WHAT we do not see. Our ongoing Faith (Trust) is a life lived in believing the promises of God to be true and clinging to them when we are uncertain.

TRUST GOD, TRUST HIS PROMISES, TRUST HIS SOVEREIGNTY, TRUST HIS GOODNESS AND LOVE FOR YOU!!