



Biblical Understanding of Suffering (Part 3)  
Sunday September 18, 2005

Overview:

Understanding God's Heart in the light of His original intent  
Suffering – A Present Reality  
Three realms in which we experience suffering  
Different reasons for suffering  
Suffering according to the will of God  
Why does God allow me to suffer?  
What should I do when I face suffering?  
The Believers Mindset Towards Persecution  
Enduring hardships

Review:

Understanding God's Heart in the light of His original intent  
Suffering – A Present Reality  
Three realms in which we experience suffering  
Different reasons for suffering

1. Suffering due to the "bondage of corruption"
2. Suffering due to one's own actions
3. Suffering due to satanic oppression
4. Suffering due to other peoples actions including persecution
5. Suffering due to divine discipline and judgment
6. Suffering due to willing sacrifice

1. Suffering due to the "bondage of corruption"
2. Suffering due to one's own actions
3. Suffering due to satanic oppression

Today:

Our goal in this teaching is not to create a "desire" for suffering – rather to create a "preparedness" in our hearts – a readiness, so that we may know what to do when we do experience suffering.

We are not to be "preoccupied" with suffering, having a "suffering mentality" and a "persecution complex" or a "oh poor me syndrome". Rather we are to be captured with a passion to know Him, to know His heart. And He is all goodness, love and grace. He is full of desire to bless and prosper. Suffering is not part of His original intent neither is it His desire. So we do well not to be preoccupied with it!

We are not to give suffering any "undue importance", since truly God is more interested in seeing us blessed, victorious, prosperous and triumphant – than seeing us suffer, since suffering is not God's original intent.

While suffering is not the original intent neither is it the desire of God's heart for His people, God knows that in the world you and I will experience suffering. No one is exempt. Therefore He has given us sufficient information and instruction in the revealed Scriptures, so that we may know how to live victoriously when we do experience suffering. Further, knowing that no human is exempt from suffering, Christ Himself walked the same path, enduring suffering and set us an example of what manner of people we ought to be in the midst of suffering. Since God knows that no one is exempt from suffering, God in His wisdom uses it for our advantage – to help mature us and perfect us into Christlikeness.



#### 4. Suffering due to other peoples actions including persecution

##### 1 Peter 1:5-9

- Though now for a little while (season)
- If need be – this indicates the possibility of our faith being tried. Therefore we must be ready if need be to have our faith tried, at any point in our walk with the Lord.
- Grieved (distressed) by various trials (adversity)
- To find (perceive) the genuineness (trial, proving) of your faith – the purpose of such adversity is to show the genuineness of our faith. And when the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed we will receive praise, glory and honour.
- According to the Scriptures, the genuineness of our faith is proved, not only by the successes we have achieved, but also by the adversities we have endured. (Hebrews 11:33-38)

In this first epistle, Peter identifies 6 situations where the believer experiences adversity:

- (1) Suffering wrongfully (2:18-23) – injustice in the workplace
- (2) Suffering for righteousness sake (3:13-18) – being falsely accused for your good conduct
- (3) Suffering against sin (4:1,2) – suffering in the flesh
- (4) Suffering as a Christian (4:12-14,16,19) – sharing in Christ's sufferings
- (5) Suffering due to our own actions (4:15)
- (6) Suffering due to the adversary (5:8,9)

Out of these 3 have to do with suffering due to other people's actions.

##### 1 Peter 2:18-23 : Suffering wrongfully

- In this passage Peter writes specifically about a workplace situation, an employee-employer relationship
- Vs 19 : "this is commendable" – approved by God, acceptable to God
- Vs 19 : "because of conscience toward God" – as in God's sight, as toward God,
- Vs 19 : "one endures grief, suffering wrongfully"
- Vs 21 : "For to this you were called" – The Christian life is a calling to be Christlike, and part of this is to follow Christ's example in suffering for other peoples wrongs and leaving the outcome to the One who judges righteously. So when you suffer wrongfully, count it an opportunity to walk even as Christ walked (1 John 2:6).
- QUESTION : What should my response be? ANSWER: Vs 23 "commit yourself to Him who judges righteously". Psalm 103:6 Romans 12:17-21
- There could be other situations where we may suffer wrongfully.

##### 1 Peter 3:13-18 : Suffering for doing right

- There are effects that are accomplished through enduring adversity which can be secured in no other way. Some of the brightest traits of character, are the effect of trials.

##### 1 Peter 4:1,2 : Suffering in your striving against sin

- Hebrews 12:3,4

##### 1 Peter 4:12-14,16,19 : Suffering as a Christian

- A sure sign that the Spirit of God is upon you
- Matthew 10:21-25
- Philippians 1:27-30 : When must stand unafraid amidst persecutions.

#### Summary



- Understand that God does not control/manipulate people. So what people do to you or against you is not God's doing!
- God does move upon people to influence them (Proverbs 21:1 / Jeremiah 42:12).
- Regardless of peoples actions towards you – your goal is (1)live as Christ would live (2)keep your heart full of faith toward God (3)keep your heart free from anger or bitterness toward them.
- Understand that God is able to turn what man has intended for evil into something that will work out for your good (Genesis 50:20).
- Don't become "persecution minded" rather be "protection minded". Be more conscious of God's protection over your life rather than man's persecution against you. Jesus said: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him..." (Matthew 10:28)
- Look past the immediate pain to your eternal reward (2 Corinthians 4:18-20)

#### Divine protection versus persecution

How does this balance out with Scriptures on Divine protection like Isaiah 54:17 / Psalm 34:7 / 1 Chronicles 16:22 / Psalm 105:15 ?

- We are not to pray that we will not suffer persecution, but rather to pray that in the midst of it we will be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men – that our lives will be preserved so that each one can complete the work we have to do for the Kingdom. (Romans 15:30,31 / 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 / 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3 / 2 Timothy 4:14-18).
- Even though Paul faced severe persecution, he declared his confidence in the fact that the Lord will deliver him from every evil work.

#### **5. Suffering due to divine discipline and judgment**

Two levels of divine dealings

- Divine Discipline
- Divine Judgment

Divine Discipline – God's loving correction

Hebrews 12:1-17

God lovingly corrects us:

- Through the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16,17)
- By the promptings of His Spirit
- Through other people – The wonder of God's working is evident in the fact that God uses imperfect people to perfect imperfect people!

When we are unwilling to respond to God's diving disciplinary dealings, then we willfully step into disobedience.

Greater the level of maturity, revelation and responsibility in the Kingdom one has, the more serious the consequence of disobedience.

Divine Judgment – God's call to repentance

Joel chs 1,2

- God's judgments are His call to repentance. (Joel 1:13-20)
- Even in judgment there is hope of finding mercy and healing, if there is a genuine repentance. (Joel 2:12-14)
- There are places in Scripture where a certain deed is attributed to God, but must be understood that it was not God directly "doing the deed". Rather it was a consequence of the individual's (or



groups) disobedience that caused them to step out of divine protection and exposing them to satanic activity (e.g. an evil spirit "from God" troubling Saul 1 Samuel 18:10)

#### Divine Judgment in the House of God

- Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
- The young man at Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:1-7 / 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 / 2 Corinthians 7:8-12)
- Hymenaeus & Alexander (1 Timothy 1:18-20 / 2 Timothy 2:16-18 / 2 Timothy 4:14)

#### 6. Suffering due to willing sacrifice

Hebrews 11:24-27, 33-40

Luke 14:27

The cross :

- a place of suffering
- a place of separation Galatians 6:14
- a place of sacrifice

Sacrifice – giving up something you have a right to. E.g. Philippians 3:7

John 12:24-26

Each sacrifice you make will lead you into greater fruitfulness for God's kingdom.

#### Daily sacrifices and Life sacrifices

Daily sacrifices could be things such as separating yourself from unnecessary things, choosing not to do things that others (your peers) may be doing, living a consecrated life, etc.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Romans 12:1-2

#### Life Sacrifices

Example: Abraham (Genesis 12:1), Moses (Hebrews 11:24-26)

Paul worked with his own hands and supported himself in many places where he established churches.

He chose to do this as a willing sacrifice Acts 20:33-35 1 Thessalonians 2:9,10

#### Spirit-led sacrifices versus fleshly sacrifices

John 3:6 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

- Fleshly sacrifices are things we seemingly "suffer" for Christ's sake, but we are really motivated by wrong reasons. These sacrifices and the consequent "sufferings" we endure are NOT pleasing to God.
- Spirit-led sacrifices are sacrifices which the Holy Spirit leads us to make for the cause of Christ. These are sacrifices that are acceptable to God.
- The price that God wants you to pay may not be the same as the price God is calling someone else to pay.
- Pay your price with joy

#### Closing Remarks:

We ask God to give us more patience.

But patience is a byproduct of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is learned.

*Will be continued next week.*



**USEFUL RESOURCES**



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

**YOUTUBE:** <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

**WEBSITE:** <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

**CHURCH:** <https://apcwo.org>

**FREE SERMONS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

**FREE BOOKS:** <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

**DAILY DEVOTIONALS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

**JESUS CHRIST:** <https://examiningjesus.com>

**BIBLE COLLEGE:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

**E-LEARNING:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

**WEEKEND SCHOOLS:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

**COUNSELING:** <https://chrysalislife.org>

**MUSIC:** <https://apcmusic.org>

**MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP:** <https://pamfi.org>

**CHURCH APP:** <https://apcwo.org/app>

**CHURCHES:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

**WORLD MISSIONS:** <https://apcworldmissions.org>