

TRIUMPHANT LIVING IN TURBULENT TIMES

THE BLESSINGS OF SUFFERING

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

The Gathering
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Pastor
Ray of Hope Christian Church | Decatur, GA

II Corinthians 1:3-7

The Blessings of Suffering

My suffering is the
turbulence in my life.

The Greek word for suffering is translated, “tribulation”, something that causes distress. Suffering can range from minor annoyances that we experience every day to major disasters that come sweeping down out of the blue and leave us stricken.

RAY STEADMAN
IMAGINE MORE

Suffering is at the core of human
existence.

WILLIAM N. HINSON
*TRIUMPHANT LIVING IN
TURBULENT TIMES*

Christians are expected to experience suffering.

RAY STEADMAN
IMAGINE MORE

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

I PETER 4:12

Your attitude determines
your altitude.

“We must go through many hardships
to enter the Kingdom of God.”

ACTS 14:22

Paul was no stranger to suffering
– Acts 9:16.

I will show him how much
he must suffer.

Paul embraced his suffering -
Philippians 3:10

Paul endured suffering all his
life – II Corinthians 12:9

My grace is sufficient for you
for my power is made perfect
in weakness.

1. How do you feel when you suffer? Do you feel like it is unfair or unwarranted, that God is punishing you or has forsaken you?

2. How do you respond to your suffering, do you try to deny it, escape it, or reject it, saying this is not what God wants for me?

DISCUSSION

This life is nothing but a
constant death.

For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

ROMANS 8:36

II Corinthians 1:8-9

Paul also knew that the only way
to endure the harsh
realities of life is to lean and
depend on God.

WE SUFFER BECAUSE . . .

We are a fallen people who
live in a fallen world.

Genesis 3

Romans 8:20

WE SUFFER BECAUSE . . .

God uses suffering to
lovingly discipline us.

Hebrews 12:7-11

Romans 8:28

WE SUFFER BECAUSE . . .

Suffering conforms us to Christ by providing us with greater insight into life and a better understanding of the ways of God and the ways we participate in the pain of others.

Psalms 119:67-68, 71

God uses pain and suffering to perfect
our character.

ROMANS 5:3-5

And we 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 in our hearts.

Perseverance produces character.

James 1:2-4

Perseverance produces character.
The word character in the Greek
means “proven reliable.”

Suffering produces in us the capacity and the capability to minister to others—
II Corinthians 1:3-4, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we have received from God.

Paraklesis, which means
“comfort” – “a calling alongside
to help, to give consolation or
encouragement.”

The prophet Isaiah says
in 49:13-15.

He comforts us so that
we might comfort others.

It is through our pain that we receive the anointing to do ministry. Paul says in verse 5, for just as the sufferings of Christ flow into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort which produces in you patient endurance of the same suffering that we suffer.

Suffering is the way to share Christ's glory – Romans 8:17, Now if we are children, then we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his suffering in order that we may also share in his glory.

How should we suffer?

Remember that God is with you
Psalms 56:3-4, Isaiah 43:2

Resist bitterness, anger,
resentment and hatred towards
those who have caused your
pain and suffering.

Luke 6:27-28, Romans 12:21

Trust in God's sovereignty –
God is in control.

Find your hope in the Lord
and in His word.

Allow others to encourage
and comfort you.

There are some things
we cannot see in the Word,
except through our tears.

Persevere – Hebrews 12:1-3, the
grace to persevere is looking to
Jesus the author and finisher of
our faith who for the joy set
before him endured...

Keep your mind fixed on eternity.

Romans 8:18

II Corinthians 4:18

1. How has your suffering matured you?
2. How has suffering made you sensitive to and more prepared to minister to and comfort others?

DISCUSSION

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