

Lessons Learned From Suffering

Sunday PM 09/02/18

Introduction:

Sorrow, pain, death, anguish, are regularly seen on the television. We read newspaper accounts of tragedies, thousands are killed in an earthquake; hundreds die in a mud slide, a family is killed in an auto accident, etc. Most of the time it is impersonal to us but then it hits us. We may wonder why did this happen to me but the more important question is, how will I handle it? What lessons can we learn from human suffering? Read *2 Corinthians 4.16-5.10*.

I) The Occasion of Suffering

A) **Sin is the cause of our suffering. The sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden brought death and suffering into this world.**

1. Think of the family that is killed by a drunk driver, the AIDS victim that contracted the disease through sexual activity, the gang member gunned down in a fight, or the mother that gets a call in the middle of the night to find that her child was killed in an accident.
2. Then there is the mental anguish that sometimes occurs due to sin. *Psalms 31.9-10*.
 - a. The person who finds out they are being divorced.
 - b. The person who gets AIDS.

3. Ted Bundy killed numerous young ladies and then five in one house in Tallahassee, FL.

B) Some of our suffering is because we live in an imperfect world

1. Our bodies wear out, *Psalm 90.10*
2. Diseases, strokes, heart attacks, car accidents happen, *Job 14.1-2*

II) What Can We Learn From Suffering?

A) The Vanity of life

1. Suffering will get our attention and look at our priorities. *Ecc. 1.2-11*
2. How many people will turn over a new leaf because of an illness or near brush with death?
3. Many are materially well off, but possess starving souls.
 - a. Many with cars, boats, all kinds of toys, but no Bible.
 - b. They have plenty of time for games and work, but none for Bible study or prayer.
4. Sickness makes us re-organize our lives, *Job 14.14*

B) The Power of Prayer

1. We will ask people to pray for us or a loved one when there is a perceived need.

2. In times of helplessness we know we must rely on God.
3. Jesus was strengthened through prayer, *Luke 22.41-46*
4. We need to prayer for the sick and those that tend to them and for ourselves, *Acts 16.25*

C) To Sympathize With Others

1. Jesus learned from His suffering, *Hebrews 4.15*
2. He felt compassion for others, *John 11.32-38*
3. We are told to sympathize with others, *Romans 12.15*
4. It is hard for those that are never sick to understand how others feel when they are sick.

D) Whether We Are Faithful Because of Our Blessings Or Because Of Our Convictions

1. Was Job faithful because of his blessings? God knew but Satan did not. In our reading of Job we learn that Job's faithfulness was due to his convictions.
2. There are certain things we learn about ourselves when we face various trials.
3. Christians are to stand firm in the Lord, *Hebrews 13.13*
 - a. Am I ready to suffer for the cause of Christ?

- b. "If I Was On Trial For Being A Christian, Would I Be Convicted?"

E) The Blessings of Being A Christian

1. Many a Christian has been comforted by their brothers and sisters in Christ.
2. The comfort of being in Christ, *2 Timothy 4.8*
 - a. I remember my Dad talking to me and saying that he was not afraid to die.
 - b. The sadness of age is overcome by the hope of heaven.
3. Knowledge that God loves me, *Job 19.25-27*
 - a. Stephen Foster has been called the Father of American music. Among the songs he wrote was "My Old Kentucky Home." Stephen Foster died homeless. In his wallet was a piece of paper that said "Dear friends and kind hearts", 35 cents in confederate money and 3 cents. He died alone.
 - b. A Christian never dies alone. *2 Timothy 2.19*

Conclusion:

We cannot escape the sorrow, pain, and death of a physical world. We can allow it to make us better. We can escape to heaven, *Revelation 21.3-4*.