

CALL to PRAYER - Pray for the families of the victims & missing in the Texas floods (rescuers)

Intro - We have been exploring the question, "What is God's will for my life?" We have looked at generalities and specifics. There are several things the Scripture specifically mentions as being God's will for our lives...but today's item hits us where it hurts. "***It is God's will that we suffer.***" A FAQ is "If God is so good then why is there so much suffering?" In short let me starkly say, "*It is God's good will that we suffer.*" Suffering is not outside of God's will for our lives; it **IS** God's will for our lives. This may be a hard pill to swallow (especially when we are suffering) but sometimes strong medicine is the best medicine. And a Biblical understanding of suffering can help us endure our afflictions. We all have them or are guaranteed to have them. We all suffer... we all go through something... and our suffering is part of God's will for our lives.

1 Peter 4:12-19 - Discerning God's Will - part 7

SURPRISED BY SUFFERING

1. We have a hard time with hardships. (named well) we struggle with "Why??!!"
 - a. The prosperity message permeates our land
 - b. We are often surprised by suffering because we think its contrary to Christianity
 - i. "*People are looking for a problem free Christianity.*" John Murray
2. We shouldn't be surprised by suffering because it is promised.
 - a. 1 Peter 4:12 suffering is not odd, strange or unusual for the Christian...it is normal
 - b. 1] - Suffering is unavoidable in this sin-stained cursed world - Job 14:1 (NKJV)
 - c. 2] - Suffering is part of the Christian life...a promised part
 - i. Phil. 1:29 suffering is granted to us (like belief)
 - ii. 1 Thess. 3:3-4 we are destined / appointed to suffer
 - iii. Acts 14:22 we must go through it
 - iv. John 16:33
3. Suffering is part of the Christian life and message
 - a. Acts 9:16 suffering is part of the initial "sales pitch" of discipleship
 - b. Shackleton's ad "*MEN WANTED for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful, honor and recognition in case of success.*"
 - c. The way of the Cross 1 Peter 4:12-13 "*He who is without trouble is often without God*" CHS

SUFFERING & SONSHIP

- Suffering is not incompatible with being a disciple...it is part & parcel to being a disciple
 - Matthew 16:21-23 "*Get behind Me Satan*"
 - "NO SUFFERING FOR SONS" is a satanic idea
- It was God's will for His Only Begotten Son to suffer....us too
 - Isaiah 53:10a (NIV) 1 Peter 4:19
 - If Christ suffered so too the Christian. If the Only Begotten...also the adopted

- Suffering and Sonship go hand in hand.
 - Hebrews 5:8 Sonship did not exempt Jesus from suffering
- Suffering is no sure sign of separation from sonship
 - Jesus was tempted to question His Sonship because of His suffering
 - Matt. 3:17 – 4:3
 - We will be tempted to question our sonship because of our suffering....
 - *“If God really loved me then this wouldn’t be happening to me.”*
 - Suffering won’t separate us
 - Romans 8:35

SUFFERING & SANCTIFICATION

- God uses suffering to sanctify us.
 - *“I walked a mile with pleasure, she chatted all the way, but I was none the wiser for all she had to say. I walked a mile with sorrow and ne’re a word said she, but oh the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me.”* (Poem quoted by John Murray)
- Some things are best learned in the school of sorrow
 - Learn obedience
 - Heb. 5:8
 - Jesus learned obedience through suffering...so can we
 - Learn perseverance
 - Rom. 5:3
 - To learn endurance, you must endure something.
 - Learn God’s Word
 - Psalm 119:67, 71, 75
 - It has been in the most difficult times that God has taught me the most
 - God’s Word became “real” to me when I really hurt.
 - Learn our faith is real
 - 1 Peter 1:6-7 (Zech. 13:9)
 - Suffering will let you know if your faith is the real thing (Matt. 13:20-21)
 - Temporal suffering teaches eternal hope - 1 Cor. 15:19
 - Psalm 126:5-6
 - Our pain can be productive when it gives us an eternal perspective.
 - *“Turn your eyes upon Jesus...”* (#320)
- Suffering is part of the process/mission, but it is NOT the final destination.
 - 2 Cor. 4:16-17
 - Rom. 8:17
 - Phil. 3:10-11
 - 1 Peter 4:13
 - The way of the cross doesn’t end there...Resurrection!...Glorification!
 - Suffering comes before glory but Christian suffering ends in glory
 - 1 Peter 4:19