

Pain, Suffering, & Evil: The Response of the Believer

Can our agony compare with the agony of Christ as He cries from the cross, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” There is no One better suited to deal with the predicament that we face than the Master who sleeps on the cushion in Mark 4.

“Lord there is no One like You to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on You. O Lord, You are our God; do not let man prevail against you.”
2Chronicles 14:11

1. The real question for the sufferer is not “why” but _____.

The biblical prototype is Job

2. Views on suffering

An illusion?

There is no God

Re-define God—He does not care; He is powerless

For the believer the question is this: *Why did God, who in His sovereignty knows everything & plans everything, create a world in which He knew things would go wrong & so much suffering would result?*

3. The Biblical View

Isaiah 45:7

John 16:33

James 1:2

4. Why Do the Righteous Suffer?

- Common human condition
- Corrective
- Glorify God
- Cosmic

5. Lessons Learned from Suffering

Are we in control?

Do we have a saving faith?

Are we appropriately humble?

Are we clinging to the world and its trappings?

Do we properly long for heaven?

What do we truly love?

Do we value the blessings of God?

Can we help & comfort the broken?

Are we improving spiritually so that we are of greater use to God?

6. How does the church respond to the broken?

Did you ever take a real trip down inside the broken heart of a friend?
To feel the sob of the soul--the raw, red crucible of emotional agony?
To have this become almost as much yours as that of your soul-crushed neighbor? Then, to sit down with him--and silently weep?
This is the beginning of compassion.

Consider the responses of Job's friends

“Though the grace of faith is of universal use throughout the Christian’s life, yet it is especially so when we come to die. Faith has its great work to do at the very last, to help believers to finish well. To die to the Lord so as to honor Him, by patience, hope, and joy so as to leave a witness behind them of the truth of God’s Word and the excellency of His ways.”

Matthew Henry