

The Significance of Suffering

Phil. 1:29 *For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also **suffer** for his sake.*

2 Cor. 4:17-18 *For this slight momentary **affliction** is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

- Suffering poses what has probably been the **most serious problem** for believers.
- Suffering is not only the last thing to be considered useful, but rather something to be avoided, evaded, and shunned. According to the Word of God, suffering is not an accident but a **gift** to be cherished, for when properly received it **works to enhance one's eternity**.
- It is difficult for most people to understand why affliction comes. That is one of the mysteries of the ages. However, regardless of the mystery, we know that **God is love**, and He permits suffering to the saint to work for him an eternal weight of glory.
- No one ever becomes a saint without **suffering**, because **suffering**, properly accepted, is the **pathway to glory**.

An unforgiving spirit will ultimately turn to **bitterness**, and all **bitterness** is ultimately against God.

Heb. 12:14-15 *Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled. (verse in between boxes)*

Will you **seek** and **extend** forgiveness?

“Why, God?”

Dealing with Hurt

Rom. 5:3-4 *We rejoice in our **sufferings**, knowing that **suffering** produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.*

Rom. 8:18 *For I consider that the **sufferings** of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

2 Cor. 1:3-5 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the **sufferings** of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.*

The Defining of Affliction

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, *affliction* is anything causing **pain** or **distress**. It implies any sorrow, suffering, hurt, or heartache imposed by illness, loss, misfortune, etc.

At times the suffering of hurt, adversity, catastrophic disaster, and utter loss is necessary to produce the meekness, compassion, and selflessness necessary for eternal rewards.

*We never learn anything new about God except by **adversity**.*
(Watchman Nee)

*It is good for me that I have been **afflicted**; that I might learn thy statutes.*
(Psa. 119:71)