

had a friend write to me today about pain and suffering. they have a dear one that is now questioning God about that very thing. i think we have all faced that question at some time in some situation. how can a loving God allow His children to go through such pain. that would also apply to ones who are suffering severe persecution for their faith.

i can only quote the following verse from the word of God Himself. "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." james 1:7 just know that God's fire will not destroy. it will only refine us. purify us. the early disciple believed that so much they gladly laid it all down. laid down that which they could never keep for that which they could never lose.

as much as we would like to think sometimes, the world does not revolve around us. God was not created for us, but we for God. we were created to know Him in the fullness of His worthiness. and none of us can yet know the extent of all He wants to share with us. the rewards and joys are yet unknown. the few who have returned from death have allowed us glimpses.

i know the present sufferings may seem overbearing, but the word calls it a light momentary affliction. i would call that correct when compared to eternity. even Jesus endured for "the joy set before Him". i pray we will all consider our situation an opportunity to glorify our Lord and confess even as job did, "though He slay me, yet will i serve Him". (but we

know that it is the devil alone who seeks to slay.) every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father above. resist the devil. fight the devil. give glory to God. Let God have His good and perfect work in you in the trial of your faith.

i readily admit that the following was dawn from sources on the internet. trying to explain suffering is beyond my pay grade. i only know to trust and believe. believe that God isn't finished yet; not finished with our faith. not finished in working out all things. my faith, your faith, His glory.

(not my stuff)

of course, it's not just physical pain that brings about suffering, nonphysical suffering is often silent, but just as painful. those who have been abused wear scars that seemingly never heal. betrayal leaves many wondering if they will ever be whole again. grief causes one's life to halt and become devoid of meaning. and the list could go on and on and on.

we are finite beings trying to grasp at an infinite God.

the first thing we must recognize is that God sees the larger picture and is orchestrating everything for His glory, which is to our benefit. you and i are not the center. there's a larger story unfolding that you and i are not privy too. we have to ask ourselves if we trust that God's plan is good, even if at the moment it doesn't seem good. that's what faith demands,

believing in advance what will only make sense in reverse.

paul points to this mindset in 1 corinthians 13:12. for now, in this life, we see things imperfectly. but God sees the bigger picture and one day He will reveal it to us. until then, we are told to trust in His plan.

the point i'm trying to make is that until we put God at the center, we will struggle with this question of why suffering exists. until we understand that there are things we will not see this side of heaven, this question will cause us to stumble. until we place our trust that God's plan is good, even when it doesn't seem to be, we will never be at peace with this question.

God sees and understands what we cannot. Not only is He in control, He's a good God that is working things for His glory and our benefit. We can trust in His goodness even in the midst of our suffering.

God designed humans to love. but love requires a choice. love cannot be forced, it must be chosen. thus God had to give us the ability to chose, He had to give us free will. without it, we cannot truly experience love.

it's easy to see this in someone else life and doubt in our own life. we love stories of other peoples suffering being used for good. but often doubt that God can use our suffering for anything of value. the suffering we experience we see as too harmful, the

damage too extreme, to be repaired much less be used for something good. but that's exactly what God is in the business of doing. taking the bad of this world and redeeming for something good.

the assumption is that the story is over. but God isn't finished yet. just because He hasn't, doesn't mean He won't. suffering exists because the story is not over. God is still pursuing His people. but one-day suffering will end and the final chapter will be written. then we will be able to see the whole story and how masterfully it was written and how much love God has for us.

suffering will force us to move, we don't get to decide that. we decide where we move too. will we turn from God because we think He's not good, not loving, not trustworthy because of our pain? or will we turn to God trusting that while things don't make sense now, one day God will reveal the grandeur picture?

we get to choose. but before you decide just consider that God didn't spare Himself, He entered into suffering Himself. He knows what you are experiencing and wants to walk with you through it. may you all dwell securely in His peace and love. the devil's day of reckoning quickly comes.

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