



Suffering

“Most people can bear adversity. But if you wish to know what a man really is, **let him accept then embrace adversity.**”

In my small group...

This question was recently asked of me...

“How do you suffer well?”



Why Am I qualified to talk about this?

I was Born 23 years ago

With multiple health conditions



What does it mean to suffer??

- Suffering according to dictionary...
 - Experience or be subject to *something bad* or *unpleasant*
- “*Greeking out*”-
 - Suffer, endure, bear, tolerate, put up with it
 - Suffer, ail
 - Have a bad time, suffer



“Suffering means the same...”







This is My Personal Mindset on Suffering:

- God has written your story
- Accept then embrace
- The two things you need: to *accept* then *embrace*
- Sow, Sow, Sow



God Knows your own story

John 1:3-5

(NKJV)

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

- The Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit were never created
Everything (other than the Trinity) that exists was Created



Free Will

Genesis 2:9

The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.

In the middle of the garden there was the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

All of creation has free will... We see this in satan's rebellion



The Definition of Accept

“Take upon oneself, a responsibility,
acknowledge **that a situation exists**”



Let's Look at Accepting Suffering

- Accepting suffering... is something everyone can do
- The **Key** difference is the *attitude* in *accepting suffering*



Let's look at The story of Joseph and Jacob

The story of Joseph is important to the next point...



Jacob

- When Joseph's brothers came to purchase food from Egypt the first time Joseph's younger brother Benjamin stayed behind
- Jacob was **AFRAID OF LOSING** Benjamin because he **NEVER** recovered from losing Joseph
- Jacob just *accepted suffering* and in so doing... It *defined* him...



Embrace

“an act of accepting or supporting something, or a situation willingly or enthusiastically”



Embracing Suffering

- Begins with accepting suffering
- You can't embrace something without first accepting it
- Those who embrace suffering *don't let their suffering define them*
- Jesus is a perfect example of this
- Involves letting God have all the glory
- And giving God all of the glory
- No matter what



Now, Let's go back to Joseph

- Joseph **ACCEPTED AND EMBRACED** his suffering
- Joseph's *attitude* was the exact opposite of his father – Jacob
- Embracing suffering means to *not make* your suffering what *defines* you
- You need to realize, like Joseph did, that God has a plan for you and *what you are going through*



Genesis 50:20 (MSG)

Don't you see, you planned evil against me but
God used those same plans for my good,
as you see all around you right now—*life for many people.*



My journal entry (May 20th this year) on Genesis 50:20

What the enemy or others may use to bring down suffering upon us, God will use it for Him and His Glory.

It is only when we learn to accept, then embrace suffering then God can use us despite our suffering.

God wants to use vessels that are willing to both pursue God and be pursued by Him and a vessel that's willing to be used by Him to lead others to Jesus. No matter how depressing or racked with hardships your personal stay on Earth is, remember this; we pursue and were created by a very personal God.



My journal entry on Genesis 50:20

Since we are created by a personal God, He wants us to embrace our story, just as Jesus embraced the cross. When we become willing vessels to be used by Him, then and only then He will use us to bring others to Jesus and fulfill Genesis 50:20.”



How I have learned to Accept then Embrace

Your suffering molds your character

Don't compare and say "It's not fair"

There isn't a scripture in the Bible where "*comparing*"
yourself to others produces a good outcome...



Philippians 4:11-13

Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.



Here is what you need to Accept then Embrace

- Compassion
- Mercy

Movie Clip...

“Let’s See what the Pirates have to say about this”



The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything...

So you want to purchase compassion and mercy?

SCAMPI ON A CLEAN SKEWER
10.00

COMPASSION
MARKET PRICE

MERCY
MARKET PRICE

Compassion and Mercy from Jonah

A quick overview of the story of Jonah...

- God is showing Jonah compassion and mercy and at the same time using him to show compassion and mercy
- **First time**, God used the whale to transport Jonah close to Nineveh
- **Second time**, God used Jonah to show *compassion* and *mercy* on Nineveh



Something I need to say...



Now let's look at ... Sow, Sow, Sow

The Lord wants to use you where you are,
both in your life and where you live

God can use *all of your story* (*which includes your suffering*)
to inspire others
and to lead others to Jesus



Matthew 13:3-8 (MSG)

Where Jesus tells the parable of the sower and seeds...

³⁻⁸ “What do you make of this? A farmer planted seed.

As he scattered the seed,

some of it fell on the road, and birds ate it.

Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun came up it withered just as quickly.

Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled by the weeds.

Some fell on good earth, and produced a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.



Sowing

- You are *always sowing into others*, like it or not
- You are either sowing one of two things:
 - The things of yourself and your nature
 - The things of Jesus into the lives of others
- To sow the work of God and the presence of the Lord requires that you *accept* and *embrace* suffering



Let's Summarize what I have talked about...

By *Accepting* then *Embracing* your *trials*
and *tribulations* – your *suffering*

You *define them* rather than letting *them define you!*

- In order to *suffer well* you need these 3 things:
 - *Accept* then *Embrace*
 - *Compassion* and *Mercy*
 - *And Sow... Sow... Sow...*

