



**Compassionately Responding
to People Suffering with Life Issues**

Overview

- **Life Issues**
- **Suffering**
- **Worldview of Suffering**
- **Jesus' Suffering**
- **Scriptural view of Suffering**
- **Compassion**
- **Jesus Moved by Compassion**
- **Compassionate Response to Suffering**

Life Issues

- Marriage
- Fertility
- Birth
- Adoption
- Disability
- End-of-Life



Suffering

- **Suffering in body, mind, and spirit**
- **When?**
 - Since the Fall into sin
 - According to God's will (Job 1:9-11)
- **Why do Christians suffer?**
 - Worldview of suffering
 - Scriptural view of Christian suffering

Worldview of Suffering

- **Misperception of suffering**
- **Based on what you do and how you feel**
 - Think, choose, act
- **Results**
 - Immediate avoidance = greater long-term suffering
 - Self-sacrifice = taking on unnecessary burden
 - Hinder God's plan for suffering
 - Suffering becomes purposeless
 - Helpless and hopeless – Satan's goal

Jesus' Suffering

- **Physical suffering**

- By His wounds/strikes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5)
- Crucifixion (Matthew 26; Mark 15, Luke 23)

- **Mental and emotional suffering**

- Mocking (Psalm 22:6-8)
- Despising shame (Hebrews 12:2)
- Abandoned by friends (Mark 14:50-72)

- **Spiritual suffering**

- Stricken, smitten, and afflicted (Isaiah 53:4)
- Abandoned by God (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34)

Christian Suffering

- **We are intended to suffer**

- To be conformed to image of Christ (Romans 8:29)
- Suffering given as a gift (Philippians 1:29-30)

- **It is the Lord's will**

- Pick up your cross and follow me (Luke 9:23; Mark 8:34)
- Take my yoke and learn from me (Matthew 11:29)
- Suffer because our Lord suffered (1 Corinthians 15:49)

- **God, hidden in the opposites, is nearer to us**

- Jesus' death brings mankind life (John 12:24-26)
- He is with us in trouble and will deliver us (Psalm 91:15)
- Hidden for a moment and then gathers us with great mercies (Isaiah 54:7-10)

Christian Suffering

- **God's love is revealed**
 - Ultimate love in the death of His Son (John 3:16-17)
 - Discipline for those He loves (Hebrews 12:6-8; Revelations 3:19)
 - All works together for the good (Romans 8:28)
- **Orients us to the Word and cross of Jesus**
 - Leads us to prayer (Isaiah 26:16)
 - Ongoing for eternal life (Hebrews 13:12-14)
 - Makes us dependent on God (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

Christian Suffering

- **For our Christian development**
 - Prepare us for the greater glory (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)
 - Yields peaceful fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:11)
 - Reveals sin (1 Corinthians 11:30-32; Jeremiah 30:11)
 - Testing our faith (James 1:2-12)
- **We are encouraged in the battle against Satan**
 - Confident Satan cannot harm us eternally (Matthew 10:28-30)
 - God is for me, who can be against me (Romans 8:31-32)

How Christians Suffer

- **In many ways** (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)
- **Suffering is normal** (1 Peter 4:12)
- **Suffering is never too severe**
 - You will not be overtaken (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - Hope removes shame and guilt (Romans 5:5)
 - Prayer delivers relief (Psalm 50:15)
 - Faith in God's purpose and His love, not the circumstances (Job 13:15)
- **Rejoice in suffering**
 - Joy and blessing in suffering (1 Peter 4:13-14)
 - Spiritual contentment (Philippians 4:11-13)
 - Martyred for His namesake (Acts 5:41)

Compassion

- **Greek – splagchnizomai** (splangkh-nid'-zom-ahee)
 - To be moved by the inward parts
- **Movement by compulsion**
- **Not an act by human nature** (Romans 3:9-18)
- **Lord acting through us**

Jesus Moved by Compassion

- **Harassed and helpless without a shepherd** (Matthew 9:36)
- **Healing**
 - Diseases and afflictions (Matthew 14:14; Mark 6:34);
 - Blind men (Matthew 20:34)
 - Cleansed the leper (Mark 1:41)
- **Feeds the masses** (Matthew 15:32; Mark 8:2)
- **Casts out demons**
 - Boy with seizures (Mark 9:22)
- **Restores life**
 - Widow's son (Luke 7:13)

Compassionate Response to Suffering

- **Do not explain suffering** (Job 11:7-8)
- **Act as ambassadors of Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)
- **Speak about suffering in Truth and Love** (2 Timothy 4:2)
- **Strengthen dependence on Christ**
 - Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:1-2)
 - Daily repentance and renewal through forgiveness of sins (James 5:14-16)
 - Prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- **Be prepared to share the reason for your Hope** (1 Peter 3:14-16)

Questions

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