

Women & More
A 'call' and 'walk' Experience

Suffering is Part of Life

Worksheet 2: **September 10, 2015**—*attitude*

What is the purpose of suffering? Is it really necessary? Why do some seemingly suffer more than their fair share? When God could stop it, why doesn't he? Scripture is all over this subject, and it is only here that we will uncover and discover where suffering originates; its causes, and its effects, particularly in the children of God.

“If you recognize the hand of God, and make no opposition to his will,
you will have peace in the midst of affliction...
Nothing so shortens and soothes suffering as this spirit of non-resistance.”

—Bishop Fenelon

“Christ's blessing oftentimes means sorrow
but even sorrow is not too great a price to pay
for the privilege of touching other lives with benediction.”

—J. R. Miller

*We need to stop telling God how big our storm is,
and remind the storm, instead, just how big our God is!*

Prepare by Soaking in Scripture:

Psalm 119:82

Psalm 85:7

John 18:11 (the 'cup' of Jesus' suffering was from the Father)

Philippians 1:29

James 5:10-12

Scripture to Memorize:

Psalm 119:50 *“My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life, O LORD.”*

Prayer Requests and Praises:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____

Questions for Mentor-group Discussion:

1. What is the purpose of suffering in this world?

2. How is the Christian to suffer, and what are to be some of its effects on the believer?

ANSWER to the first part: **Suffer well!**

Sufferings' effects on the believer include:

To: _____

To: _____

To: _____

3. What do you understand to be some causes of suffering for the believer?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Recommended Reading:

A Step Further, Joni Eareckson and Steve Estes

The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Portrait of Perfect Suffering: Jesus Suffered Well!

Isaiah, in 53:1-5, movingly describes the suffering Savior and the benefits to us:

“Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

²“He grew up before him like **a tender shoot**, and like **a root out of dry ground**. He had **no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him**.

³“He was **despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering**. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was **despised, and we esteemed him not**.

⁴“Surely he **took up our infirmities** and **carried our sorrows**, yet we considered him **stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted**.

⁵“But he was **pierced for our transgressions**, he was **crushed for our iniquities**; the **punishment that brought us peace was upon him**, and **by his wounds we are healed**.”

JESUS...

- v2: —tender shoot
 —root out of dry ground
 —no beauty or majesty to attract us to him
 —nothing in his appearance that we should desire him
- v3: —*despised* by men
 —rejected by men
 —man of sorrows
 —familiar with suffering
 —one from whom men hide their faces
 —*despised* (the second time in one verse)
 —not esteemed by us
- v4 —**took up our infirmities**
 —**carried our sorrows**
 —we considered him stricken by God
 —smitten by Him
 —afflicted
- v5 —**pierced for our transgressions**
 —**crushed for our iniquities**
 —**punishment that brought us peace was upon him**
 —**by his wounds we are healed**.”

Hebrews 5:7-10 “During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. **Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered** and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.” God’s plan for His own Son included suffering—injustice—and death!

So how should the Christian suffer?

Our attitude and aim should be like Jesus— to suffer well!

Philippians 2:5-8 ***“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!”***

Webster’s *New American Dictionary* weighs in on the meaning of SUFFER 1 : to feel or endure pain 2 : experience, undergo 3 : to bear loss, damage, or injury 4 : allow, permit syn endure, abide, tolerate, stand, brook, stomach; SUFFERING pain, misery and hardship.

There are PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL and SPIRITUAL sufferings of abuse, abandonment, accident, and affliction. We can be bullied, hated, maligned, misunderstood, opposed, persecuted, raped, rejected, ridiculed, slandered, and falsely accused. There is certainly catastrophe, damage, devastation, disaster, failure, famine, hardship, infirmity, injury, ruin, sickness, torture and trouble of every kind. And there are the problems of grief and guilt, of disability and loss, of loneliness and chronic disease, and so much more.

All we have to do is look up the words listed above in our Bible’s concordance and we will find many, many verses for each distress. Scripture says, *“In this world you will have trouble”* in **John 16:33**. *“In fact,”* says 2 Timothy 3:12, *“everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”* But Paul in Romans 8:35-37—*“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall **trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?** 36As it is written: ‘For your sake we **face death all day long**; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ 37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”*

♥**The help-line is open:** Jeremiah 33:3 *“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”* Psalm 50:15 *“...and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”* Because, says Psalm 46:1, *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”* And Proverbs 24:16 *“For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.”*

“He who has fixed the bounds of our habitation, has also fixed the bounds of our tribulation.”

—Charles H. Spurgeon

“Evil circumstances are changed into good when they are received with an enduring trust in the love of God.”

—Bishop Fenelon

My Life is in Your Hands

Verse 1: Life can be so good.
Life can be so hard.
Never knowing what each day will bring to where you are.
Sometimes I forget.
And sometimes I can't see
That whatever comes my way You'll be with me.

CHORUS:

My life is in your hands; my heart is in your keeping
I'm never without hope, not when my future is with You.
My life is in your hands, and though I may not see it clearly
I will lift my voice and sing, 'cause Your love knows amazing things—
Lord, I know my life is in your hands.

Verse 2: Nothing is for sure.
Nothing is for keeps.
All I know is that Your love will live eternally.
So I will find my rest
And I will find my peace,
Knowing that You'll meet my every need. (repeat chorus)

REFRAIN:

When I'm at my weakest, oh You'll carry me
Then I become my strongest, Lord in your hands...

Second half of CHORUS:

My life is in your hands, and though I may not see it clearly
I will lift my voice and sing, 'cause Your love knows amazing things—
Lord, I know my life is in your hands.
I trust you Lord, my life is in your hands!

—Music and Lyrics by Kathy Troccoli