

“Why Do I Experience Suffering In My Life?”

John 9:1-5

Sermon Series: “Trials”

Introduction: We often wrestle with the issue of why we experience so much suffering in our lives. In the previous message in this series, we looked at this question in a general sense as it pertains to the world at large. Today, we are going to zero in and look more specifically at the question of why we have suffering in our individual lives. Let me say a few things up front. We cannot always answer the why question. Sometimes it is not necessarily even helpful to us to be able to answer the why question. Also, there is the reality that difficulties are part of living in a fallen world. However, it can be helpful at times to identify why we are experiencing suffering because it helps us to respond properly.

Main Idea: There would be no suffering if there were no sin, but not all suffering is directly caused by our particular sin. Sometimes it is caused by my sin, sometimes by the sin of others, and sometimes it has nothing to do with sin directly but is part of God’s greater plan for our good and His glory.

1. Sometimes we suffer because of our own sin. The Bible is full of examples of this truth and so is contemporary life. Ezekiel 18:4c says, “The soul who sins shall die.” Galatians 6:7 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” This is the concept of personal responsibility. We often bring our own problems upon ourselves. However, the good news is that Jesus reaped what we sowed on the cross so there is forgiveness. Forgiveness does not necessarily eliminate scars and earthly problems though. **If we are suffering because of our sin, what should we do? The answer is repentance (Luke 13:1-5).**

2. Sometimes we suffer because of the sin of other people. Once again, the Bible and contemporary life are full of examples of this. Everything we do affects other people, and the people we affect the most are those closest to us. Also, the more influence we have, the

more we end up affecting others. Romans 14:7 says, “For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.” **If we are suffering because of the sin of others, how should we respond?**

A. Do not seek vengeance (Romans 12:19-21).

B. Forgive (Ephesians 4:32).

C. Sometimes we have to avoid people who lead us in the wrong direction (1 Corinthians 15:33, Proverbs 1:8-19, Proverbs 13:20).

3. Sometimes we suffer because God has a greater plan for our good and His glory that involves us going through difficulties.

The Bible teaches us that God uses difficulties to refine and mature us and glorify Himself (see James 1:1-8 for one example). Charles Spurgeon said, “God is too wise to be mistaken and too loving to be unkind so when you can’t trace God’s hand, trust God’s heart.” Remember that it is more important to know **who** God is than to understand **why** things happen. Job had to ultimately learn to trust that God is God, and he was not. Habakkuk 2:4 says, “Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith.” God calls us to trust Him.

Conclusion: Trust that God has a good purpose, is for us, and loves us completely even in the midst of suffering (see Romans 8:18-39). If you are not a Christian, do what the man that Jesus cured of his blindness did and personally believe in Jesus (John 9:35-41).