

BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE

DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES



DEALING WITH
DISAPPOINTMENT AND LOSS

Track I.8
Neil Gerber

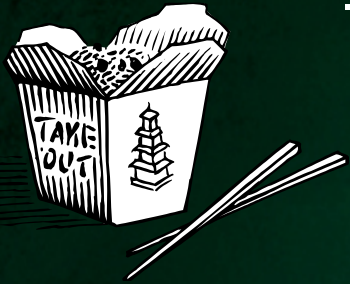


DISAPPOINTMENT AND LOSS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

- Main Takeaway

- We can't avoid experiencing the pain of suffering, but we can experience the joy of God's blessing if we learn to respond biblically



- Key Verses

- **Deuteronomy 29:29** The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.
- **Job 5:7** but man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.





DISAPPOINTMENT AND LOSS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

- Key Verses

- **Deuteronomy 8:2** And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not....
- **Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.



DISAPPOINTMENT AND LOSS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Key Verses

- **2 Corinthians 4:7** But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.
- **Philippians 1:29** For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake
- **1 Peter 4:12** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.



THE BIG PICTURE





DISAPPOINTMENT AND LOSS

PART I: "THE BIG PICTURE"

To understand why we experience suffering and its purpose in our life, we must first understand:

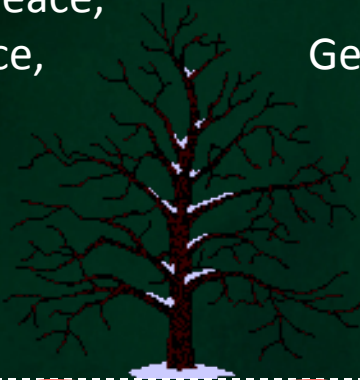
- The sovereignty and character of God
- The glorious gospel of grace through Jesus Christ
- The doctrine of biblical "hope"



SUFFERING= The Heat

Joy,
Love,
Peace,
Patience,
Kindness,
Goodness,
Faithfulness,
Outer man

Inner man



“HEART” =
Loves God first, at peace,
guilt free, secure,
loves others
before self

Gentleness,
Self-control

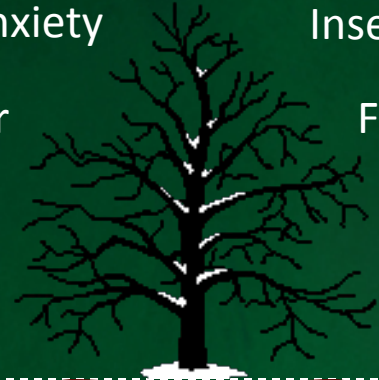
MAN SEES
GOD SEES



Jesus:

- Provides atonement
- Identifies idols (wants, desires, cravings)
- Calls you to repentance
- Transforms heart / mind

Life-Dominating
Sins
Depression Bitterness
Anxiety Insensitivity
Anger Fears
Selfishness
Pride



“HEART” =
sinful, calculating,
selfish, greedy,
depraved,
self-love!



WORSHIP: WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH “REAL PROBLEMS”

- People with serious and difficult problems
- People who have had problems for a long time
- People who have had life-shattering experiences
- People who have failed
- People who are spiritually weak
- People who are elderly
- People who have marriage difficulties
- People who are facing marriage
- People who are depressed
- People who are suicidal
- All counselees dealing with disappointment or loss



UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO OUR SUFFERING: QUESTIONS WE ASK

1. What is “Suffering”?
2. Why Does God Allow Suffering?
 - Is God good? - Does God care? - Where are you
 God?
3. What is God’s Purpose in Suffering?
4. How Are We to Respond to Suffering?
5. How Can We Help Others Who Are Suffering?





PART II - UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE?

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

James 1:1-5

1 Peter 4:12-19



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? 2 COR. 1:3-11

God's Character and Works –

- Blessed Father of mercies (v.3)
- God of all comfort who comforts us (v.4)

God's Purpose for His People –

- To learn to trust God, not ourselves (v.9)
- To comfort and encouragement others (v.4-6)
- To breathe biblical hope into people's lives (v.10)
- To give thanks and gratitude to God – worship (v.11)



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? 2 COR. 4:7-18

What Is Suffering?

- “Momentary” (v.17) – set duration of time, immediate and present
- “Light” (v.17) – a measurement of weight, burden to bear
- “Affliction” (v.17) – pressure (the heart in the diagram). Trouble which produces anguish.
- “Outer man is perishing” (v.16) – being destroyed.

What is God Accomplishing?

- “Inner man is being renewed” (v.16) – in the mind and in the image of God.
- “Producing an eternal weight of glory” (v.17) – beyond all comparison

Our Response?

- Courage: do not lose hope (v.16)
- Perspective : see things from God’s eyes and eternal reward (v.18)



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? JAMES 1:1-5

What Is Suffering?

- “When” (v.2) – troubles are certain in life (not if, but when)
- “Fall into” (v.2) – troubles come upon us swift and unexpectedly
- “Trials” (v.2) – troubles show us what’s in our heart (Deut. 8:2)
- “Various kinds” (v.2) – troubles come in all stripes and colors

What is God Accomplishing?

- “that you may be perfect, lacking nothing” (v.4) – trials produce godly change in our lives that make us more useful to God (v.18).
- “Complete” (v.4) – full effect (holoklegos – 360 degree image).
Spiritual maturity and character in the image of God.



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? JAMES 1:1-5

Our Response?

- “Rejoice” (v.2) – in God, not circumstances or self
- “Endure patiently” (James 1:3, 5:7-11)
- “Ask” - pray for wisdom (v.5)



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? 1 PETER 4:12-19

What Is Suffering?

- “Beloved” (v.12) – troubles are not accidents: they are designed and planned by God for His glory and for our good.
- “Do not be surprised” (v.12) – troubles are a certainty: they will come.
- “Fiery trial” “to test you” (v.12) – used of a fiery furnace (Mal. 3:1-3 describes God’s coming a purifying fire) to melt metal and refine impurities; painful experiences and difficulty.
- In contrast to a “consuming fire (Mal. 4:1) upon unbelievers.



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING: GOD'S PURPOSE? 1 PETER 4:12-19

What is God Accomplishing?

- God shares Christ's suffering with us (v.13)
- God shares Christ's glory and Spirit with us (v.13)
- That we may glorify God (v.14,16)

Our Response?

- Rejoice and be glad (v.13) – in God, not circumstances
- Self-examination (v. 14-15) – some trials have nothing to do with our faith.
- “Glorify God” (v.16) – worship is always the purpose of testing.



PART III.

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING?

APPLICATION TIME

- Psalms 42-43
- The Book of Job



OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING: PSALMS 42-43

1. What was happening in the Psalmist's life?
2. How was it affecting the Psalmist?
 - Emotionally
 - Physically?
3. How does he respond spiritually?
4. What can we learn from the Psalmist?



OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING: JOB

1. What chief characteristic defines the man (Job1:1)?
2. How does this characteristic display itself in suffering?
1:20-22 2:9-10 13:15-16 19:23-27
3. What is Job's primary desire in his suffering?
10:1-2 13:2,15 23:3-7 27:1-6 29:1-5 31:1-6
4. What do we learn from God's answer to Job (chapters 38-41) ?
5. What do we learn from the epilogue (chapter 42)?



PART IV. SUMMARY

GOD'S PURPOSES IN SUFFERING

- How could my suffering ever be an expression of God's grace in my life?
 - God is not the author of sin, nor the source of evil (Jas 1:13)
 - Yet God redeems our seasons of trial and loss for:
 - Spiritual maturity (Rom. 5:3; Jas 1:2-4)
 - Growth in Christ-likeness (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:7-5:1)
 - Spiritual Testing or Discipline (Deut. 8:2-5; Heb. 12:5-11)
 - To display His faithfulness (Ps. 119:75-76; 1 Cor. 10:13)
 - Greater humility or dependence upon God (2 Cor. 1:8-11, 12:7-10)
 - Preparation for greater ministry (2 Cor. 1:3-7)



PART IV. SUMMARY

OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

- Praying for James 1:5 wisdom & perspective
- Rejoice in God's goodness
- Cling to Christ & His finished work
- Fight against your own sin
- Keep a clear conscience before God
- Be on the alert to overcome common temptations
- Trust God's sovereignty in your circumstances & relationships
- Always seek to serve others more than yourself (be a blessing)
- Place hope in the right goals, right reality, and right standard of truth and normalcy (our perfect model is Christ)
- Our goal must remain worshipping, pleasing, & glorifying our Creator in all our suffering; and to "imitate" Christ



PART IV. SUMMARY

GOD'S PROMISES TO US IN SUFFERING

- Consider further all that God provides to you in your suffering:
 - HIS FAITHFULNESS: 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - HIS MERCY: 1 Peter 1:1-3
 - HIS PROTECTION POWER: 1 Peter 1:4-5, 5:10
 - HIS GLORY: 1 Peter 4:14
 - HIS JOY: James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:6-9
 - HIS GOODNESS: James 1:16-18
 - HIS SOVEREIGNTY: Genesis 50:20; Job 1:21; Romans 8:28-39
 - HIS CARE: 1 Peter 5:7
 - HIS INFINITE WISDOM: Ps. 147:3-5; Rom. 11:33-34, 16:27
 - HIS HELP: Romans 8:26-27; Hebrews 2:18, 4:16



PART V. HELPING OTHERS WHO ARE SUFFERING (LUKE 24:11-35)

Jesus Is the Model of Suffering and Disciple-Making

1. Make Disciples (v.13-19)

- Come along side of others in their problems (v.15)
- Enter their lives and share their burdens (v.17-19)
- Speak grace into their lives (v.27)
- Break bread together – be a blessing to others (v.30)

2. Give Direction (v.25-29) – “Hope”

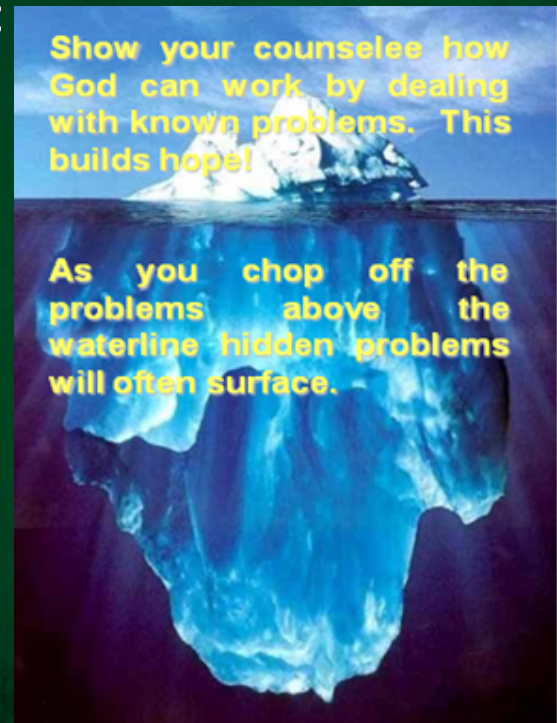
- Doxology – biblical counsel and instruction
- Help others refocus (see life as God sees it)
- Get our eyes on God, not ourselves
- Provide Christ-centered solutions (v.26-27)
- Show Christ to others “the scars in our hands” (v.30-31)



PART V. HOW TO HELP OTHERS IN SUFFERING

- **How To Inspire Hope:**

- Biblical illustration: Barnabas - “son of encouragement” (Acts 4:34-36, 9:26-27, 11:21-24, 15:36-40; 2 Tim. 4:11)
- Goal: Help the disciple grow in their relationship with Christ
- How: Teach the disciple to think biblically:
 - About the situation
 - About God’s character
 - About the possibility for good
 - About the divine resources
 - About the nature and cause of the problem
 - About their language
- Be Solution-Oriented
- Follow the “Iceberg Principle”
- Be a model of hope & victory





PART VI.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Romans, Philippians, 1 Peter, & James
- Trusting God, Even When Life Hurts, Jerry Bridges
- It's Not Fair, Wayne Mack & Deborah Howard
- "Where is God when Things Go Wrong?" John Blanchard
- "Christ & Your Problems", Jay Adams
- The Power of Suffering, John MacArthur
- The Cup and the Glory: Lessons on Suffering and the Glory of God, Greg Harris
- How to Handle Trouble, Jay Adams
- Overcoming Evil, by Jay Adams
- The Attributes of God, A.W. Tozer
- Knowing God, J.I. Packer
- Damsels in Distress, Martha Peace



PART VII. GOING DEEPER

- **Summarize your Main Take-Aways**
- **Memorize Ps. 119:67-75?**
- **Word Document: *God in the Psalms*, Bible study on finding God in the Book of Psalms**
- **Word Document: *Praying According to Philippians 4*, Bible study on how to respond to trials and the promises of God in them**
- **Booklet: *Where is God When Things Go Wrong*, John Blanchard (also available in pdf format)**
- **Booklet: *Ultimate Questions*, John Blanchard (also available in pdf format)**



GOING DEEPER

- **Booklet: *Responding Properly When God's Plan Differs from your Own*, Steve Viars**
- **Booklet: *Why Me? Comfort for the Victimized*, Paul David Tripp**
- **Booklet: *Suffering, Eternity makes a Difference*, Paul David Tripp**
- **Booklet: *The Peace and Joy Principle*, Joe Propri**
- **Booklet: *You Can Trust God*, Jerry Bridges**



GOING DEEPER

- **Book: *Trusting God*, Jerry Bridges**
- **Book: *Don't Waste your Cancer*, John Piper**
- **Book: *Getting Past Your Past*, Steve Viars**
- **Audio Message: John Piper, *Why Was this Man Born Blind?***



GOING DEEPER

<http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/sermons/why-was-this-child-born-BLIND>

Book: Suffering and the Sovereignty of God, John Piper - download

<http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/online-books/suffering-and-the-sovereignty-of-god>

Audio Message: Darlene Rose testimony;

http://jesusaogm.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=13&Itemid=41