

Notes:

"When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied."

Isaiah 53:11a

What could make incredible suffering worth it?

"My righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins."

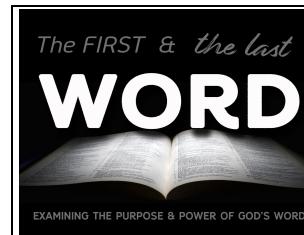
Isaiah 53:11b

We are his living hope.

This led Paul to write: I want to know Christ and the power that raised him from the dead. I want to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death.

¹¹Then I have hope that I myself will be raised from the dead. Philippians 3:10-11

Sierra Community Church February 6th, 2022 Part 7- Dan Wilvers



Why does a good God allow evil and suffering?

1 Peter 1:3-12

Why does a good God allow evil and suffering?

If God allows evil and suffering to continue because he can't stop it, then he might be good but he's not all-powerful.

On the other hand, if God allows evil and suffering to continue because he could stop it and yet he won't stop it, then he might be all-powerful, but he's not all good.

Either way, the good, all-powerful God of the Bible couldn't exist. It's a pretty formidable argument!

What do we say to it?

Notice what Peter says to believers in 1 Peter 1:6,7

... though you must endure many trials for a little while. ... your faith (if it) remains strong through many trials, will bring you much praise and glory and honor...

He says the pain you're going through now doesn't have to weaken faith at all, rather it ought to strengthen faith.

We should say to unbelievers; if there is no God, all we have is nature. We are nothing more than the bi product of chemical soup. So, if there's nothing but nature, then there's nothing more natural than violence. It's how you and I got here. Natural selection, right? The strong eating the weak.

Community Group Questions:

1. How does the idea of suffering with a purpose sit with you?
2. All of our sorrows and hurts will one day be swallowed up in eternal victory, meaning that our victory will be greater for having suffered first. Can you think of any examples in this life where this is true?
3. What will you tell yourself going forward when life gets hard?

In nature violence and suffering are perfectly natural.

Suffering is a part of nature. Because nature is violent.

What does the Bible tell us about how we should approach evil and suffering in this world?

1. The story of the Bible culminates in God suffering in our place.

...even though you must endure many trials for a little while.⁷ These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold.

1 Peter 1:6,7

"When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.³ For I am the Lord, your God..."

Isaiah 43:1-3

Sounds inspiring, how do I know it's true?"

Because only Christianity, of all the religions of the world, says that in Jesus Christ, God became vulnerable and was subject to suffering, pain and even death.

Jesus suffered everything we have ever suffered and then some. (Jesus) endured the cross, disregarding its shame...³ Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. ⁴ After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin. Hebrews 12:2-4

But who did? Jesus. And not for His own sin but for ours. For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin...

2 Corinthians 5:21

And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! ⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. Isaiah 53:4,5

2. To trust of God amidst suffering we must have a living hope.

It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation,⁴ and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay.

1 Peter 1:3,4

Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

1 Corinthians 15:20

It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, ... those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

1 Corinthians 15:52,53

Jesus Christ's resurrection means our resurrection is going to happen. Which means everything sad, and horrible is going to be brought into our future glory and make it infinitely better than it would have been if we'd never had any of those experiences.

3. Let the Good News own your heart.

¹⁰This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you.¹¹ They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward.

1 Peter 1:10,11

¹²They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.

1 Peter 1:12

Jesus came through an incredible furnace of affliction. **How?** Hebrews 12:2 says, "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross."