

Same God, Different Seasons

3-04-26

5 - When God Allows Pain (#6 When God Allows Joy)

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome those online.
- B. Slide1-3 Holy Week. Easter Experience/The Road to Resurrection. Easter.
- C. Slide4 Prayer: God, I know that **You hurt** when *your children hurt*. **And** as a human being with a limited mindset, *I wouldn't even attempt to offer a reason why?*
 - 1. **But at the same time:** God, we wanna dwell in your sanctuary. We wanna push into your presence. **We ask**, right in the middle of *our hurt and heartache, grief and pain*, please start to reveal **Your goodness**. **And** if even for *just a moment* to sense, God ... **You are with us!**

II. Slide5a Intro: When God Allows Pain (When God Allows Joy)

- A. What kind of **pain** tests your faith the most: physical, relational, financial, emotional, or spiritual?
- B. You're going to see that **suffering** is actually not contrary to the story of the Bible, But that **suffering** is actually central to the story of the Bible.
 - 1. **Christianity makes sense of, gives meaning to, and offers a solution for the evil and suffering that we experience.** Craig Groeschel
- C. We **are not** answering the problem of pain in 45 minutes. **Yet we are learning** how to **shepherd people** who are in it!
- D. Big Idea: God is **never absent** in the pain He allows. **And** what He allows, He intends to **redeem**.
 - 1. Slide5b We can say, What God **allows**, He **does not waste**. **Or**, Pain may be permitted, **but** it is never purposeless.

III. Slide6a 1 PAIN IS NOT THEORETICAL

- A. Let's be honest: If you live long enough, **pain** will find you. (Loss. Diagnosis. Betrayal. Prodigals).

1. And in those moments, the question isn't **abstract**, it's **personal**:
"If God is good, why this?" (don't rush past that tension).

- B. **Slide6b** Or the age old ... **Why do bad things happen to good people?** Prob with this?
1. *None of us are biblically GOOD people. (none good, no not one. Rm.3:10)*
 2. *No one is good except God alone. (Mk.10:18)*
- C. There has only been **one** truly good person in all of human history, **Jesus**. (and He *suffered the greatest evil*).
1. Yet **the cross** reveals something **profound** about God.
 - a) The worst evil humanity ever committed became **the means** of the greatest good God has ever given.
- D. Christianity does not teach that **good people** should never suffer.
1. **But** that God is able to **redeem suffering**.
- E. The deeper question is **not** *"Why bad things happen to good people"*, but **Why good things happen to sinful people at all.** Answer? the **grace** of God.
- F. **The Gym / Muscle Tear** (formation through strain)
1. When you lift weights, you're actually creating **micro-tears** in the muscle. Strength doesn't come from **comfort**. It comes from **strain** - followed by **recovery**.
 2. The very thing that feels like **breakdown** is what **builds growth**. **But** here's the key - **the weight** must be **controlled**. (Too much crushes you; Too little doesn't change you).
 3. Scripture says **nothing** enters your life outside the hand of God. That means **the weight is measured**.

IV. **Slide7a** **2 GOD ALLOWS PAIN**

A. When you hear the phrase "God allows pain," what emotion rises first: **comfort, confusion, resistance, trust?**

B. God does not delight in evil. He is not the author of sin.

1. **But Scripture is clear:** Nothing enters your life outside His sovereign permission. (Job 1-2 makes that unmistakable).
 - a) **God Allows Pain** - 1:12 *And the LORD said to Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.*
 - (1) Satan acts, **but** only within limits **God** sets.
 - b) **God Sends Pain** - Ex.4:11 (Moses to God I am slow of speech)

*Then the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him **mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind?** Is it not **I, the LORD?**”*

C. **Pain may come through:** A fallen world. Human sin (ours or others’). Spiritual opposition. Loving discipline (formational, not punitive). Redemptive participation in Christ (costly obedience). Direct sovereign purpose. Permitted testing. **All under the sovereignty of God.**

1. **Warning:** we must be careful not to assign a specific reason to every pain. Scripture gives categories - but not always *explanations*.
2. That will protect us from *a simplistic theology*.
 - a) **Slide7b Sum it up 2 ways:** However pain arrives, it never arrives *unsupervised*.
Or: Pain may have *many pathways*, **but** it never bypasses God’s sovereignty.

D. When you hear the phrase “God allows pain,” what emotion rises now: *comfort, confusion, resistance, trust?*

E. Is it more **comforting** or more **unsettling** to believe nothing enters your life outside God’s permission? **Why?**

F. How is believing pain is random different from believing it is **permitted**?

V. **Slide8a 3 WHAT PAIN DOES** (according to Scripture)

A. **Pain Reveals What We Trust**

1. In **abundance**, we thank God. In **pain**, we discover if we trust Him.

2. Paul says in 2 Cor.1:9 *Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.* [pain exposes false saviors].

B. Slide8b Pain Refines Faith

1. 1 Peter 1:6-7 *the tested genuineness of your faith - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire.*

a) What do you think it means that faith is “refined” like gold?

2. **Gold** isn't *created* by fire - it's **revealed** by fire.

a) **Pain** doesn't *create* faith. It **clarifies** it.

C. Slide8c Pain Produces Glory (Romans 8)

1. Romans 8:18 *The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

a) Paul does not *minimize* suffering. He **magnifies** glory.

2. **And then** the most comforting line in the chapter: *He who did not spare His own Son...*

a) If God did not spare Christ, **He is not careless with your pain.**

D. What has **pain** taught you about yourself that **prosperity** never did?

E. What is the difference between **pain** that *makes someone bitter* and **pain** that *makes someone deeper*?

VI. Slide9a 4 THE CHRIST-CENTERED ANCHOR

A. We cannot teach “*When God Allows Pain*” without going to **the cross**.

B. Jesus Christ. **The worst evil ever committed** - the crucifixion of the Son of God - was allowed. **And through it came redemption.**

1. Slide9b **The cross proves:** God can allow **suffering** *without abandoning goodness.*

2. If God can take *the darkest day* in history **and** turn it into **salvation**, He can redeem *the darkest chapter* in your life.

C. How does **the cross** shape the way you **interpret suffering**?

VII. Slide 10a **5 WHAT PAIN IS NOT**

- A. **Pain is not:** Always punishment. Always a lesson you'll understand. Always something you'll see resolved this side of heaven.
- B. **Slide 10b** Sometimes pain is mystery. And sometimes faith is *trusting without explanation*.
- C. That's uncomfortable, but it's also comforting! Because it means: *Pain is not random. It is not ultimate. And it is not wasted.*

VIII. Slide 11a **6 WHAT GOD OFTEN DOES IN PAIN**

- A. **When God allows pain, He is often:** Deepening dependence. Stripping idols. Expanding compassion. Preparing usefulness. Producing eternal weight of glory.
- B. **Slide 11b** Remember Paul's thorn in 2 Cor. 12 - He prayed for removal. God gave sustaining grace. [Sometimes *God removes the pain*. Sometimes *He strengthens you in it*].
 1. Both are **mercy!**
- C. Which is **harder for you** - trusting God to **remove** pain, **or** trusting Him to **strengthen** you in it?
- D. What might God be **building in you** right now through something you wish He would take away?
- E. **Slide 12 LET'S TIE IT BACK TO OUR SERIES**
- F. **In When God Is Near** - we **feel His comfort**.
In When God Is Distant - we **trust His character**.
In When God Does Not Answer - we **trust in His wisdom**.
In When God Speaks - we **surrender to His voice**.
In When God Allows Pain - we **cling to His cross**. [*Same God. Different Season*].

G. **CLOSING**

H. The question is **not** “*Will I avoid pain?*” The question is “*Will I meet God in it?*”

I. Do you believe **God is good** even when He *does not* **relieve what hurts?** *Let sit*

J. **Prayer:** Lord in the pain You **allow**, **help us see the grace** You provide.

1. God, I pray for **miracles**. I pray for **provision**. I pray for **healing**. I pray for **restoration**. I pray, God, for a **peace** from heaven that goes beyond our human ability to understand. And God, when we're asking **why** and **don't understand**, we thank you that you're a God that **lets us come to you**. Help us to **cling** to you and **trust** in you, even when we don't understand!

K. Keywords: Pain, suffering,