



Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

There is a popular phrase in our culture that correctly conveys a biblical view of suffering: “No pain, no gain!” Although this expression cannot be found in a verse of the Bible, the concept it conveys is found all throughout the pages of Scripture. It expresses a truth that many of us would prefer not to be true. Namely, that the most important and valuable things in life are often obtained at a price. Conversely, the things that cost nothing are rarely, if ever, significant.

Most of us have a natural aversion to and even fear of sorrow and pain, and a natural attraction to ease and comfort. We tend to view all suffering as bad (i.e., something that has no redeemable or beneficial quality) and something that is to be avoided at all cost. This perspective seems to originate from our sinful nature.

Unfortunately, this often spills into the Christian life (and is perpetuated by the false teaching of the “Prosperity Gospel”). Christians often recoil or scoff at anything that may be uncomfortable, difficult, or painful – and even doubt God’s sovereignty and/or His goodness in times of suffering. Many Christians avoid spiritual growth and spiritual discipline like the plague. It seems that in the world of Christianity the all too common, yet unspoken, belief is: “No gain, no pain.”

The fact of the matter is that sorrows and sufferings are universal. I have heard it said that “Life is a school, and problems are the curriculum.” I think this aptly describes the reality that everyone in this life has problems. The only striking differences are how severe the sufferings may be, and how each person responds to the various trials and sufferings they endure. Everyone suffers and everyone, whether directly or indirectly, is affected by suffering. Suffering knows no cultural, racial, social, economic, or gender boundaries. It is a reality that touches everyone and uniquely affects Christians.

While Christians can avoid the unnecessary pain of sinful choices, they are certainly not immune to suffering any more than the non-Christian. In fact, the Christian may be more prone to suffer than the non-Christian. Why? To oppose the system of this world, as Christians are called to do, is to invite persecution from it (Jn.15:20-21; Acts 14:21-22; 2Tim.3:12). In addition, to walk contrary to the will of Satan, as Christians are called to do, is to draw the attention and ire of the evil one (see 1Pet.5:8; Matt.13:19).

Some, no doubt, would answer, “Why become a Christian if my life is more prone to suffering?” But the mature Christian knows this truth: we would rather go through any suffering with God than experience no suffering without Him! That is, we would rather go through the fire of persecution and trials with God – in us, around us, leading us, and working through us – than we would ever desire to go through the greatest things this world has to offer without God.

With this said, we as Christians must realize that we cannot look at suffering the same way the world does. The world typically sees suffering as only a negative. From the world’s perspective, suffering has no redeemable value. For the Christian, however, we must view suffering as God does – God does not view all suffering as bad.

Jesus forewarned His apostles of the suffering and sorrow they would experience on account of Him: *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”* (Jn.16:33). Christians can be assured that God is sovereign over all of their trials, and that He will ultimately use every trial for their good and His glory!

Together in and for Christ,
Pastor David
(9/14/26)

Scripture Readings for the Week (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #37):

Numbers 17-20; 1 Chronicles 25-29; Psalm 108-110; Proverbs 23-24; Amos 1-4; John 16-18; Titus

Recommended Reading:

“Suffering and the Sovereignty of God” by John Piper and Justin Taylor