

## **WHY DO THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER? (2)** **(Matthew 5:1-12)**

### **Introduction:**

- 1. In the Beatitudes Jesus describes the kind of character we must have to be in His kingdom.**
  - a. The second beatitude is: “Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.”**
  - b. This mourning refers to one’s grief for his sins.**
- 2. There is also mourning in the world because of human suffering.**
- 3. For Christians, suffering can be a source of blessing if one learns from his suffering.**

### **Discussion:**

#### **I. SUFFERING TEACHES US HUMILITY.**

##### **A. When everything is going well, it is easy to forget God.**

- 1. Pride is one of the most common of all sins.**
- 2. Pride often comes from a sense of self-sufficiency.**
- 3. The wise man said: “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud” (Pr. 16:18,19).**

##### **B. Suffering makes one humble.**

- 1. Paul had reason to be proud for he was “caught up into Paradise” (2 Cor. 12:1-10).**
- 2. God sent him a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble.**

**“And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure” (v. 7).**

#### **II. SUFFERING TEACHES US TO DEPEND ON GOD.**

##### **A. Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of mighty Babylon, trusted in himself (Dan. 4).**

- 1. He boasted: “Is this not great Babylon that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” (v. 30).**

2. Immediately a voice spoke from Heaven: “The kingdom has departed from you” (v. 31).
  3. He was driven from his throne and lived in the wilderness as an animal until he learned “that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses” (v. 32).
- B. Many have learned from financial ruin, sickness or some other catastrophe that they need God in their lives.
1. Marshall Keeble used to say, “When you are flat on your back in a hospital bed, the only way you can look is up.”

### **III. SUFFERING TEACHES US DISCIPLINE.**

- A. Hardship makes one strong.
1. To be strong physically, one must endure painful exercise, deny himself ease, and abstain from fattening foods.
  2. Trials of life may make or break us.
  3. The hardship that crushes one strengthens another.
- B. God wants His children to be strong; therefore He disciplines us.
1. The Hebrews were suffering from persecution (Heb. 12:5-12).
  2. They may have thought, “We are God’s people. Why is this happening to us?”
  3. As an earthly father disciplines his children because he loves them, so God disciplines us.
  4. Discipline is painful but in the long term, “it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (v. 11).

### **IV. SUFFERING TEACHES US TO HAVE HOPE.**

- A. Hope is one of three cardinal Christian virtues (1 Cor. 13:13).
1. We are “saved in hope” (Rom. 8:24).
  2. We have “hope of eternal life” (Tit. 1:2).
  3. The ultimate fulfillment of hope is Heaven (1 Pet. 3:3-5).
- B. It is the anchor of the soul: “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus...” (Heb, 6:19,20).

### **V. SUFFERING TEACHES US THE BREVITY AND UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE.**

**A. Life on earth is very brief:**

- 1. When Jacob was 137, he said, “Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life” (Gen. 47:9).**
- 2. Life is like a vapor that vanishes away (Jas. 4:13-15).**

**B. Life on earth is very uncertain:**

- 1. I saw a wreck in Knoxville where a semi had crushed a car; I later learned that mother and baby were killed in the car.**
- 2. A man was driving down a road in Campbell Co. when a tree fell on his truck and killed him.**
- 3. A hymn tells us “Life is Filled With Swift Transition.”**

**VI. SUFFERING TEACHES PATIENCE.**

**A. Two Greek words are translated as “patience” in the KJV Bible.**

- 1. Macrothumia: longsuffering, forbearance, patience.**
- 2. Hupomeno: fortitude, endurance, patience in suffering.**

**B. James wrote: “My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of suffering and patience (macrothumia). Indeed, we count them blessed who endure (hupomeno). You have heard of the perseverance (hupomeno) of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord - that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (Jas. 5:10,11).**

**VII. SUFFERING TEACHES US COMPASSION.**

**A. Our English word “compassion” comes from two Latin words meaning “to suffer with.”**

**B. Jesus had compassion (Mt. 9:36; 14:14; Lu. 7:11-15; Heb. 4:15).**

**C. A parent who has lost a child can best comfort one grieving the loss of their child.**

**Conclusion:**

- 1. Some who suffer blame God and leave the faith.**
- 2. Others who suffer accept it, become stronger in the faith, and help others who suffer.**