

1 **The Endurance of Suffering**

*Exposition of
Hebrews 12:3-13*

2

- C.J. Mahaney, early in his ministry, was told by an older pastor:

“Prepare your people for suffering”

- Preparation for suffering is best done before suffering happens
- Because of the numbing effects of suffering, it is difficult to teach, and to hear, what God has to say in the middle of it

3 **3 Biblical Truths about Suffering**

TRUTH #1 - Suffering is an unchangeable reality in a fallen world

- This is true for both believers and unbelievers
- This includes suffering that is physical, spiritual, emotional and relational
- Our ultimate Gospel hope is final deliverance from suffering at Jesus' Return

4 **3 Biblical Truths about Suffering**

TRUTH #2 - Suffering is sometimes a direct result of our sin

- We are to examine ourselves to see if our suffering is a result of specific sins
- This is God's gracious chastisement to turn us from sin
- Even then, it is not punitive because of the Cross

5 **3 Biblical Truths about Suffering**

TRUTH #3 - Suffering is sometimes not a direct result of our sin

- Hebrews 11:35ff tells us of faithful saints who suffered
- The book of Job gives an example of one blameless and who feared God, yet suffered
- Hebrews 5:8 tells us that Jesus Christ, the sinless One, learned obedience by the things He suffered

6 **How to Endure Suffering**

Think on the suffering of your Savior Hebrews 11:3-4

Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

7 **Recognize that Your Suffering is a Sign of God's Love and Your Sonship – vv.5-6**

*And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:
"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
For whom the LORD loves He chastens,
And scourges every son whom He receives."*

8 **Remember that the Appropriate Response to Suffering is Endurance – v.7**

*If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons;
for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?*

9 **Realize that the Lack of Suffering Would be Evidence that You are Not God's Son – v.8**

But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

10 **Realize that Endurance is Not Passive, but a Response of Respect and Submission to God – v.9**

*Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect.
Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?*

11 **Remember that Your Suffering is for Your Profit and Sanctification – v.10**

*For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them,
but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.*

12 **Realize that You Can Rejoice, without Pretending that Suffering is Joyful – v.11**

*Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful;
nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness
to those who have been trained by it.*

13 **How These Truths are to be Used to Strengthened You in Suffering - vv.12-13**

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 **The Hope of the Gospel and Suffering – Romans 5:1-5**

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.