

# Suffering & The One Anothers - God's Provision -

## Part II: Discipling The Suffering

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Holy Bible, NASB

New Morning Mercies, A Daily Gospel Devotional, Paul David Tripp

Morning & Evening, A Classical Devotional Classic For Daily Encouragement, Charles Spurgeon

# Agenda

- Review of Part I: Psalms for the Suffering
- Suffering and Claims of Injustice
- Injustice in All Suffering?
- Man's Call for Justice and Fairness?
- God's Grace that Motivates True Justice
- Help in Suffering – Psalm 121
- How to Help/Disciple Suffering (Injustice)
- God's Grace for the Suffering – Theological Insights

# Psalms for the Suffering – Review/Transition

- Reading & Analysis of Suffering in the Psalms
  - Psalm 13 (Hurting)
  - Psalm 25 (Suffering due to Sin)
  - Psalm 63 (Comfort in Suffering)
  - Psalm 23 (Psalm for the Hopeless)
  - Psalm 55 (Betrayal)
- Application
  - Changing Our Thinking of Suffering
    - Pray, Read, Reflect, and Respond (Prrr)
- *To help (disciple) another through suffering nearly always brings up the issue of why me, why this, why now....*
- *The root issue in how we biblically deal with suffering is the question of fairness and justice!*
  - *Is it fair that we need to suffer in this way? Is it really fair that a sovereign God who loves me would allow me to suffer in this way?*

# Suffering and Claims of Injustice

- Psalm 13 (Hurting)
  - From: Complaining God had forgot him and will not exalt them over their enemies
  - To: God is trustworthy and good to him in this time of hurting
- Psalm 25 (Suffering due to Sin)
  - From: Asking for God's protection and success against perceived injustice
  - To: Confessing his sin and resting in God's judgement and integrity
- Psalm 63 (Comfort in Suffering)
  - From: Seeking God's loving kindness and protection
  - To: Clinging to the power and deliverance (justice) of God
- Psalm 23 (Psalm for the Hopeless)
  - From: Reminding himself to not fear the unknown but trust in an unseen God
  - To: Resting in the protection and provision in God's eternal home
- Psalm 55 (Betrayal)
  - From: Distraction, Restlessness, Running, and Hiding in his own strength
  - To: Casting his burden on a trustworthy God to deal out justice and revenge
- How quickly do you turn from thoughts of injustice to actions of praise?

# Injustice in All Suffering?

- Where we struggle – Questioning the Fairness and Justice of Suffering
  - Why would a loving God cause or allow this suffering?
  - If He is sovereign and loving, He would see this is not “fair” and take it away!
- Ways suffering struggles become questions of fairness and justice
  - Hurt by injustices around us
  - Experiencing an unjust trial brought about by sins of others
  - Desire justice for an unfair action done to us
  - We have been called out for an unjust or unfair action or decision
- Issue – We struggle wanting what we see as fair over God’s righteousness
  - We want what we want, not what is really just and fair (God’s Perspective)
  - We do not like that God is in charge and we are not
  - We want God’s definition of mercy, forgiveness, and grace but our definition of fairness and justice

# Man's Call for Justice and Fairness?

- Justice – Why does it operate as a tool of fairness?
  - Defined as tool or action: How fairness is administered (e.g. Tablets of the Law)
  - Typical Understanding: Equality for both sides
  - Social Perspective: Justice is seen as equal rights for all society
  - Biblical Justice: Impartial application of God's moral law within the social realm
  - Man's Call to Justice:
    - Micah 6:6-8 (We are to do Justice, love kindness, walk humbly w/ God)
    - Proverbs 29:1-7 (Ruling w/ Justice for strong and the weak leads to stability)
    - Matthew 23:23 (Justice, Mercy, Faithfulness are the more important parts of the law)
    - Job 9:19 (Only God is truly Just... how can we suggest His hand that allows is unjust?)
  - Challenge: Justice does not always work fairly from man's perspective (even God's justice)
- Fairness – What is fairness based on?
  - Typical Understanding: Equality for all without bias
  - Society Perspective: Cultural value that must be taught and can change
  - Expected Result: Peace among people or loud cries when it runs afoul
  - Colossians 4:1 (Man's societal structures should operate with fairness and Justice)
  - Isaiah 11:4 ( All God's decisions on afflicted men are truly fair and His justice is righteous)

# God's Grace Motivates True Justice

- God's grace is His free unmerited favor upon us sinners
- Appealing for God's justice motivated by His amazing grace
  - Acknowledge our need for help and ask Christ to advocate for us
  - Express a need for God's justice as the true judge
  - Ask God to correct our defective needs assessment
  - Recognize that all things work for God's glory and our good
  - Most Importantly, rest in God's Grace that motivates true Justice
- God's Grace that motivates His justice in our suffering
  - Grace is the most important concept in the bible, Christianity, and the world
  - Grace is most clearly expressed in the promises of God revealed in scripture and embodied in Christ
  - Grace is the love of God shown to the unlovely; the peace of God given to the restless; the unmerited favor of God
  - Grace is most needed and best understood in the midst of sin, suffering, and brokenness

# Help in Suffering - Psalm 121

- Psalm 121 (God's Provision)
- Where does our help come from when in suffering?
  - We are to lift our eyes to the mountains (God) from the (valley of suffering) (Vs 1)
- What are God's promises to us?
  - God will keep us without slumber (vs 3-4)
  - God is near us and will keep us (vs 5)
  - God will protect us from all evil and keep our soul (vs 7)
  - God guards the purposes and activities of our lives for eternity (vs 8)
- Two key truths we must apply to our thinking when we are suffering
  - God is our battle buddy (Keeper) through all life's trials, sufferings, and pain
  - As our Keeper, God never takes his eyes off caring for us through our suffering
- How should we respond to God when we are suffering? – God is just in our suffering
- *Devotional Words from Paul David Tripp on Psalm 121 (ref: July 4)*



# How to Help/Disciple Suffering & Injustice

- How to help (disciple) a one-another facing suffering
  - Provide hope
  - Provide tools
  - Provide biblical foundation
  - Pray scripture
  - Pray strategically
- Where do I start when discipling brother or sister struggling with the injustice of suffering?
  - Listen to them and understand their pain and suffering
  - Ask questions to draw out all their perceived issues of injustice in this suffering
  - Look up together what the bible says about God's position on injustice
  - Probe to see if other issues like hurt, anger, bitterness, are evident in this suffering
  - Ask if they are seeking fairness, justice, retribution, or punishment. What does that look like to them?
  - Inquire if they are willing to leave their burden of perceived injustice with God
  - Offer to discuss/study about; The attributes of God, Our identity in Christ, What the bible Teaches about Justice
  - Pray with them and for them daily
  - Encourage them to journal and note their attitudes, thoughts, and actions each day as they grow in Christ through this suffering
  - Suggest they find a few Psalms each week to share with you that captures their heart

# God's Grace for Suffering – Theological Pictures

- Theologian Quotes on God's Grace for the Suffering
  - “Grace is love that cares and stoops and rescues”
  - “(Grace) is God reaching downward to people who are in rebellion against Him”
  - “Grace is unconditional love toward a person who does not deserve it”
- *Devotional by Charles Spurgeon – Despite your sufferings, find peace and joy in longing after Christ! (pg 470, Song of Solomon 5:8)*
- *God's Provision: Suffering causes us to long for closeness with Christ*

# Suffering & The One Another - God's Provision –

Part I: Psalms for the Suffering

Part II: Discipling the Suffering