

Is Your Suffering the Will of God?

The suffering that Christians experience in this life is a highly misunderstood topic. We've all heard people blame God for the tragedies and disasters that occur, but what does the Bible say about believers who suffer?

Suffering exists because we live in a fallen, sin-filled world. Man also chooses to harm his fellow man. The Bible is also clear that evil spirits can oppose God's people and God's work. We can suffer because of poor decisions, sin or a lack of knowledge.

Suffering is a part of life, but is it actually God's will for His people? The Bible addresses the issue of suffering among believers.

Second Timothy 1:8 says, "With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News."

Second Timothy 3:12 says, "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

First Peter 2:21 says, "For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps."

We should understand that when we stand up for truth, do what is good and right in God's eyes or speak against evil we will be persecuted. The world is quick to slander, cancel or silence the truth. Persecution even comes from a person's family or from fellow believers. This kind of suffering is for the sake of the gospel or Good News.

Another question to ask our selves is, "Did Jesus Christ suffer?"

- Jesus suffered persecution—to the point of an excruciating death.
- Jesus suffered rejection and abandonment by those He loved.
- Jesus suffered being tempted in all the same ways we are tempted (but never sinned), and that's why He's able to help us when we suffer temptation.

Yes, Jesus suffered according to the will of God. Jesus told us to take heart! Just as He overcame the world and its troubles, and so shall we.

It is also important to note that Jesus did *not* suffer from sickness and disease. He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. The Bible is very clear that sickness and disease are not suffering according to the will of God.

Suffering that is not according to the will of God can be from the demonic realm, from our own disobedience or our lack of knowledge. The good news is that even if we suffer because of our poor choices, but place our trust in God, He will still bring good out of our suffering. That's how good God is. The key is to draw near to God through our suffering and rely on His faithfulness.

When we go through difficult trials, we may not have all the answers or understand why. We must fix our eyes on what is lasting and eternal, and it will strengthen our faith and give us hope! One day we will be in heaven with our loved ones, living in a perfect world, with no more pain, no more loss and no more suffering. Our strength to endure comes from knowing that our suffering will not last.

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