

DEVOTION TWELVE.

Where did suffering come from and does God care?



We all have those thought provoking questions concerning God and the world around us. It usually starts with something like, "If God is so good, why...?" These are legitimate questions, and should be asked, if not to others, then ourselves. Although we may be troubled to unleash these tough questions because of the possible ridiculing looks and/or remarks that may follow, I propose we should not fear these questions at all, but embrace these intellectual minds God has given us to work through these perplexing problems.



So what's the deal with suffering?

Okay, so let's ask the question, what's the deal with all the suffering, deaths, and abuse in the world? Who should we point the finger at? Many think the Big Guy upstairs should take the wrap for all of it, and they're not referring to their landlord. But let's consider this: if a husband cheats on his wife, should the wife blame God? If a person consumes too much alcohol, gets behind the wheel and hits a child, who's to blame? This world is consumed with flawed humans who at times make horrible sinful choices. Sadly, many innocent lives and generations are affected by those choices.

Does God suffer?

Have you ever reflected on how God has to deal with our wrong choices, and how much his heart must hurt from allowing consequences to play out? Let's be God for a quick second. Imagine yourself holding the whole world in your hand (try and read that without humming the tune in your head!!) Now imagine you have to allow certain events to play out because you alone know how every choice affects everything. Now imagine that you're not distant from the pain, and you feel the weight of every choice and consequence. Just as Jesus wept with the crowd for Lazarus' death, he weeps with the widow, the parent, the daughter, the brother, the friend, all of us. This is not a one time event for God, he suffers daily, and his heart aches alongside those who are hurting.

What about natural suffering?

Of course there begs the question, "Well, what about natural causes of death, whose fault is that?" Why did my little brother pass away from a stroke at the age of 12? Why was someone's mom or spouse's life cut short from cancer? Although it's hard to accept, death and disease are a part of everyday living. They came from the horrible choice of mankind, Adam and Eve. Why should we suffer from a choice our ancestors made so long ago? To put it frankly, some of us are suffering from the choices our parents and grandparents made, and we did not have any say in it. Some inherit debt, mental health issues from broken childhoods, and some inherit a hometown they hate because they had no say in where they were born. In one way or another, we have all suffered from the choices others have made. The choice Adam and Eve made in the beginning represents all of us. Humankind brought sin and death into a beautiful world God created and intended for us to thrive, multiply, and rule over. Thankfully God made a choice to not let the story end there. He made a choice to become man and redeem humanity in the form of his son Jesus.



2 PETER 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.



What suffering are you aware of today? How can you be praying into this situation?



WAY MAKER (Leeland)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV_2HgxD0

Meditate on these lyrics. What do you think God is doing in the midst of this suffering that we are experiencing?

