

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

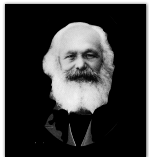
1 Peter 3:13-17  
Lesson #15  
Values of Suffering  
11/15/2020

Suffering is a universal human challenge.



Suffering is a universal human challenge.

Some have viewed suffering as the root source of the human dilemma.



Marx

tried to alleviate suffering by altering the **outer** access to things.

(detachment from the spiritual world)

**Humanity needs social revolution.**



Buddha

tried to alleviate suffering by altering the **inner** attachment to things.

(detachment from the material world)

**Humanity needs inner enlightenment.**

2

“When suffering comes, we yearn for some sign from God, **forgetting we have just had one.**”

Mignon McLaughlin

3

**Jesus** introduced a very different approach.

- He had the power to remove all physical suffering in this world **BUT DID NOT.**
- He **incorporated** it as a central theme of his GOSPEL message.
- He made it a **lens** through which we can see ourselves and God.



**Suffering is a sign of the human dilemma and the deliverance from it.**

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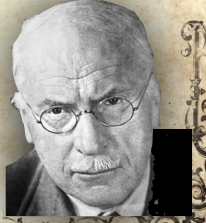
“Before we can see properly we must first shed our tears to clear the way”

Indian Proverb

5

“There is no coming to consciousness without pain.”

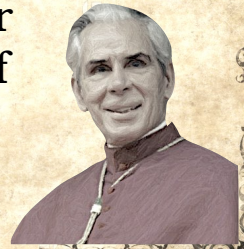
Carl Jung



6

“Of all the great religious leaders of history, Jesus is unique in that he alone came for the purpose of dying.”

Fulton J. Sheen



7

*In bearing the sins of the world Jesus suffered as no one can imagine.*

**Scourging**

*“No man can bear this!”*

**Crucifixion**

- Physical, psychological, and social torture.

**Shame for sin**

- Bearing the sin of the world.

**Isolation from God** - Hell.

8

*The great symbols of the faith*



*The Cross*



*Baptism*



*The Lord's Supper*

*remind us of Jesus' death and of our own participation with him in it.*

9

*Galatians 2:20*

“I have been **crucified with Christ**; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;”

*Romans 12:1*

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies **a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

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Spiritual Health is measured, not by a pain free life but rather in **how we respond to suffering.**

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# 1 Peter

## Operations Manual for Alien Ambassadors in a fallen world

This is who we are "in Christ"

This is how we should express our identity

	Indicative	Imperative				
"chosen"	Salvation	Sanctification	In the church	Submission	Shepherding	
Introduction	Chosen	Privileged	Submission	Suffering		Conclusion
"aliens"			In the world			
	1:1-2	1:3-12	1:13-2:12	2:13-3:12	3:13:4:19	5:1-11

Christians are called out of the world — and then sent back into the world.

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### 1 Peter 3

"13 And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. *And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,* 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong."

13

## How should I view suffering?

### 1. It starts with cultivating a broader perspective.

#### Romans 12:2

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind,**

#### Matthew 6:22

"**The eye is the lamp of the body;** so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light."

#### 1 Peter 1:13

"Therefore, **prepare your minds for action,** keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

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### Hebrews 12

"1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who **for the joy set before Him endured the cross,** despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

**Jesus' endurance for his suffering came from his vision of coming joy.**

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## Implications

- **Recognize that the way we see things** will determine how we respond to them.
- **Resist the world's** material / temporal perspective so as to find peace, & joy.
- **Drink from the right fountain** - what we read, hear, etc. will shape and guide us.
- **Resurrection** not revolution is our hope.
- **Be a Berean** and note what the Scripture says and does not say.

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## Note what is conspicuously missing in this teaching.

- A promise of **temporal blessing**
- A promise of **social justice**
- A call for **repentance**
- Social **reform**



**As aliens in this world we have a different agenda.**

17

## 2. Security

**Suffering need not confuse or scare you.**

1 Peter 3

“<sup>13</sup> And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even **if you should suffer** for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled.**”

“If God loves me, why is life so hard?”

Jesus' response,

**“It is the Way of the Cross, follow me”.**

Romans 8:35

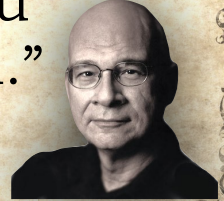
“Who will separate us from the love of Christ? **Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?**”

18

“Suffering is unbearable if you aren't certain that God is for you and with you.”

Tim Keller

*Walking with God  
through Pain and Suffering*



19

1 Peter 3

“<sup>13</sup> And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled.**”

Isaiah 8:12

“You are not to say, “It is a **conspiracy!**”  
And you are not to fear what they fear  
or be in dread of it.”

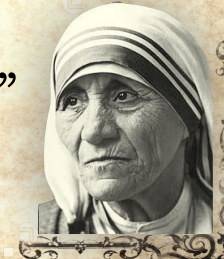
“Should we fear an unseen enemy  
that is working against us?”

**Fear God, not a broken world.**

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“In the end, dear friend, it is always between us and God, not between us and them.”

Mother Teresa



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For Christians  
Everything is  
O.K. in the end.

If it's not O.K.  
it's not the end.

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## 3. Significance

**Suffering invites your witness  
response of “salt and light”.**

1 Peter 3

“<sup>15</sup> but sanctify **Christ as Lord** in your hearts, always **being ready** to make a defense **to everyone who asks** you to give an account for **the hope** that is in you, yet with **gentleness and reverence;**”

The calling of the believer is to  
**be the Body of Christ**  
in this world and at this time.

This is the **only** instruction on  
evangelism in all the epistles.

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## Evangelism 101

- Get your **heart** right (Get out of the way).
- Get your **mind** prepared (make sense).
- Let your true **hope** shine (in response to life's ups and downs).
- Don't be **pushy** (respond to pain).
- Respect your **audience** (listen).
- Respect your **message** (get it right).

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## 4. Selfimage

**Your response to suffering can build confidence in your new self.**

*1 Peter 3*

"16 and keep a **good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your **good behavior** in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is **better**, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong."

*Ephesians 4*

"22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

25

We are forced to make a decision every time we face, pain, & suffering.

We will be a hypocrite to one of our two natures.

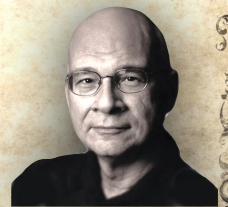


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"Though Christianity does not provide the reason for each experience of pain, it provides deep resources for actually facing suffering with hope and courage rather than bitterness and despair."

*Tim Keller*

*Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*



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## MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING

VIKTOR E. FRANKL

WITH A NEW FOREWORD BY HAROLD S. KUSHNER

MORE THAN 12 MILLION COPIES IN PRINT WORLDWIDE



In his book ***Man's Search for Meaning***, Dr. Frankl wrote about the psychological impact of life as a prisoner in the Nazi concentration camps of World War II. His mother, father, brother, and pregnant wife were all killed in the camps. Dr. Frankl describes in chilling detail how his captors took from him virtually everything of personal value and basic human dignity.

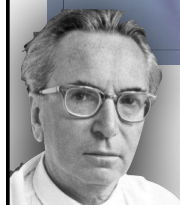
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"Between stimulus and response there is a space.

In that space is our power to choose our response.

**In our response lies our growth and our freedom."**

Dr. Viktor Frankl

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