

God uses suffering for His glory and our good

The sin of Adam and Eve brought suffering into the world.

Now all the descendants of Adam are born into a life of sin and disobedience to God.

Whatever the state of affairs, God is all wise and He now uses suffering to convict sinners of their need to deny themselves and to trust in Jesus Christ.

God also uses suffering to conform the faithful who have received spiritual life from God who follow Jesus Christ, to be transformed into the image of Christ, as they learn not to live according to the flesh of Adam, but to live spiritually, submitted to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

This eternal plan of God for salvation of sinners is not the message of many churches, who treat God as some sort of father Christmas, who only wants people to be happy in the world God has under judgement.

The real God of holiness and glory has judged the whole world of mankind as sinful, and is looking to save some who will genuinely repent in holiness and truth, as they look to Jesus as they are called to forsake the world and themselves, to be born again by the Spirit of God, to live spiritual lives dedicated to live only for Jesus who died on their behalf.

If everyone was comfortable in the world according to the flesh and the wisdom of Adam, no one would see the need to repent and obey God. And no one who was saved by the Spirit would see the need to continue to put the memories of the flesh life of Adam to death as they must grow in the reality of the righteousness of Christ.

A comfortable heart is the enemy of the cross we need to take up in order to enter heaven. But the more we look to heaven the less we are comfortable in the world.

When we are saved by the grace of God, and have denied ourselves and have taken up our cross to follow Christ, we will see a multitude of people in the world who are destined for hell and damnation, who desperately need to hear from us who have been made alive with God, the good news of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for the sins of the world, so they too can be called to repentance and faith in God. Consequently, suffering is God's tool to loosen people's grip on the world and the thinking of sinful mankind.

The Holy Spirit gives understanding to the chosen children of God, so they can see the world the way God sees the heart of man. Therefore, the redeemed from death to live with God will witness to Jesus Christ and make disciples for Him, teaching them to obey His commands.

Glorify Him who has been raised from the dead

Oh dear, how are we to worship Him? The maker of all things, the maintainer of all things, the perfecter of all things, the planner of all things, the determiner of all things, the purpose of all things, the reason for all things. He has saved us and included us with Him, and secured us in His own life and purpose, even in this fallen world. And He has done this by the power of the gracious gift of His eternal Spirit so He lives in us and we in Him, so that we can grow in righteousness and share in His glory. It is hardly enough to say all authority belongs to Him in heaven and earth, for He is the Lord of all. How can we not live for Him alone, who died for us and rose again from the dead? Who will also raise us up with Him on the last day, so we can reign with Him for ever and ever.

Oh Lord, our efforts to love you and serve You seem so weak and futile. Our life of daily worship wanting, our devotion to be Your witness often ineffective, our cross too often forgotten. May Your grace make up in us what is lacking of our Saviour Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed God, so that the church and the world may know You are indeed the Lord of lords and the King of kings, to whom, without complete surrender and loving devotion, no one, absolutely no one can see heaven.

Have you got eyes to see, or are you still comfortable in the world?