

Devotion for Sunday 3 October 2021

Persevere Through Suffering

I want to conclude our devotion series by asking you to read Isaiah 53, to see how God becoming man, helps us to persevere through suffering. All of us know that we live in a beautiful and a wonderful world, but also a world of great suffering, pain, sorrow, and loss. What I want us to consider together is how to face suffering and persevere through it with faith and joy in our hearts.

Suffering is a normal part of life. It's an unfortunate everyday reality. And we all face various forms of it in our lives. The question is how will we get through it? How do we persevere through suffering with peace in our hearts? We will highlight what this passage teaches us about God to help us persevere through suffering.

We see here that when God became man, he became a man of sorrows, a man who suffered greatly. This is very important because there is one thing that makes times of suffering so hard to go through. It is to think that nobody understands what we are going through. We often feel like we're all alone, that no one feels our pain. But what this passage teaches us is that actually, the most important person in the world does feel our pain because he's already felt it.

Jesus was not only despised, but he was rejected. God became a man of sorrows in every sense of the word. He was a man acquainted with grief. Why? So that in the midst of every type of sorrow, you and I could know we have someone to turn to who understands, who can sympathize with us and can feel our pain. He didn't distance himself from the painful realities of life. God didn't see our pain and remain at a distance; God is always with us as our sympathetic and suffering Saviour.

In Isaiah 53, we also see that this suffering of Jesus is not meaningless but has a great purpose. There is a purpose behind the suffering and this is why we celebrate it. His death brought us life; his wounds brought us healing because the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He has paid the price for our sins so that we can be forgiven by God and healed.

But we might say, how does that help me through my sufferings today? The cross brings me heaven, but what about my problems today?"

Here's God's answer: The cross is not just something we look at for our forgiveness and reconciliation with God, but is the lens we look at our sufferings through. We can see that if that is true with the cross Jesus had to bear, then it is true with every cross we have to bear. This is how we can walk through suffering as Jesus did—with faith and trust in our hearts that there's a great reason for it, and one day we will see it.

All we need to know is that God knows. Just because it seems pointless to us doesn't mean that it's pointless to God. Just because you and I can't see how God could tie up all the loose ends that doesn't mean he can't. After all, remember that God is the Potter. What does a potter do? He takes a mess and turns it into a masterpiece. We can have peace in our hearts knowing that God knows. That's what the submission of Jesus teaches us. He entrusted his soul to the one who judges justly. He knew that God was in control and the end result is always victory and joy!

This is the key to the mystery of suffering and how to persevere through it. Be assured that one day we will see that every form of suffering has been worth it. That none of it was pointless. God is going to show us one day that these momentary afflictions won't compare to the glory that will be revealed to us. We can be assured of it, and that's how we can persevere through the suffering. This doesn't remove the pain but helps us persevere through it. No matter what you are going through or will go through, there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

May the grace and peace of God be with you all.

Bobby Kusilifu