

Devotion – Day 4 – Blessed with Healing – Life Week 2023

Bible reading: Romans 8:18-39

We all have or will experience some aspect of suffering in our lifetime. Whether we have lived through the loss of a loved one, a disabling injury, or even abuse, trauma, or rape, the question that many of us ask is, “Why me?” The next question is often, “Where were You, God?”

The Israelites complained to God after calamity and defeat. They were shamed and confused that God had allowed these things to happen to them, and they wondered, “Where was God when ...?” (Psalm 44). Like the Israelites, we are tempted to despair and doubt God when we are suffering. Paul echoes our cry about suffering in Romans 8:36: **“For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”** Yet, it is Jesus who is the Lamb slaughtered on our behalf.

By this ultimate act of God’s love, we are bound to Christ Jesus in His death and share in His victory over the consequences of sin, death, and the devil. It is also the reason **“... we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose”** (Romans 8:28). Oftentimes, we will not understand the reason for the suffering we endure, yet we can always trust that God has a purpose and that it is good.

We can also be assured that Jesus knows our suffering. He, who committed no sin, took on our illnesses, diseases, deformities, sinfulness, and the ultimate consequence of death for the joy that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). Additionally, Paul notes that our **“... suffering is not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed to us”** (Romans 8:18). Though lament is an inevitable and a biblical response to suffering, we are called to rejoice both in our sufferings and **“... in the hope of the glory of God”** (Romans 5:2-3).

The philosophy of the fallen world tells us suffering is purposeless, and our sinful nature leads us to believe we can save ourselves from it. God knew we would be consumed by the lies of this world and incapable of saving ourselves from the consequences of sin. Therefore, God sent His only Son to walk among us in our world of suffering. Jesus’ compassion for us as lost and helpless culminated in His perfect sacrifice on the cross, which was acceptable to God on our behalf such that Christ suffered once for all. Moreover, His victory over death brings the forgiveness for sins, the promise of eternal life with a glorified body, and the source of hope as we suffer through all our trials and tribulations.