

Sermon 3) Suffering from the perspective of the end

Suffering and the future...

1) The hope of heaven... is built on reality...
and it keeps us going through suffering

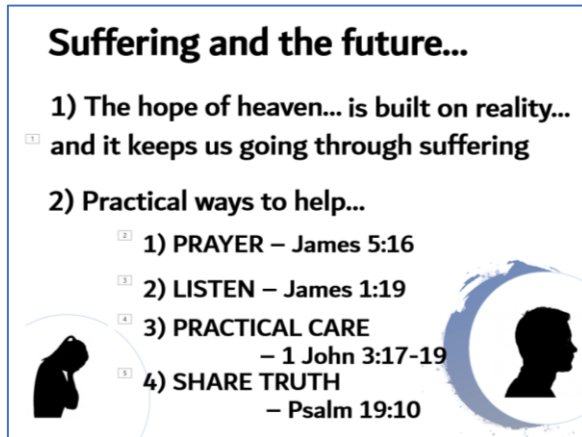
2) Practical ways to help...

1) PRAYER – James 5:16

2) LISTEN – James 1:19

3) PRACTICAL CARE
– 1 John 3:17-19

4) SHARE TRUTH
– Psalm 19:10



Verses used in the sermon...

1a) Revelation 21:1-5

1b) Psalm 34:17,18; John 11:25; 1 Cor 15:1-3

1c) Romans 8:18; 2 Cor 4:17

2) James 5:16; James 1:19; 1 John 3:17-19; Psalm 44:13; Psalm 18:30; Psalm 19:10.

Questions for further investigation on your own or in small groups...

- 1) Though the picture language takes some figuring out, take another look at “*what’s there*”, and “*what’s not there*” in Revelation 21, and think about how good heaven will be. Is there anything specific here that brings you help in suffering?
- 2) Taking into consideration the four practical suggestions for helping others, is there anything you would do differently next time in helping a friend who is having a hard time?
- 3) What in this series has helped you to see the trustworthiness of God? Talk to God in prayer.

Questions for family discussion...

- 1) Does everyone go to heaven? How does John 3:36 help us answer that? Are you trusting Jesus?
- 2) What Bible stories show us that God is good, even when bad things happen? (see 1 Peter 3:18 & Genesis 50:20). What would you like to say to God?

Some Further Resources...

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEX3WY3zFF4&list=OLAK5uy_mOfVjFs8FoW9ErjDhr1Awbo4T5KetQ&index=2&t=0s “There is a Higher Throne”- song by K & K Getty.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nBrSHCT1FM> 1 hour talk to students at Royal Holloway University by our friend Andrew Sach on “If God, why Suffering”.
- <https://www.10ofthose.com/uk/products?q=suffering> A range of books on the topic of suffering. Of particular recommendation are:
 - “Suffering and Evil”- Scott Petty, Little black book. Short youth introduction.
 - “Why Me?” Roger Carswell- several personal stories of people’s suffering.
 - “Don’t waste your Cancer” short booklet by John Piper- also free online [here](#).
 - “Walking with God through pain and suffering”- Tim Keller.
 - “How Long O Lord”- Don Carson. More advanced Biblical reflections on suffering.

Extra Verses on Suffering...

Psalm 23:1-4

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
³ he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

Psalm 44:23

Awake, LORD! Why do you sleep?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us for ever.

Psalm 125:2

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people
both now and for evermore.

Isaiah 45:5-7

I am the LORD, and there is no other;
apart from me there is no God.
I will strengthen you,
though you have not acknowledged me,
⁶so that from the rising of the sun
to the place of its setting
people may know there is none besides me.
I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form the light and create darkness,
I bring prosperity and create disaster;
I, the LORD, do all these things.

Jeremiah 29:11

'For I know the plans I have for you,'
declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and
not to harm you, plans to give you hope and
a future'.

John 14:1-4

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. You
believe in God; believe also in me. ²My
Father's house has many rooms; if that were
not so, would I have told you that I am going
there to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go
and prepare a place for you, I will come back
and take you to be with me that you also
may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to
the place where I am going.'

John 16:33

'I have told you these things, so that in me
you may have peace. In this world you will
have trouble. But take heart! I have
overcome the world.'

Romans 8:18

I consider that our present sufferings are not
worth comparing with the glory that will be
revealed in us.

Romans 8:28,29

²⁸And we know that in all things God works
for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to his
purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also
predestined to be conformed to the image of
his Son, that he might be the firstborn
among many brothers and sisters.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and
the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in
all our troubles, so that we can comfort those
in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves
receive from God. ⁵For just as we share
abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also
our comfort abounds through Christ. ⁶If we
are distressed, it is for your comfort and
salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your
comfort, which produces in you patient
endurance of the same sufferings we
suffer. ⁷And our hope for you is firm, because
we know that just as you share in our
sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

2 Corinthians 4:7-11

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to
show that this all-surpassing power is from
God and not from us. ⁸We are hard pressed
on every side, but not crushed; perplexed,
but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not
abandoned; struck down, but not
destroyed. ¹⁰We always carry around in our
body the death of Jesus, so that the life of
Jesus may also be revealed in our
body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always
being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so
that his life may also be revealed in our
mortal body.

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again:
rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to
all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious
about anything, but in every situation, by
prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace
of God, which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in
Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 5:6,7

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's
mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due
time. ⁷Cast all your anxiety on him because
he cares for you.