Human Suffering

Reading – 1 Peter 4:12-19

***[1 John 4:1-3] Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. [2] Hereby you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: [3] and every spirit that confesses not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof you have heard that it comes; and now it is in the world already.***

***[Job 4:7-8] Remember now, who ever perished being innocent?  Or where were the upright destroyed? [8] “According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity And those who sow trouble harvest it.***

If we view suffering as inconsistent with the idea that God is good, then somewhere along the line we have bought into some wrong assumptions. ***1 Peter 4:12 'Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you… 'as though this were some abnormal experience'***

**Did God Create Evil?** There is a **BIG** difference between what God created and then what man makes of those created things.

Every work of the flesh, is simply a perversion of something that in itself is good. ***[Galatians 5:19-21] Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,  20idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,  21envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.***

God 'creating evil': ***[Jeremiah 18:11] Now, therefore, say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: ‘Thus says the Lord, behold, I am shaping disaster against you and devising a plan against you. Return, everyone from his evil way, and amend your ways and your deeds.’***

 ***[Isaiah 45:7]  I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the Lord, who does all these things.***

***[James 1:13] Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.***

***(Genesis 1:31) 'And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.'***

**The Consequences Of FreeWill:**

If God were to stop all suffering, it would mean that Jesus would come in judgment. But stopping all suffering also means ending the opportunity to repent . ***[2 Thessalonians 1:7-10] and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, [8] in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, [10] when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.***

“Choice” isn't a curse, rather, it is one of those things which we have in common with the Creator Himself. ***[Genesis 1:26] Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.***

***[Psalms 8:3-6]  When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, [4] what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? [5] Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. [6]  You have given him dominion over the works of your hands.***

Sin is something that is chosen. ***[Romans 6:16 & 19] Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?... [19] For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.***

**The Benefits Of Suffering:**

***[Hebrews 10:26-31] if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,  [27] but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.  [28] Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses.  [29] How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?  [30] For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.”  [31] It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'***

Sin takes its toll upon the sinner. ***[Galatians 6:7-8] Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. [8] For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life***

AIDS: Could much of the suffering related to that disease been eliminated with godly living? ***[Romans 1:27] and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.***

**So You Want To Stop The Suffering?**

1. Share the gospel with someone who is lost.

2. Comfort someone who is suffering. ***[Matthew 25:34-36] ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.  [35] For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,  [36] I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me…***

3. Bring your children up i***n the nurture and admonition of the Lord***.

4. Die in a right relationship with God!