



GOD'S LOVE IN PROLONGED SUFFERING

Abstract: Suffering is an inevitable reality of human existence. The pain of loss, disappointment, sickness, persecution, misunderstanding, and more can often feel like necessary evils that we must simply “get through.” However, God is too loving, wise, and gracious to fail to redeem suffering for His glory and our good. In this study, we will explore the so-called “problem of pain” in relationship to God’s perfect love by turning to Scripture and the testimonies of suffering saints to understand how God redeems suffering in the lives of His people.

What is God like?

The Attributes of God



Topic
Theological Bucket

Learning Objectives:

- Explore the biblical perspective for why suffering exists in a fallen world and the implications of suffering in God’s redemptive plan.
- Reflect on how God’s attributes of sovereignty, love, and wisdom interact with human suffering.
- By examining the testimonies of suffering saints, list the benefits of suffering in God’s economy.

Forum Schedule

- 8:00** | Welcome
- 8:15** | Opening Presentation (Presenter)
“Suffering is Not for Nothing”
- 8:45** | Theological Discussion (Moderator-Led)
- 10:00** | How might we obey what we have learned?
Personal & Church Applications
- 10:45** | Closing Prayer Time

Forum Date: Saturday, May 24th | 8-11AM

Discussion Questions

- How does the concept of free will impact our understanding of the “problem of pain?” Discuss the differences between suffering due to moral sin and natural suffering.
- How does God use suffering to graciously get the attention of believers and unbelievers alike? Reflect on C.S. Lewis’ quote, “God whispers to us in our pleasure, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain.”
- What is the relationship between suffering and God’s purposes in sanctification? (Reflect on lessons learned from Elizabeth Elliot, Joni Eareckson, and Helen Roseveare)
- Why is it dangerous to let our experience of suffering interpret who God is, rather than allowing God to define Himself through His Word? Discuss the importance of Scripture and specific biblical promises that have encouraged you in times of suffering.

Presenter

Moderator

Pre-Forum Study Resources

6-Week Individual Study
Release Date: April 1, 2025

Primary Forum Reading | **Suffering is Not for Nothing** – Elizabeth Elliot
Book | 128pgs. <https://a.co/d/1mcjVEp>
or Video | <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/suffering-is-not-for-nothing>

- Book | **A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God’s Sovereignty** 256pgs. - Joni Eareckson Tada
- Book | **The Problem of Pain, ch.6 & 7** 29pgs. - C.S. Lewis
<https://tinyurl.com/2s4jdkm7>
- Video/Transcript | **Why Suffering?—A Theological Response** - Don Carson
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/sermon/why-suffering-a-theological-response/>
- Video/Transcript | **Suffering: Gospel Hope When Life Doesn’t Make Sense** - Paul Tripp
https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/conference_media/suffering-gospel-hope-life-doesnt-make-sense/
- Video | **Where’s God in suffering? - Helen Roseveare’s story** 37min
<https://youtu.be/b-BLCXWfXPs2i>
- Debate | **Theodicy, God and Suffering - A debate between Dinesh D’Souza and Bart Ehrman** 102min
<https://youtu.be/lsg6Kx-3xdI?si>

Post-Forum Assignment

Write an introduction, outline, and conclusion for a message/ lesson from Romans 5:1–5: Title: **Our Hope in Suffering**

Complete & meet with classmate to share by: June 24, 2025