

“WHY DO CHRISTIANS SUFFER?”

Lesson 42

1. If God is KIND AND LOVING why does He allow us to suffer TRIBULATION?
2. There are SOME LESSONS God would have us learn that can only be learned through SUFFERING. John 16:33, Hebrews 2:10
3. Christianity is not an inoculation against TRIALS. Hebrews 12:6
4. Christians suffer because of WILLFUL IGNORANCE. 1 Peter 2:20 & 21
5. Christians suffer when they stand for RIGHTEOUSNESS. 1 Peter 3:8-15
6. Christians suffer because of UNCONFESSED SINS. 1 Cor. 11:27-32
7. Christians suffer because of PAST SIN. If an alcoholic gets saved HE IS FORGIVEN but his or her body continues to suffer the ravages caused by the addiction. Galatians 6:7-10; Acts 9:23
8. Believers suffer for the GLORY OF GOD. Job 1:8-11, Acts 9:15 & 16
9. Christians suffer for THEIR FAITH. Acts 12:2 & 4; 2 Peter 1:12-15; John 21:18 & 19; Hebrews 11:35-38
10. We as believers will suffer in the process of BEING DISCIPLINED. Hebrews 12:6-10
11. What are some of the RESULTS of discipline and/or suffering?
 - A. The enemy is SILENCED. Job 1:20-22
 - B. God is GLORIFIED. John 11:4, 40 & 41; John 9:1-3
 - C. We become MORE LIKE Christ. Philippians 3:10; Romans 8:29
 - D. We learn to DEPEND on Him. Psalm 46:1
 - E. Discipline STRENGTHENS our faith. Hebrews 12:11-13
 - F. Suffering teaches us PATIENCE. Patience can only be learned by ENDURING. Romans 5:3-5 (Patience is not a BIRTHRIGHT it is LEARNED.)
 - G. Suffering makes us SYMPATHETIC. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7
 - H. Suffering keeps us HUMBLE. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, 1 Peter 5:5 & 6

12. What BLESSINGS come from suffering?

- A. We know that GOD LOVES US. Hebrews 12:5-8
- B. We learn to be SUBJECT to God. Hebrews 12:9
- C. We are led into HOLY LIVING. Hebrews 12:10
- D. Suffering produces RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE. Hebrews 12:11
- E. Discipline gives us the ASSURANCE of our SALVATION. Heb. 12:8
- F. Suffering and discipline work together to make believers PRODUCTIVE. Hebrews 12:12 & 13

Conclusion

What is your reaction to the chastening of the Lord -- to the trials and tribulations of life?

Hebrews 12:5 says, *“Despise not the chastening of the Lord.”* How does one despise it? Simply by ignoring the fact that God is trying to teach you something -- so let Him. Another way you can react to God’s discipline is to take on a good dose of self pity. *“Why did God let this happen to me?”* The Bible says, *“Faint not when you are rebuked of Him”* (Hebrews 12:5). That suffering, or problem, has come to you as a challenge to trust Him through it all. Then, there are those with a super-pious attitude. They will say, *“This is my cross and I’ll bear it,”* when all the time there is rebellion inside their heart and soul. *“No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised by it”* (Hebrews 12:11). Finally, we are to endure chastening -- suffering (Hebrews 12:7). The hardest lesson for most of us is to endure anything very long. Do you ever take an inventory of your life when trouble comes? Job said, *“When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold”* (Job 23:10). *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you”* (James 4:8).