

Suffering and Love Combined?

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son”

John 3:16

One of the greatest arguments against the idea of a loving God in our world is this matter of the remarkable and universal suffering we see.

Given the historical evidence of suffering, many people are amazed that people who think clearly can insist on both at the same time. This is the paradox of Christianity and of history.

In every generation there has been a multitude of people—some poor, some rich, some intellectual giants, and some common and ordinary souls—who love God in spite of the suffering they endure themselves and see around them.

Why is it that rational people of every age stand up and say that a God of love created this world so filled with sickness and death?

When suffering comes knocking at our door do we not have some thoughts of God not being loving or merciful?

Who can go into the cancer ward of a children’s hospital and not have a sense of the injustice—the awfulness of the world around us? It is when the young are touched with sorrow that our disgust at evil rises to

the surface. How can the little ones be given such a sentence of death before they really live?

The people of every age who confess they believe in a God of love mercy and grace—and then look at the hurt and pain of the world—have also seen something else. Those people have looked at a spot outside the city of Jerusalem and seen an event that happened two thousand years ago.

It is only when we see the world through the lens of Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection, that we can cope with the terrible pain some people must endure.

We are taught in the Bible that the cross of Christ demonstrates both the anger of God against sin—and its evil work—and the love of God for sinners such as we are.

Calvary proclaims God’s resistance to evil and suffering and it also proclaims God’s eternal never dying love for His people. God was willing to pay the greatest price a Father ever could pay in order to redeem a humanity for Himself.

A wonderful friend of mine who was a navigator in World War II showed me a photo of

him and his brother beside the bomber he navigated on many missions against Germany. My friend came home from the war and his brother did not. Having children of my own I asked my friend how his parents endured such a sacrifice.

My friend assured me they were never the same after their son’s death. Just so with the God Who made us. He has suffered beyond our imagination to let His Son die for sinners.

God has put away the results of sin for His people. Some day He will remove all of His children from this world of sin and cause us all to be free forever from sin’s power and influence.

Stand at the foot of the cross today and marvel at the amazing love of God for people such as you are. Consider the enormous suffering of God to pay the price of sin for us and never doubt again that the evil you now endure shall finally be removed from your sight and the heaven you shall claim in the future.

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