

Sorrow Has A Large Family

“...a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”

Isaiah 53:3

Many people who suffer have the idea that no one has suffered as much or in as many ways as they have. The pain of suffering easily clouds our thinking and causes our view of life to be distorted.

As a child, I loved to join with my siblings and cousins in playing family. Occasionally I would find an old pair of glasses one of my parents owned and put them on to try and look like an adult. I would find a hat of my father's and wear it to try and make the illusion more lifelike.

My Dad's hat would drop down on my smaller head until it rested on or over my ears. The glasses would distort all that I saw and sometimes cause me to stumble as I strode around pretending I was a man.

Trials in life can act like corrective glasses gone bad. Pain and suffering often magnify the smallest irritants and make them appear larger than life. Who has not found themselves short tempered when life hurts? We may know in our minds that the irritant is

of not great consequence, but our emotions get the best of us and we shout, cry, or in some other way react inappropriately to the issue that pain has made so large.

I well recall my first visit to Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto following my first cancer surgery. Just to get up the courage to walk into the place took all the strength I had. I desperately wanted to turn around and leave, but I overcame my fears enough to continue walking into the clinic. When I had registered with the receptionist I sat down and glanced at the other patients who were at the same clinic.

As I looked around at the other patients in the waiting room, I saw the obvious challenges they were facing and it helped me put things in perspective. I very quickly realized that there were many people in the world who had similar or greater challenges than I had. I accepted the fact that I was now in a large “family of sorrow”.

When I got home and turned to my Bible for comfort and strength, I looked at the suf-

fering of Jesus as described in the Gospels. As I thought of the many ways He suffered emotionally, spiritually and physically, I knew that I had little to complain about. What my Lord had suffered for sinners such as myself was vastly more than the small pain that was my portion.

In the midst of our own pain it's easy to believe that no one else has the problems that we have in life. However, when we look in the cancer wards, see someone in a wheelchair, or read the newspaper, we soon realize that there are many others who suffer in this life.

Remember that the One Who suffered the most in life was our Lord. So when you feel life becoming too much, come to the “Man of sorrows” and tell Him all about your fear, your pain, your loneliness. He listens and understands. He will give you the peace, comfort and strength to carry on another day. That is His promise to all who follow Him.

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