

Suffering Like Jesus

Jesus, the man of suffering (Is. 53)

He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

Suffering like Jesus in our actions:

1 Peter 2:21–23, *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.* ²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ²³ *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

1. Jesus was severely sinned against.
2. Yet Jesus did not respond sinfully
3. Instead Jesus trusted in God (*also 4:19; Rom 12:17-21*)
4. And Jesus bore good fruit (*also 3:9; 4:19; Romans 12:17–21; Luke 6:27–36; 23:34*)
5. Jesus is our model in these situations (*v.21; also Romans 15:2-3; 1 John 2:3-6*)

Suffering like Jesus in our emotions:

God gives us emotions for specific purposes. These include:

- To know, relate to, and glorify God
- To fulfill the Great Commandments (love God and neighbor)

We don't want to forget that Jesus, fully God and fully man, displayed all sinless human emotions. For example, Jesus was filled with pity, compassion, love, and affection (see Matt. 9:36; Mark 1:41; 8:2; Luke 7:36-50; John 11:5; 13:34; 15:9-13). Compassion is the most frequent emotion of Jesus (See Mark 13:2; 11:34; Matt: 9:36) that we see. The compassion of

Jesus is vital because he is compassionate towards sinners and sufferers. He is not irritated with them. He is not bothered by them, unlike his disciples. Jesus is perfectly compassionate towards those who suffer.

Christ was also perfectly angry. In some places, Jesus is angry at death (such as John 11:33, 38). There, Jesus is angry at the unbelief of those watching and their hard-heartedness, but also at death-that unnaturally intrudes, breaking relationships. We see Jesus then displaying perfect anger in death, along with sorrow and hope.

This matters for us. Jesus came not to be broken by suffering and death but to break it. He demonstrates for us that we can display sinless emotions even in our suffering, including sorrow and anger. Now, you may be surprised to hear this. Especially the anger part. It's true though that the anger of Christ is rare. And it is limited to only a few occasions. Our English translations soften up the word to say Jesus groaned in his spirit, but, as DA Carson explains, "It is lexically inexcusable to reduce this emotional upset to the effects of empathy, grief, pain, or the like." There is a righteous anger that we can display in our suffering, but it is limited. We can appropriately grieve and have sorrow, but our anger should be accompanied by other godly virtues and expressed in godly ways.

How to handle emotions through the truth:

Scripture is our starting point and compass towards the truth. Scripture helps prevent us from getting off track. The only way we can know what to feel and desire is through God's Word.

- We need an honest evaluation of ourselves. What are our sinful emotions and how do we display them?
- After identifying, confession and repentance are essential.
- See emotions as a gift from God.
- Understand the connection between our emotions with our thinking, desires, and actions.
- Grow in our understanding of what is truly "normal": what emotions did Jesus experience, and what do these look like? What emotions do we learn from God? What does Scripture say about the emotion?
- Be honest towards God and self in what we are feeling and the emotions we are experiencing.
- Put to death ungodly emotions and replace with godly emotions.
- Being controlled by the Spirit instead of the flesh is the key.
- Taking thoughts captive: renewing our thinking
- Cultivate godly emotions through worship, the Word, prayer, and meditation.

Suffering like Jesus in our attitude:

Don't be surprised by suffering.

Why?

- We live in a Gen. 3 world.
- Jesus suffered, so why shouldn't we?
- Suffering is necessary, as it tests faith-genuine faith more precious than gold
- Suffering can strengthen our faith
- Suffering gives reason for joy

- Suffering identifies believers with Christ-not a sign God is against us
- Suffering leads us away from sin and our idols
- Suffering points believers to the living hope of Jesus.
- Suffering brings praise, glory, and honor to Christ and (us)
- Suffering now, glories to follow (v10-12)

How do we maintain a Christlike attitude in our suffering?

1. Remembering our afflictions are momentary compared to what is coming.
2. Reshaping our view: weaknesses are a way for God to display his strength in us.
3. Reminding ourselves that God does not abandon us in our suffering.
4. Refocusing: Suffering reminds us we are not home yet, and still in a fallen world.
5. Reframing: God is sovereign over our suffering
6. Renewing: Our suffering unites us with Christ and each other fellow sufferers
7. Resulting: A biblical response to suffering is a deeper relationship with the Lord.