

Determining the Cause of Pain

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon teaches us how to distinguish between suffering that is from God and suffering that is not, by noting whether it is imposed or chosen.

Scripture: Daniel 6:16, Jonah 1:4, Matthew 5:11, Luke 23:33, Acts 27:20

Topics: "Suffering", "Discerning God's Will"

Description

A.W. Tozer explores the distinction between suffering that comes from the cross and suffering that comes from the rod, emphasizing that pain can arise from both obedience and disobedience to God. He illustrates this with examples from the lives of Jonah, Paul, and Daniel, highlighting that the source of pain is not as important as the heart's response to it. Tozer points out that true blessedness comes from suffering for Christ's sake, as indicated in Matthew 5:11, and that our tribulations should be chosen rather than imposed. Ultimately, he encourages believers to reflect on the nature of their suffering and its alignment with their commitment to Christ.

Transcript

But how can we tell in a given situation whether our pain is from the cross or the rod? Pain is pain from whatever source it comes. Jonah in flight from the will of God suffered no worse storm than did Paul in the center of God's will; the same wild sea threatened the life of both. And Daniel in the lion's den was in trouble as deep as was Jonah in the whale's belly. The nails bit as deep into the hands of Christ dying for the sins of the world as into the hands of the two thieves dying for their own sins. How then may we distinguish the cross from the rod?

I think the answer is plain.

When tribulation comes we have but to note whether it is imposed or chosen. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you?" (Matt. 5:11). But that is not all. Four other words He added: they are "falsely, for my sake." These words show that the suffering must come voluntarily, that it must be chosen in the larger choice of Christ and righteousness. If the accusation men cry against us is true, no blessedness follows.

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