

That Questionable Suffering

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer explores the concept of suffering, distinguishing between suffering as a moral corrective and suffering for Christ's sake, and encouraging believers to turn neutral afflictions to good.

Scripture: Romans 5:3, 1 Peter 2:20

Topics: "Suffering", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

A.W. Tozer addresses the nature of suffering, distinguishing between just punishments for wrongdoing and the suffering that comes from living a righteous life for Christ. He emphasizes that true suffering for Christ is a choice, while other forms of suffering, such as illness or loss, are part of the human experience and may lack clear spiritual significance. Tozer encourages believers to transform these neutral afflictions into opportunities for growth through prayer and humility, learning from adversity rather than resenting it. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper understanding of suffering as a means to draw closer to God.

Transcript

We delude ourselves when we try to turn our just punishments into a cross and rejoice over that for which we should rather repent. ?For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God? (1 Pet. 2:20) . The cross is always in the way of righteousness. We feel the pain of the cross only when we suffer for Christ?s sake by our own willing choice. I think that there is also another kind of suffering, one that does not fall into either of the categories considered above.

It comes neither from the rod nor from the cross, not being imposed as a moral corrective nor suffered as a result of our Christian life and testimony.

It comes in the course of nature and arises from the many ills flesh is heir to. It visits all alike in a greater or lesser degree and would appear to have no clear spiritual significance. Its source may be fire, flood, bereavement, injuries, accidents, illness, old age, weariness or the upset conditions of the world generally. What are we to do about this? Well, some great souls have managed to turn even these neutral afflictions to good. By prayer and self-abasement they wooed adversity to become their friend and made rough distress a teacher to instruct them in the heavenly arts. May we not emulate them?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/that-questionable-suffering/>

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