

The Issue of Suffering

by Ray Comfort

The issue of suffering is not something to be avoided, but rather it's glaring evidence that man has rejected God, and it should lead people to investigate the claims of God's Word.

Scripture: John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9, Hebrews 9:27

Topics: "Suffering And Faith", "Salvation Through Christ"

Description

Ray Comfort addresses the common reactions to the message of the gospel using a plane analogy. He illustrates how individuals respond differently to the evidence of suffering in the world, with one embracing faith, another rejecting God, and a third acknowledging but not acting on the truth. Comfort emphasizes the urgent need for all individuals to recognize the seriousness of the situation and to respond by putting on the 'parachute' of salvation through Jesus Christ, especially when faced with the undeniable evidence of sin and brokenness in the world.

Transcript

What if someone says, "What about the issue of suffering? Little kids are born deformed, people die of terrible diseases, and there are earthquakes and tornadoes that cause havoc. This proves that there is no God! We are on our own..." How do you answer that?

Three philosophers are seated in a plane. The first man said that he heard that during the early hours of the night, hijackers took over the controls. As he spoke, the plane lunged to the left and thrust a number of passengers against the wall, seriously injuring some of them.

After the second man gained his composure, he said, "Because of what just happened, I don't believe that this plane was ever made." Even though his statement didn't make sense, he continued to maintain that the entire plane, with its seats, windows, lighting, air conditioning, engines, etc., happened by accident.

As the third philosopher began to give his thoughts, the plane again lunged to one side. This time it was so violent that many passengers were seriously injured and two elderly people were killed. He was obviously shaken, but was able to share his thoughts about what had happened. He said that despite what was happening on the plane, he thought all was well in the cockpit.

It was then that someone quickly passed a hand-written note to the first man. It read, "Hijackers! All to be thrust out of the plane. Parachute under seat. Put it on now. Going to cut the lighting. Be ready to jump!"

As he read its words, his eyes widened. This confirmed that something was radically wrong. He quickly reached under his seat and put the parachute on, and then passed the note on to the second philosopher.

The second man read the words on the note. He smiled said, "This note hasn't used correct grammar. "Parachute under seat" isn't even a complete sentence..." With that, he crumpled the note and dropped it to the floor.

The third man, still shaken by what had happened on the plane, picked up the note and read it. He said, "It sure looks authentic. It does have the airline's letterhead. What's happening on the plane does add up to something being radically wrong...I think I now believe there is something wrong." However, he then sat in his seat, not bothering to put his parachute on, or even to pass the note on to others!

Here we have three common reactions to the message of the gospel. Obviously, the first passenger is a genuine convert. He understands that the issue of suffering--disease, pain and death shows that something is radically wrong between God and man. His knowledge of the jump that he must take through the door of death causes him to trust in the Savior.

The second man is an atheist. He uses the issue of suffering to somehow make an illogical leap into the philosophy that there is no God. The thought that the whole of creation, with its flowers, its birds, the sun, the moon, the animal kingdom, the beauty of the seasons, the incredible variety of succulent fruit trees, etc., all happened by accident. The notion that such reasoning borders on insanity doesn't enter his unthinking and sin-loving mind. He doesn't bother to humbly study the warning of Scripture. Instead, he exalts himself above the mind of his Creator, and condescendingly becomes a critic of the Word of God. He maintains it is full of errors and therefore can't be trusted.

The third man is an average person. He believes in God. He even believes the Bible. He is easily convinced that something may be wrong between man and God...but he doesn't see his urgent need to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we awaken these two men?

For the answer, let's go back to the plane. The first man simply needs to tell the other two philosophers to look out of the window for a moment, and to think about the 25,000-foot fall. Their knowledge of the unbending law of gravity should kick in, and from there common sense should do the rest. It should cause both men to look under their seat for the parachute.

The issue of suffering is not something the Christian should avoid. It is glaring evidence that man has rejected God--all is not well on board the flight. It works for our cause, not against it. All these things--pain, disease, droughts, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.,--should cause the thinking person to investigate the claims of the "note" of God's Word, and see its explanation.

However, the ultimate convincing agent is of course the unbending Law of God. It is the knowledge of the Law and the fearful consequences of transgressing its precepts that should cause fear to kick in, and hopefully common sense should then cause the sinner to seek after the Savior, who lovingly died and rose again, so that they might be saved.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ray-comfort/the-issue-of-suffering/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net