



# Life Principles Notes<sup>™</sup>

## The Ways of God Part 7: He Uses Our Suffering

### Summary:

**We know God loves us and cares for us, but we wonder why He allows suffering.** We suffer, we pray, and we feel that our prayers are not answered. What we fail to realize is that even though we cannot see what God is doing, He is patiently at work fulfilling His will. One of the most important and awesome ways of God is that He uses our suffering.

Peter wrote a letter to suffering believers in the

first century. He said, “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right” (1 Peter 4:19).

**Key Passage:** [1 Peter 4:12-19](#)

**Supporting Scripture:** *Psalm 119:67, 71; John 15:1-2; Hebrews 5:7-9, 12:5, 10; 1; 1 Peter 1:7; Thessalonians 5:18; Romans 5:1-5; Philippians 1:12-13, 3:10.*

### Scriptural Principles:

#### 1 Suffering is the result of anything that causes us pain in some way.

In such a sinful world, all of us suffer. Some of our suffering may take the form of persecution for our faith. There are other kinds of suffering we bring on ourselves, such as violating good health principles.

#### 2 God uses suffering in order to get our attention.

In verses 67 and 71 of Psalm 119 we read that affliction helps us to learn God’s ways. When He sees that we are moving toward sin and disobedience, the Lord allows suffering because our pain drives us back to Him.

#### 3 God uses suffering to develop personal righteousness and maturity.

As Christians, we are often unaware of sinful activities that remain in our lives. God is in the process of developing maturity through us, and suffering helps to reveal those issues that He wants us to resolve.

#### 4 God uses suffering for the purpose of pruning.

Pruning is God’s process of cutting back the useless parts of your life that will never be productive for His kingdom. What does God prune? He “cuts away” our attitudes and our actions so that godly ones may grow, thus maximizing our potential as children of God.

#### 5 God uses suffering to teach us obedience.

Even Jesus had to learn obedience. (Hebrews 5:8) He was always perfect, yet always learning obedience. Focus on what God is teaching you. Accept His discipline because it applies to those whom He loves.

#### 6 God uses suffering to teach us to trust Him.

In 1 Peter 1:7, we read that our faith, when tested by fire, is more precious than gold, which is perishable. God makes no apology for sending us suffering because He loves us so much.

## 7 God uses suffering to bring about continuous dependence upon His grace.

Paul wrote about the incredible lesson he learned—when he was at his weakest in human strength, he was at his strongest in Christ. Only in our weakness is God glorified the most, because we must rely on the Lord.

## 8 God allows suffering to manifest Christ's life in each of us.

When we speak of the body of Christ, we don't mean His physical body, because He is now at the right hand of the Father. The body of Christ refers to all believers, the church. Christ uses all of us as His physical body on earth to demonstrate His power to the world.

## 9 God allows suffering to purify the heart and to make us holy.

We can share in the holiness of Christ, according to Hebrews 12:10. God's goal for us is that we be like Jesus. Through our suffering, God purifies our hearts, allowing His holiness to shine through our character.

## 10 God allows suffering to teach us to give thanks in everything.

Being thankful for suffering isn't easy, is it? We read in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 to give thanks in everything, for this is God's will. We may not feel thankful, but we should have gratitude knowing that He uses our suffering.

## 11 God allows trials to build character.

We learn perseverance and steadfastness in our trials. Even though we suffer, we know that the Creator is doing His awesome work in our lives. In Romans 5:1-5, we learn that suffering brings perseverance, then character, and finally a hope that will never disappoint us.

## 12 God allows adversity to enable us to share the sufferings of Christ.

In Philippians 3, Paul writes that he desires suffering because Jesus Christ suffered on his behalf. Since Christ and Paul suffered, we know that God calls us to endure trials as well. It is a false Gospel that claims our faith should only bring us health and prosperity.

## 13 God allows suffering to prevent pride and broaden our ministry.

Paul knew that God allowed him to be tormented by a "thorn" of some kind (we don't know the specifics). The apostle prayed for the thorn's removal, but God told him that His grace was sufficient. In Philippians 1:12-13, Paul tells how his imprisonment was used for good by spreading the Gospel.

## 14 God allows suffering to reveal man's evil and God's righteousness.

God's righteous judgment is the result of humanity's wickedness. The Creator is alive and active, and He punishes sinfulness.

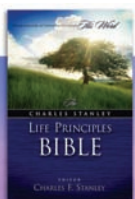
## 15 How should we respond to suffering?

We should always ask God what He wants us to do. Was this suffering caused by our own sin, or through some other influence? Ask God for strength and discernment during this time of testing.

## Conclusion:

If you are a Christian seeking to walk in faith, know that God has a purpose for your trials, even when you can't see what they are. Use this time to increase your understanding of Him.

God is gracious even in the way



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He uses the most unpleasant things in life to ultimately bless us. There are so many reasons that He sends suffering, and every single one of them is for our best.

Be patient! Be steadfast and persevere, because you will ultimately know why God allowed every difficult time in your life. Then you will be able to say, "Thank you Lord, for You knew best." 🙏

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