

Sharing His Suffering

Lord, when I'm dealing with disappointment, what a comfort to turn to You and think of Your sufferings. Thinking of You turns my world right-side-up. Thinking of Your sufferings when I am "suffering" brings me comfort and joy.

When my suffering is unjust, it is lost in Your greater suffering. It finds meaning in You. I realize that my suffering is some small part of Your work, Your mercy, Your salvation. The apostle Paul felt that his sufferings were somehow completing Your suffering (Colossians 1:24). I realize that when I lay my life down in Your service--not in mere intention, but in action--my destiny becomes wrapped up in Yours. I share Your suffering. I will share Your glory (2 Timothy 2:11-12).

When my suffering is a sad part of life, beyond my control, I realize that You suffered. You understand suffering. I often think of You as holy, omnipotent, perfect God, high above and detached from my gritty struggles. But when I suffer, I'm reminded that You, the God I know, with whom I live face-to-face, have been scarred and shaped by suffering yourself. It's part of Your personal experience. It's who You are--I can see it in Your eyes.

How amazing that Holy God would come to earth and become known as the "Man of Sorrows." You have felt as I feel, and I find sympathy with You: You "feel along with" me. Our suffering becomes something we share, as my spouse and I share the suffering we've endured for our children. Our hearts, Yours and mine, are bonded together by our pain.

When my suffering is the result of my own sin, I find in You the Fountain of mercy and tenderness. You long only for my forgiveness and restoration, not recrimination and punishment. I experience again how complete is salvation. You want not only to forgive my sin but also to heal it to its core. You work patiently but persistently to banish sin's awful curse from my life, completely and forever.

Lord Jesus, thank You for the wonderful gifts You give through suffering. Our pain brings us a fuller, sweeter understanding of life here and hereafter. It is part of turning loose of what is temporary and grasping what is eternal and of infinite value.

*Suffering Savior,
Man of Sorrows,
Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,
I thank You and worship You with all my being.
Praise to You forever and forever!*

Hymn: [Isaiah 53](#)