

The Christian's Lessons In Suffering

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Gen 18:25)

The *why* of suffering, has ever been among the most serious problems of life. Before we can do anything that is really worthwhile in helping our fellow men, we must pass through a training of suffering, in which alone we can learn the lessons that will fit us for this holier service.

We are called to suffer, it may be as a *witness for God*. We do not know what may depend upon our faithfulness in any time of stress or trial. It may seem a small thing, for instance, to complain and fret when we are suffering, and yet it may sadly blur our witnessing. God wants us to represent Him, to illustrate the qualities in His character which He would have the world know. A Christian in a sick room is called to *manifest* the beauty of His Master in patience, in trust, in sweetness of spirit. A Christian in great sorrow is called to show the world the meaning of faith and faith's power to hold the heart quiet and at peace, in the bitterest experience of grief and loss. We are witnesses for God in our sufferings, and, if we would not fail Him—we must show in ourselves the power of divine grace to keep the song singing in our hearts through pain or sorrow.

There never can be any *gain* in asking "Why?" when we find ourselves in trouble. *God has His reasons*, and it is enough that He should know why He sends this or that trial into our life or our friend's life. There is always mystery. The perplexed and heartbreaking "Why?" is heard continually, wherever we go. We cannot answer it. It is not meant that we should try to answer it. The "Why?" belongs to our Father. He knows; let Him answer and let us trust and be still. God is love. He makes no mistakes.

-J.R Miller