

The God of All Comfort – Part 3

There are Four Types of Suffering:

1. Self-induced – Result of our own sin.
2. Others/Societal-induced.
3. Environmental-induced.
4. Ministry-induced – Suffering due to Christ-like activity.

Last week, we focused primarily on the first type, self-induced suffering. This is a type of suffering that results from our own rebellion against God's ways, when we don't believe God can meet our needs, when we take matters into our own hands, and when we don't do things that we are supposed to do. This week, we will look at suffering caused by others or society, environmentally-induced suffering, and suffering as a result of doing Christian work, and how God offers His comfort to us.

HURT PEOPLE HURT OTHER PEOPLE

I. Type #2: Others/Societally-Induced Suffering

When we are a victim of the selfishness or cruelty of others, we ...

- A. Repay **K** _____ for cruelty.

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. – Romans 12:19-21 (NIV)

1. Trust God for **V** _____.

"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. – Romans 12:19 (NKJV)

- B. Look for a creative **C** _____ when we can.

"Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." – Daniel 1:12-13 (NIV)

A HURT WORLD WILL HURT ITS PEOPLE

II. Type #3: Environmentally-induced Suffering

Not only did sin enter the human relationship through Adam and Eve, the chain reaction of sin also entered into the world. As a result, all of nature became dysfunctionally unnatural.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—Romans 5:12 (NIV)

- A. In this world, something is **W** _____ with everything, and all of creation yearns for the day that Jesus will restore perfection.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. – Romans 8:22-23 (NIV)

III. Type #4: Ministry-Induced Suffering - Sufferings for Christ due to Christ-like activity

- A. Don't be **S** _____ at suffering.

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. – 1 Peter 4:12

- B. Suffering now means **C** _____ later.

But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. – 1 Peter 4:13-14

- C. When you cannot compromise, stand **F** _____.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." – Daniel 3:16-18

- D. God will **A** _____ us through our suffering and will deliver us either in this life or the next.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, Your Majesty."

He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." – Daniel 3:24-25

So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them. – Daniel 3:26b-27

Answers:

I. A. Kindness; 1.) Vengeance; B. Compromise

II. A. Wrong

III. A. Surprised; B. Celebration; C. Firm; D. Accompany