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TE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

WHY GOD ALLOWS SUFFERING

Our hearts and prayers are with those who have suffered the loss of loved ones, the loss of homes and the loss of livelihood in this most recent storm. When tragedies occur the question often arises as to why an all-powerful and loving God allows suffering in this world.

God allows suffering because it helps us to learn valuable lessons. The Bible tells us that Jesus "learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). Jesus suffered rejection, ridicule, persecution, temptation, scourging and a horrible death on the cross. Yet, from this suffering he learned obedience. When we suffer it should remind us of the necessity of being in the right relationship with our God who loves us and who helps us through the most trying times of our lives. "For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).

God allows suffering because it enables us to show our commitment to God. In the book of Job, Satan told God that Job was only serving God because God had blessed him so bountifully. Satan said, take everything away from Job and he will curse you to your face (Job 1:9-11). Yet, when God allowed Satan to take away Job's family, possessions, and afflicted him physically, the Bible tells us, "In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong" (Job 1:22). Genuine faith in God will not allow one to turn away from God when suffering, no matter how great the suffering is (1 Peter 1:6-7).

God allows suffering because suffering promotes compassion for others. when we have suffered and endured, we can provide comfort and help to others who are suffering. God "comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

God allows suffering because suffering produces humility. Humility is a trait that is necessary to pleasing God (Prov. 16:18-19). The Bible tells us that "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6b). Paul was given a "thorn in the flesh ... lest he be exalted above measure" (2 Cor. 2:7-10). Whatever form it takes, suffering will be our thorn in the flesh. Paul asked God to remove his "thorn in the flesh" but God said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

God cares when we suffer. Let us trust in Him completely looking to Him and His word for comfort and strength to endure <http://.greenplainchurchofchrist.org> Email: greenplaincoc@gmail.com