



## **When Your Heart Breaks**

### **2 Corinthians 1:3-5**

When our hearts break, we wonder, “Does God really \_\_\_\_\_ us?” Today we’re going to explore the value of \_\_\_\_\_. The Bible reveals God’s love in \_\_\_\_\_ times and in \_\_\_\_\_. He hears every \_\_\_\_\_ and knows every \_\_\_\_\_ we face. He gives us His \_\_\_\_\_ to teach us, to comfort us, and to guide us through the rough times. You’ll never face a \_\_\_\_\_ that someone hasn’t faced before, and the Scriptures give us an amazing \_\_\_\_\_ to see how others have handled their struggles. God knew what we needed even \_\_\_\_\_ we had a need and He gave us this marvelous book to help us (Psalm 119:50).

Annie Johnson Flint was crippled and twisted much of her life with arthritis, yet from her pain she developed a sensitivity to suffering that \_\_\_\_\_ her to understand and encourage others who were suffering. She wrote these words of encouragement: “God hath not promised skies always blue, Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through; God hath not promised sun without rain, Joy without sorrow, Peace without pain. But God hath promised strength for the day, Rest for the labor, light for the way, Grace for the trials, help from above, Unfailing sympathy, undying love.”

As Christians, we shouldn’t \_\_\_\_\_ God to prevent every problem. People say, “If God loved us, He wouldn’t let us \_\_\_\_\_.” But those who say such things may be speaking too \_\_\_\_\_, they may not understand. God may be using a difficulty now to \_\_\_\_\_ a greater good. Heartaches teach us the most important \_\_\_\_\_ of life (Psalm 119:75). The heartaches of life may bring us the greatest \_\_\_\_\_.

**Our Scripture reading today comes from 2 Corinthians 1:3-5.**

**Read what Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 7:2-4.**

It’s an assumption that the best life is one \_\_\_\_\_ from pain or distress. But life free from difficulty is \_\_\_\_\_, and what seems hard and painful may be what’s \_\_\_\_\_ for us. I received a letter from a prisoner, \_\_\_\_\_ God that he was imprisoned. Why? Because he \_\_\_\_\_ salvation and a \_\_\_\_\_ life in prison. He would never have \_\_\_\_\_ for it in the free world. A jail cell and a hospital bed have often led many a person to \_\_\_\_\_ their lives for the better. The psalmist said in Psalm 119:71 that, “It was good for me that I was afflicted, That I may \_\_\_\_\_ Your statutes.” When your \_\_\_\_\_ aches, life hurts all over. But if suffering has \_\_\_\_\_ and can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ in a person's life, then we might think of God very differently. How is suffering good?



**First, some “good things” can only be brought about in our \_\_\_\_\_ by suffering.** The pearl comes not through \_\_\_\_\_, but suffering. A pearl forms when an irritant, such as a piece of \_\_\_\_\_, works its way into a particular species of oyster. As a \_\_\_\_\_ mechanism, the oyster then secretes a fluid to coat the irritant. Layer upon layer of this coating is deposited on the irritant until a lustrous pearl is \_\_\_\_\_. If there were no \_\_\_\_\_, there could be no pearl. Suffering can help a person \_\_\_\_\_ himself, what his character is, and that God can help him \_\_\_\_\_ whatever comes along. Suffering will not only strengthen him; it will also give him confidence to \_\_\_\_\_ the future (Romans 5:4). When God has helped us through one trial, we have \_\_\_\_\_ that He will help us through whatever comes our way. Paul spoke confidently in Romans 8:28, “And we know that God causes all things to work together for \_\_\_\_\_ to those who \_\_\_\_\_ God, to those who are called according to His purposes.” Not all things \_\_\_\_\_ good, but God causes all things (good and bad) to \_\_\_\_\_ together for good for those who love Him. God can take the heartaches of our lives and \_\_\_\_\_ them for some greater good. We may not always know what He will do with them, but we can \_\_\_\_\_ that He will use those experiences to bring about good.

**Second, suffering can help a person \_\_\_\_\_ what is really important or valuable.** The psalmist said in Psalm 119:67, “Before I was afflicted I went \_\_\_\_\_, But now I keep Your \_\_\_\_\_.” An affliction is something that \_\_\_\_\_ great physical or mental distress. It usually comes through no \_\_\_\_\_ of our own. It can, however, \_\_\_\_\_ us up to what really matters. It is very easy to get our priorities and our lives out of \_\_\_\_\_, to put such high emphasis on things that don't matter. Suffering is painful, but one thing it does is it helps us to see what really does \_\_\_\_\_ in this life. Having an HD TV isn't nearly as important as being able to \_\_\_\_\_ or being able to \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible (3 John 2). It's when we're \_\_\_\_\_ that we most value the presence of God our Father in our lives. With the breakdown of the \_\_\_\_\_ so prevalent in our society, many individuals are terribly lonely. The number of \_\_\_\_\_ adults in America has greatly increased. The Lord Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ loneliness. He never had a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_. Isaiah 53:3 says, “He was despised and \_\_\_\_\_ of men, A man of \_\_\_\_\_ and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men \_\_\_\_\_ their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” When He needed His \_\_\_\_\_ most, they didn't help Him. They \_\_\_\_\_ while He \_\_\_\_\_ in the Garden of Gethsemane. One \_\_\_\_\_ Him, another \_\_\_\_\_ Him three times, the others scattered. Jesus went to the cross and suffered for our sins \_\_\_\_\_.



Where did Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His strength? Jesus stayed \_\_\_\_\_ to His Father, and that closeness sustained Him through the hard and lonely times (John 16:32). **Read what the Bible says in James 4:7-8.** Likewise Paul drew His \_\_\_\_\_ from the Father (2 Timothy 4:16-18).

**Third, suffering teaches us to be \_\_\_\_\_ for our blessings.** A truly hungry person is thankful for something to \_\_\_\_\_. He's not \_\_\_\_\_ and won't \_\_\_\_\_. People who have an abundance are often the first to \_\_\_\_\_ when things aren't perfect. **Read Philippians 2:14 and Ephesians 5:20.** Someone says, "What do you \_\_\_\_\_ giving thanks for all things? How can I give thanks for this \_\_\_\_\_ and heartache that I'm going through?" I know it's \_\_\_\_\_ and harsh. When you can't change your circumstances, however, you can change how you \_\_\_\_\_ things. If all you can see is the pain, you may be \_\_\_\_\_ what God is able to do with that trouble that you're facing. **Read what the Bible says in James 1:2-4.** In Acts chapter 5 the apostles were \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus in the temple. The high priest and the Council heard of it and \_\_\_\_\_ them up. An angel of the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ them and told them to go back to the temple and preach, and they did. The guards then arrested them a second time; the Council rebuked them, beat them, and told them not to preach in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus any more. The Jews usually \_\_\_\_\_ people with whips or rods. They would \_\_\_\_\_ them repeatedly up to 39 times. The Sanhedrin Council that condemned Jesus meant business towards the apostles with this beating; and it must have been quite \_\_\_\_\_. **Read Acts 5:41-42.** They saw their suffering as a way to show \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to God. **Read what the Bible says in 1 Peter 4:12-16.** Perspective matters, and if we see our suffering as a way of showing our devotion, we can \_\_\_\_\_ even when we suffer.

**Fourth, suffering can teach us compassion for the \_\_\_\_\_ of others.** Walking through some difficult experience is \_\_\_\_\_, but it helps us understand what other people who \_\_\_\_\_ a similar problem are going through. We've been there, and we \_\_\_\_\_ what it's like. God may be using that heartache to \_\_\_\_\_ us to help someone else who may not be as strong as we are, and they can't \_\_\_\_\_ it maybe as well as we can. God's comfort \_\_\_\_\_ us to be a comfort for others. **Read what the Bible says in 2 Corinthians 1:3-5.** That is true, too! We all need the blessing of someone who \_\_\_\_\_, someone who can help us work through our struggles, and someone who will pick us up when we stumble. Mistakes and suffering \_\_\_\_\_ valuable lessons, equipping us with the understanding and the compassion necessary to help someone else through a struggle that we've endured ourselves. Suffering teaches us the value of \_\_\_\_\_ in word, thought, and in deed. We learn what it is to \_\_\_\_\_ a kindness and how valuable it is to \_\_\_\_\_ a kindness.



**Fifth, suffering can teach us the \_\_\_\_\_ of prayer and of Bible study.** Suffering \_\_\_\_\_ us of God. Some never think about God \_\_\_\_\_ some great need comes into their lives. It's a great day when we come to realize that we \_\_\_\_\_ God. We need Him in the \_\_\_\_\_ times and in \_\_\_\_\_. And it's just as \_\_\_\_\_ to understand God in those good times as it is in the bad; and to understand that He is always \_\_\_\_\_ to our prayers. The psalmist prayed in Psalm 119:153, "Look upon my affliction and \_\_\_\_\_ me, For I do not forget Your law." The psalmist said in Psalm 119:143, "Trouble and anguish have come upon me, Yet Your commandments are my \_\_\_\_\_." When your heart aches, go to the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. Read God's \_\_\_\_\_ of love; read His \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_ for His children. God's promises hold \_\_\_\_\_. You can lose your \_\_\_\_\_; you can lose your \_\_\_\_\_; you can lose your \_\_\_\_\_, or your friends; but don't ever let go of your God or His promises. Stay \_\_\_\_\_ to God. We wonder if God \_\_\_\_\_ loves us, why does He let us suffer. But love is more involved than merely keeping people \_\_\_\_\_ from pain. Some pain is \_\_\_\_\_ in life. We couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ without some pain. It's our pain and anguish that \_\_\_\_\_ us necessary lessons and \_\_\_\_\_ us want to change. Much of our heartaches come from \_\_\_\_\_, sometimes the sins of others and sometimes our own. The pain of sin makes us \_\_\_\_\_ for righteousness. Bearing the consequences of our sins \_\_\_\_\_ us to understand why sin is so terrible. God doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ sin because He's mean and hateful. He hates sin, because He knows how sin \_\_\_\_\_ the lives of people that He loves. Second Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slow about His \_\_\_\_\_, as some count slowness, but is \_\_\_\_\_ towards you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." God doesn't want anyone to be \_\_\_\_\_ in sin; He wants people to \_\_\_\_\_ their lives and come to the Lord. Your struggle today may be the motivation that you need to change your \_\_\_\_\_.

To become a Christian, \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord with all your heart. God is utterly trustworthy. Turn from your sins, because sin will only \_\_\_\_\_ to more heartache and ruin. Confess \_\_\_\_\_ as the Christ, the Son of God. And be baptized. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water for the \_\_\_\_\_ of your sins. Romans 6:3-7 teaches that baptism \_\_\_\_\_ us with Christ. And in baptism we're \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ. Baptism is the time when that old man of \_\_\_\_\_ is crucified with Christ and we begin to \_\_\_\_\_ in newness of life free from sin. Won't you do that today?