***God Allowing Pain & Suffering?*** 12-12-21

*Bottom Line: Pain and suffering are the result of man’s sin and are part of why God desires to redeem us.*

*Introduction:*

 A. **The Princess Bride** (’87) scene w/ Wesley back from being “almost dead” to recue Princess Buttercup from Prince Humperdink. “Duel to the death!” “No, to the pain!”

 B. No one enjoys pain, but everyone experiences it.

 C. You can legally sue for damages over 25 types of pain & suffering. (List)

 D. Pain pays, but mostly it causes us to suffer!

 E. There are many kinds of pain and many levels of pain.

 1. Physical pain: most familiar to all

 2. Emotional & Psychological pain: guilt, grief, anxiety, failure, and loneliness

 3. Spiritual pain – sorry, grief, repentance, shame, etc.

 4. Acute = short; Chronic = long term **(Pain Scale Slide)**

 F. Even with it being universal, we struggle with WHY?

 1. Unlucky? Fates? Just? Fair? Good vs. Evil?

 2. If God is a loving God, why does he allow it?

 3. See inconsistency and/or blame God

 G. Let’s answer the question by looking at three others:

**1. Why do we have pain and suffering?**

 A. We have pain and suffering because we are physical.

 1. Things go wrong!

 2. Accidents happen!

 3. We are dying!

 4. The principle of cause & effect! We did something…

 B. We have pain and suffering because people do evil things to each other.

 C. We have pain and suffering because life is not fair, just, or equal! We do not all get the same kind of life!

 D. We have pain and suffering as a defense mechanism to let us know that something is wrong!

**2. Why does God allow it?**

 A. Jesus’ lesson in Luke 13:1-9, things happen!

 B. Pain & suffering was caused by sin! Adam & Eve & Us!

 C. God’s love gave us free will! Choices, circumstances, and consequences are the result of free will. Mt.5, “blessed”

 D. God is more concerned with our character than our comfort! Love means freedom = choices, people, places…

 E. The real question is why doesn’t God intervene for me?

 1. What does he owe you? Beyond love and Jesus!

 2. Why am I so special? “Charmed life”? Good person?

**3. What does God do?**

 A. He allows us real growth that only comes from our struggles! Our wants are not our needs!

 James 1:2-7; Rom.5:3-5

 B. God can not take us like we are! 1 Cor.15:50

 C. Pain and suffering reveals our faith in God. 1 Peter 1:6-9

 1. He cares; 2. He understands; 3. He is present

 4. He listens; 6. He supports us (angels & family);

 7. He is waiting for us!

**Conclusion:**

A. The pain of giving his son his inheritance early! Lk.15

B. Love allows things that are needed not always wanted!

C. Paul was allowed to have a thorn in the flesh – WHY? He needed to learn to trust & rely on God’s grace!

D. Sometimes thorns look like arthritis, cancer, heart disease, etc. Paul found out they look like trust and love!