



The Suffering of the Saints

The types of suffering:

1. **Test:** *a life situation provided by God to evaluate man's individual moral character and obedience to His laws.*

Proverbs 17:3 NLT

Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart.

Psalms 139:23

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

Job 23:1

But he knows where I am going. And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold.

2. **Trial:** *oftentimes a type of testing over a period of time.*

Psalms 26:2

Put me on trial, Lord, and cross-examine me. Test my motives and my heart.

3. **Tribulation:** *a state of great trouble or suffering. Often an extended time of sorrow.*

4. **Tragedy:** *an event causing great suffering, often ending in loss.*

Tragedies are often unexplainable, hard to understand, and difficult to accept.

The purpose of suffering:

1. We go through testing **TO LEARN OBEDIENCE.**

Hebrews 5:8

"Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered."

2. We go through trials **TO LEARN TO TRUST ONLY GOD.**

1 Peter 1:6-9

"So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So, when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the



day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.”

3. We go through tribulations **TO DEVELOP ENDURANCE.**

Romans 5:3

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;”

This type of suffering is typically only experienced once or twice in life. When God wants to take you to the next level.

Often in times of tribulation you have very little power to control the circumstances. The only thing you can control is your reaction.

Hebrews 12:1-3

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up.”

4. We experience tragedies **TO REMIND US THAT THE WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME.**

In the midst of sorrow, our vantage point matters.

Isaiah 40:31

“But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.”

Philippians 3:11

“I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!”

As a Christian, your suffering is different than the suffering of this world because your suffering has a time limit. When you live for Christ, you can be sure of one thing, you never suffer longer than your time on this earth. Because all suffering exists only on this side of heaven!