

Principles That Relate To Suffering  
(James 5:13a)

Introduction:

1. Recently a number of people in our state have suffered great tragedies.
2. According to James 5:13a, Christians are not immune to suffering.
3. In our lesson we are examining several "principles that relate to suffering."
4. This subject needs to be studied carefully because skeptics often use human suffering as a basis for their unbelief.
5. Let us begin our study by showing that . . .

Discussion:

- I. PEOPLE MAY SUFFER FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS
  - A. It is possible for a person to suffer because of his own actions.
    1. To illustrate, Solomon discussed the effects of alcohol in Proverbs 23:29-30.
    2. Let us remember the law of sowing and reaping mentioned in Galatians 6:7.
  - B. It is possible for a person to suffer because of the actions of other people.
    1. Abel died because Cain killed him (Genesis 4:8).
    2. Some people from Galilee died because Pilate had them killed (Luke 13:1-3).
  - C. It is possible for a person to suffer because of an accident (Luke 13:4-5).
  - D. It is possible for a person to suffer from natural causes such as sickness and disease (John 9:1-3a).
  - E. It is possible for a person to suffer as a result of doing the Lord's will.
    1. Paul suffered greatly for the cause of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:24-28).
    2. Godly living is sometimes accompanied by persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).
- II. LET US REMEMBER SOME HELPFUL GUIDELINES THAT ARE REVEALED IN THE BIBLE
  - A. Satan uses affliction to turn people away from God (Job 1:11; 2:5).
  - B. When used properly, certain types of affliction can:
    1. bring people back to God (Psalm 119:67, 71)
    2. lead a person to depend on God more strongly (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
  - C. We are assured that God will not allow His people to be tested above what they are able to bear (1 Corinthians 10:13).
  - D. Let us pray during times of trial (James 5:13a; 1 Peter 5:7).
  - E. Let us strive to maintain a positive outlook (Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 5:40-41).
  - F. Let us use caution when speaking to people who are suffering (Proverbs 25:11).
  - G. The suffering of other people may provide opportunities to do the work of God (John 9:3-4; Galatians 6:10).

Conclusion:

1. We understand from the Bible that suffering is a reality for everyone, including Christians.
2. We also understand from the Bible that suffering is limited to this life.
3. God's people look forward to the next life that will be free from all suffering (Revelation 21:4).