

UNDESERVED SUFFERING - 2

1. There are two kinds of suffering: deserved and undeserved:

1 Peter 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God.

2. Undeserved suffering is suffering a believer undergoes for *doing what is right* [executing the spiritual life] and yet suffers because of sinful and evil activity of others. For example, a wife may undergo undeserved suffering because she is married to an unbeliever who continues in negative volition to God's grace. Perhaps she married him when she was an unbeliever. The plan of God is for her to stay married to him and submit to his authority (see 1 Pet. 3:1). However, there will be a certain amount of undeserved suffering she will undergo that is directly related to his negative volition—although one could make the case that this is not entirely undeserved in that she was rejecting the Lord when she married him. But now she is a believer and from that time forward she will undergo a certain amount of unjust suffering directly related to *his* negative volition. Such a woman must learn how to live in fellowship with God through the Word of God. She must learn how to think biblically or she will become increasingly bitter with time. Because women are responders and she is unable to respond to her unbelieving husband in certain ways—she is not to follow his attitude in kosmic thinking—she must redouble her efforts in really learning Bible doctrine under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. She must learn how to think objectively instead of subjectively. Our postmodern age [anti-logos, anti-philosophical] makes this even more difficult for her. Apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit, Bible doctrine, and good set of logos skills [critical thinking skills], she will suffer much. She must avoid at all costs the temptation to “get back at him” (everything from bitterness, the silent treatment, to withholding sex). She must learn to think biblically, think accurately, think logos-philosophy instead of emo-philosophy.
3. The believer in unjust suffering often takes the brunt of the personal sins of relatives, friends, job associates, husband, wife, or children (1 Pet. 2:11ff.)—relatives may get into your business, friends may stab you in the back, job associates may cut your throat, a husband may be callous or abusive, a wife may bitch and complain and reject your leadership, and children may get so wrapped up in the kosmos they move into rebellion against you and all that you have taught them.
4. Consider how Job's “friends” turned on him. The sinfulness of Job's “friends” were in full force against Job in hour of great need. These “friends” of Job were probably business associates as well. They probably benefited greatly from Job's prosperity.

5. One of the hardest tests in undeserved suffering is when you have great capacity to love your wife, husband, and children and yet they have very little capacity to love you back. The more you love Truth and them the less you are loved by them.
6. Apart from maintaining a robust spiritual life (which is only possible through the Holy Spirit and focus on the Logos/biblical truths of undeserved suffering) the result will be disillusionment, heartache, loneliness, self-pity, rebellion, and depression.
7. The wife who responds biblically will grow in beauty in grace (1 Pet. 3:1-6). The wife who does not will be found criticizing him—and by developing a critical spirit will end up criticizing about everything else too.

In Him,

Pastor Don