



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Seeing God Through Suffering Series, Lesson 12

Lesson Title: Jesus – Suffering the Cross
for Our Good

Take Home Point: God can turn bad things
into good.

Warm-Up:

Korean Christians have a couple of proverbs that are useful to remember when enduring times of suffering. The first is, "Christians are like nails. The harder you hit them the deeper they go." The other goes like this: "Christians should be like tea bags. They're no good until you put them in hot water." These kinds of sayings can be amusing, they may cause uneasiness, but there is much truth behind them. Deeper is where God wants us to go. It can be hard to accept suffering as a good thing when we are going through it. But if we never suffer, never know pain or failure, how likely is it that we will quickly, humbly, and deeply turn to God for comfort and deliverance? It's a bit like physical strength that comes only from working the muscles. God makes good from what we go through.

Read: Genesis 50:20; Matthew 27:31-50

Observation (What happened?):

How long did Joseph have to wait to see good come to his family as a result of his suffering?

What good things happened to Jesus as he endured his persecution and crucifixion?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What do you think the religious leaders intended to accomplish by having Jesus crucified?

Who gained from the death of Jesus on the cross?

Insight:

Hebrews 12:2 says, *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (NIV) Notice Jesus had to endure. It doesn't say he joyfully endured, it says he endured it for joy in the future. He knew his Father had a plan and could be completely trusted. For that joy he endured suffering, we can, too. I don't know about you, but I sometimes get discouraged by my circumstances of suffering, and the suffering of others around the world because of sin. But I remind myself that God is still in control and makes good out of bad. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."* (NIV) Stay close to God, he will lead you through.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How are you demonstrating to God that you trust him in your circumstances of suffering?

Who needs your encouragement in their suffering to endure it for God's ultimate good?

Kingdom Quest Year 2 – Lesson 12