

# Short & Sweet: 2 Things To Do When Suffering



**“Therefore let those who are suffering according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.” 1 Peter 4:19**

I have done a lot of things while suffering. I’ve whined, complained and cried; the perfect recipe for a pity party with one attendee—me. I have learned these reactions do not alleviate suffering or improve circumstances. In some instances they indicate a very shallow faith in God and His plans life. And, for some reason, these fruitless activities do not make God’s top-ten list of “what to do when you are suffering.” Whining and complaining get you stuck. Just ask

the Israelites—they were stuck for 40 years.

While whining and complaining may be our natural inclination they are not God's *best practice* when it comes to suffering. He has other ideas. He wants to give us a new normal.

## **Idea #1: Entrust your soul to God.**

The Greek word for *entrust* used in the verse above is *paratithmi*. I love the meaning of this word. *Paratithmi* means *to place down to another, to commit to one's charge, to deposit, to place beside or near another*. Imagine taking your soul in your hands and placing it beside God, knowing that He is better able to tend its keeping than you are. Why? Because we would *safe ourselves or comfort ourselves* right out of many valuable lessons God is trying to teach us. Let's face it, some lessons are only learned through suffering.

## **Idea #2: Keep doing good.**

What *good* do we need to keep doing while suffering? Keep the faith. Speak the gospel. Help others. Walk. Confront. Pray. Forgive. Give. Love. Serve. Share. Hope. Dream. Act. Work. Teach. Laugh. Share. Rest. Live.

Life does not stop because of suffering, and life does not have to be perfect to be abundant. God has a beautiful way of hiding blessings amid the pain. You'll find treasures you'd never acquire apart from the suffering.

## **Two more considerations:**

1. First, did you notice sometimes God allows us to suffer? This one is a little hard to swallow. It's not that God wants us to suffer or is pleased when we suffer, but because of our nature some things will only be accomplished when we suffer.

Suffering is not about our pain, it's about our progress



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- . What is God teaching you or showing you through suffering? If you are struggling, a great work is at stake.
2. Second, did you notice the name for God used in verse 19? Why *Creator*? Why not *Healer* or *Avenger*? Because amid our suffering, God is busy creating something new, something good, something beautiful. Can we entrust our souls to our Creator not only to bless us with good things but to bless us with good things that have been created by suffering?

## Action Points When Suffering:

1. **Do something you enjoy.** I remember a painful season in my life of many years ago. I put off doing my favorite hobby because I wanted to wait until the situation was resolved. I wasn't going to have any fun until things were better. Great idea, right? Do something you enjoy. Have fun by faith!
2. **Do something for another.** No act of kindness is too small to be significant. Send the card. Make the call. Say the prayer. Bake the cookies. No matter how you are suffering, someone needs to hear from you.
3. **Do something with Jesus.** Add an extra Quiet Time to your day. Ask Him to encourage you very specifically through His word, a song, a radio broadcast.

Remember, when you are suffering, entrust your soul to Him and do good to others.

Life is sweet.

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