

# “Why Do We Hurt?”

(Luke 11:2)

Dr. Richard S. Koole  
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## I. Introduction

### A. Visiting “David’s House”

1. Care for severely handicapped
  - a. What I saw there
  - b. Heartbroken parents
    1. Oh how they prayed for healing
  - c. The founders
2. Can’t do anything to “fix” them
3. But God can
  - a. He’s got the power
4. But He doesn’t
  - a. Why?
  - b. Doesn’t He care?
5. C. S. Lewis in *“The Problem of Pain”*

*“If God were good, he would wish to make his creatures perfectly happy, and if God were almighty he would be able to do what he wished. But the creatures are not happy. Therefore God lacks either goodness, or power, or both.”*

6. Some of you this morning really need this message from God
  - a. Every week I hear the stories of suffering
7. Why does God allow us to hurt so much?

8. Lady on news last night.....angry at God....how could you?

## **B. The Lord's Prayer in Luke 11**

1. Using Matthew 6

***(9) Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, (10) Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:9-10***

a. The part about "***your will be done***" is not in the Luke passage

2. Last week

a. Welcome to the Kingdom

b. How to live like an ambassador of God's Kingdom right now

3. Next week

a. What about the "***real kingdom***"

b. The same question the disciples asked Jesus:

1. "***When will these things happen?***"

2. "***When will you rule on earth?***"

c. Harold Kamping's answer

1. May 21....oops....October 21

d. What's He talking about anyway?

1. Rapture or what?

e. Next Sunday...God's answer

4. But today....the problem of suffering and the will of God

## **C. There are lots of questions regarding the will of God**

1. How is God's will done in Heaven?

a. We're told to pray—"Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"

2. Is our suffering part of God's will?
  - a. One of the questions I get asked the most
  - b. Is it God's will that children starve to death?
3. If it isn't...why doesn't he fix the problem?
4. Can I know God's specific will for my life?
  - a. Is it God's will that I marry a certain girl—a certain guy?
  - b. Like the quest for the Holy Grail
    1. What if I've already missed her?
5. If I get out of His will does that mean I can never again be back in it?

#### **D. Let me address three of the questions**

## **II. Three Questions**

### **A. How is God's will "done" in Heaven?**

1. Told to pray that God's will be done here as it is in Heaven
2. We should imitate what's being done in Heaven
3. Clues from observing the *angelic messengers* in the *Book of Revelation*
4. How do the *angels* obey the will of God
  - a. *Completely*
    1. No omissions...every minute detail of His will
      - a. Committed to the plan
      - b. Committed to serve until the job is done
    2. That's how we are to obey right now on earth
    3. Are you complete in your obedience?
      - a. That one secret sin you won't let go of?

- b. God's Spirit has spoken to you about it dozens of times
  - c. Keeping you from becoming all you could be
  - d. "Incomplete surrender" to his will
4. Chapel Pointe is "volunteer" driven
- a. Can't "hire" enough pastors
  - b. The need for fully committed workers
  - c. Completely surrendered
5. What could happen right here...right now
- a. A new model for our community
  - b. A breath of fresh air

***b. Immediately***

1. They don't procrastinate
- a. Don't plan to do it later
  - b. Do it now
2. The danger of procrastinating
- a. Putting off the difficult
  - b. When I was younger
3. When opportunity passes
- a. What if May 21 had been the day?
  - b. What if October 21 is the day?
  - c. What would you do if you were convinced it was?
4. Living in the moment
- a. In your life

b. In this church

5. We'll be held accountable for opportunities missed

**c. Lovingly**

1. Angels standing around the throne waiting to serve

a. They want to do anything God wills them to do

b. Because of their love for him

2. Do you obey out of love or obligation?

a. Because people expect us to do some things

3. The Christians in Ephesus

a. Revelation 2:2-4

*(2) I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. (3) You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.*

b. What an incredible church!

c. Not so fast

*(4) Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.*

4. They defended the truth...but had lost their love for Jesus

5. Obedience without love is misery

6. The death of so many churches

a. Simply going through the motions

b. Priding themselves on their hard work and separation from others

**B. Why does God allow suffering?**

1. Is it the will of God that we suffer?

- a. Some of you this morning
  - b. Every week I hear the stories
2. Understanding the will of God
- a. **God's Declared Will**
    - 1. His sovereign, preordained plan
    - 2. It will be done
  - b. **God's Desired Will**
    - 1. *"It's not my desire that any should perish"*
    - 2. But many choose to reject his love...and thus perish
    - 3. God's desired will is never forced on us
    - 4. Where free will comes into the picture
    - 5. It's never God's will that we sin...but we often do
- 3. God doesn't cause suffering
  - 4. Yet He seems to get blamed for most of it
    - a. Deadly fire yesterday.....why?

## **C. What causes suffering?**

### **1. Curse**

- a. Genesis 3:17-19

*(17) Then to Adam God said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you saying, 'You shall not eat of it': Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. (18) Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. (19) In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."*

- b. Sin and the curse were not God's desired will

1. Yet we were created with “free will”
  - a. And chose to disobey
2. The “curse” was one of the consequences of our willful disobedience
- c. Things affected by the fall of mankind into sin:

1. ***Spiritual death***

- a. Needed to be reconciled with God

2. ***Physical death***

- a. Satan’s lie... “You will not die”

3. ***All of creation...including nature***

- a. Poison Ivy
  - b. Heart attacks
  - c. Hunger
  - d. Old age
  - e. Floods
  - f. Cancer
- d. Quit blaming God...He warned us
- e. Liberation from the curse

1. Romans 8:18-22

***(18) I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (19) The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. (20) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the One who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. (22) We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.***

- f. How and when will that “liberation” take place

1. It hasn’t happened yet

2. Next Sunday: “The Real Kingdom”

## 2. *Carelessness*

a. Things we do that lead to suffering

1. Overeating
2. No exercise
3. Smoking
4. Laziness and job loss
5. Not changing oil
6. Not studying for tests
7. Not doing your homework
8. Alcohol abuse
  - a. 90% of traffic fatalities
  - b. 80% of fatal fires
  - c. 70% of fatal falls
  - d. 65% of drownings
  - e. 50% of all violent crimes
  - f. Job loss
  - g. Leading killer of teenagers
  - h. Shattered homes
9. Money
  - a. Recent government report (June 7, 2011)
    1. Each household and government debt?
    2. More than \$535,000 each!

b. Too much debt

c. Failure to save

d. Greed

1. Houses in California

2. \$720,000 to \$260,000

3. “Flip that house!”

10. Marrying an unsaved person

a. Beware in dating

b. A life of struggles

b. God says people reap what they sow

c. So quit blaming God

### ***3. Carnal people***

a. Widows cheated out of their life savings

b. Just plain mean and cruel

1. Dodger’s game

### ***4. Cruelty of Satan***

a. Wants to hurt God’s children

b. Tries to get you to curse God

c. His attempts with Job

d. “Steals the blessing”

### ***5. Correction of God***

a. A loving father corrects a disobedient child

b. Romans 5:3-4

*(3) Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; (4) perseverance, character; and character, hope.*

c. Correction is a very small part of the total suffering

1. But, oh so important

d. C. S. Lewis

*“Pain is God’s megaphone. He whispers to us in our pleasure, but He shouts to us in our pain.”*

e. When God withdraws his hand of protection

f. **Things to remember when suffering hits:**

### 1. **Prodding**

a. God is prodding you to grow

b. When he takes away your safety cushion

c. When there’s no other place to turn

d. When all your friends have deserted you

e. Your financial cushion is gone

1. House

2. Job

3. Retirement

f. When you learn to trust God

### 2. **Preparing**

a. Preparing you for future service

b. When you know what they’ve been going through

c. Don’t waste your sorrows

### 3. **Producing**

- a. Psalm 126:5

*“Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.”*

- b. The fruit of suffering
- c. How others are affected when you hurt

#### 4. Purifying

- a. The problem of “cultural Christianity”
- b. Those who have never faced the testing

#### 5. Protecting

- a. Paul in II Corinthians 12:7

*(7) To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.”*

- b. Suffering can be humbling
- c. Protecting you from “pride”
- d. The “already broken”

#### 6. Prioritizing

- a. Begin to realize what’s really valuable

#### 7. Proclaiming!

- a. Paul speaking in II Corinthians 12:9

*(9) And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

- b. John 9

*(1) As Jesus went along, he saw a man blind from birth. (2) His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (3) “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.”*

- c. Others are watching you suffer
- d. How God speaks to so many

### **III. Summary**

#### **A. Benvenuto Cellini**

The great artist Benvenuto Cellini tells us in his autobiography how he felt as he stood before a block of marble that had been brought to Florence for him to form into a great statue. Several chapters are devoted to the design and creation of the work of art which still stands in his native city as his greatest monument. Between the rough-hewn block of marble and the finished statue were all the love and care of the artist, and the infinite patience of releasing from stone the vision of beauty which he saw before he began to work.

#### **B. God is shaping us**

In a similar manner our Heavenly Father is at work in the life of each believer. There is a difference between ourselves and a block of marble, however, in that we have feelings and can shrink from the strokes with which the divine Sculptor would cut away the marble so that the likeness of Christ may emerge in our lives.

#### **C. Restoring us to the likeness of God's Son**

1. Romans 8:29

*(29) For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His son.*

#### **D. Peace in the midst of suffering**

1. Romans 12:1-2

*(1) Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. (2) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

2. Learning to trust God's plan for your life
3. In times of great hurting.....Psalm 46:10

*(10) Be still and know that He is God*