

In the Barn!

Barneys Newsletter



No. 8 – May 16th



Feeling Stressed

This has been a tough week for me. I'm told by mental health professionals that moving house is the 3rd most stressful thing a person can do. I have not asked what are the two things more stressful, though I'm sure changing jobs is another. Having just moved house and settling-in has been hard and continues to be an on-going task.

Wednesday and Thursday are uni days, which at the moment means spending a lot of time on the screen. I find those days very tiring. But to compound the issues I had on Thursday, I spent 4 hours working on a document for a university conference where I'm speaking on prayer, only to have the computer crash, losing the day's work. Come Friday instead of finishing a bunch of things and getting on to other work, I lost the morning fixing the computer, before being able to begin other ministry tasks.

school rang me to get one of my children who was coughing from a cold, setting my day back even further. I'm not looking for sympathy, in fact I find myself quite thankful for all the good God has given me at the moment. I'm extremely thankful for the move into Mac Fields. And though uni can be hard at the moment, I'm extremely thankful for the ministry. On the way home with the particular child, we had a great and deep discussion about the truths of Christianity, for which I'm extremely thankful.

As I've reflected upon this week with its many ups and downs, these words have been with me. Be still and know that I'm the Lord. The psalm reminds God's people in the busyness of life to stop and reflect on who God is, and in particular His many great mercies and gifts towards us. Even in the pressures and stresses of life, I'm extremely thankful for God. His graciousness continues to conform me into the image of His Son. And I'm always thankful for His patience as He works towards this goal in all His people.

Be still and know that I'm the Lord.

Psalm 46:10

Just after fixing the computer the

In Christ, Adam.

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God's Purpose in Suffering

by Elise Brake

Our experiences of suffering enable us to empathise with others who struggle; we can learn to live outwardly and comfort others even in the midst of our own pain. In a world that has no answers for those who suffer in isolation, God provides – both in Himself, and in the blessing of community with fellow sufferers.

Furthermore, God works in us in the midst of our suffering. In 2 Corinthians 4:16-17, Paul writes, 'So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.' When we suffer, as our bodies decay with age or sickness and our minds weaken, God is working to strengthen our character through perseverance, to prove our faith genuine, uniting us with Jesus.

There is not only hope that our suffering has purpose now, but also a hope that our suffering has purpose beyond this world. Seeing our present suffering in light of eternity changes our perspective. The temporary suffering we experience in this life, however painful and frustrating and unfair it may be, is what God uses to prepare us for the eternal glory that awaits those who hope in Him.



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As well as God providing a solution to our suffering in Jesus and the sufficiency of His grace in our weakness, the Bible is clear that our suffering has purpose: both in this life and the next. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 explains that God comforts us in our affliction so that “we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” I’ve seen this in my own life through the love of my family, and in the friendships I’ve been

blessed to form with others who suffer from similar chronic illnesses.

Resources

Here is a (by no means exhaustive) list of books I’ve read that articulate – with greater clarity and depth than I am capable – the truths I’ve sketched above. I’ve ordered them from most academic to most accessible.

**How Long O Lord?
Reflections on Suffering and Evil**
D. A. Carson

Making Sense of God: An Invitation to the Skeptical
Timothy Keller

Suffering and the Sovereignty of God
edited by John Piper and Justin Taylor

Is God to Blame: Moving Beyond Pat Answers to the Problem of Suffering
Gregory Boyd

Where is God When It Hurts
Phillip Yancey

Glorious Ruin: How Suffering Sets You Free
Tullian Tchividjian

Suffering Well: The Predictable Surprise of Christian Suffering
Paul Grimmond

If I Were God I’d End All The Pain
John Dickson

A Morning Prayer

by **Kath Hansen**

Early. Cold. Stupefied.
Tears sit just behind my eyes.
Dispirited, I munch on toast
and ponder friends I miss the most.

Day yawns ahead hard and bare.
I clutch my tea and sit and stare.
Problems stack up in my mind
relentless, scrabbling, searing climb.

Be with me, Lord, I know you're there.
Listen to my fervent prayer.
I'm fumbling within a cloud
plodding slowly, dazed and cowed.

Give me strength to persevere.
Give me joy and love and cheer.
Give me patience through the day
to silence words I want to say.

Lord, give me boldness to reach out,
to share your love where there is doubt.
Draw my eyes, Lord, up to you.
day by day, to trust in you.

Grow in me a pure will
to hunger for your ways; and fill
my heart and mind with only you.
Keep me steadfast. Keep me true.

I pray my heart may be so full
of your love, your word, your pull,
it overflows to those around
and leads them onto solid ground.

Take my hand, Lord, small and weak.
You, Lord, are the strength I seek.
My tea's gone cold. The sky is grey.
I have your truth to light my day.

Find-A-Word - Patience

C D I S A S T E R Q P J N G X
D O S S U F F E R I N G E R I
W F M S N N R E C N O C A A J
Y P P P E R S E V E R A N C E
T E T T U N S S E R T S G I L
N R Y R S T S B E G O D N O B
G S T I T N E S D D G K I U B
I E I B I E T R E V Z G W S A
E C M U L M A C S L I W A N R
R U R L L E A A O B E I L E C
E T O A N V V R W J R P C S S
V I F T E O T S H O P E O S R
O O N I S M C O Z Z J X A H P
S N O O S E C N E I T A P K L
C W C N D I S S O L U T I O N

Activity	Hopelessness
Anxiety	Image
Busyness	Jesus
Carson	Movement
Clawing	Paranoid
Computers	Patience
Concern	Persecution
Conformity	Perseverance
Disaster	Scrabble
Dissolute	Sovereignty
Dissolution	Stillness
Frantic	Stress
Frenetic	Suffering
God	Tribulation
Graciousness	Trouble
Hope	Trust