## In the Barn! Barneys Newsletter



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### Feeling Stressed

his 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.

Just after fixing the computer the

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.

know that I'm the Lord.

Be still and

Psalm 46:10

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.

with age or sickness and our minds

weaken, God is working uniting us with Jesus.

glory that awaits those who hope in Him.

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

> to strengthen our character through perseverance, to prove our faith genuine,

> 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



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

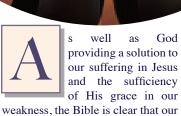
Where is God When It Hurts Phillip Yancey

**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



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

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

# A Morning Prayer

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. by Kath Hansen

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**

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Image
Jesus
Movement
Paranoid
Patience
Persecution
Perseverance
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Sovereignty
Stillness
Stress
Suffering
Tribulation
Trouble
Trust

Hopelessness