

SUFFERING AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

SESSION 7 – JULY 15, 2018

George Hoepner's story

What did I cling to at first after my wife's sudden death?

The character of God and His promises that He brought immediately to my mind!
Knowing that God is good, God is sovereign, God is not surprised, God wants and provided the best for my wife.

Knowing my wife is saved and in Heaven now.

Psalm 23. Friends and immediate family. Prayers. Faith and trust in God.

What did I do those first days?

Asked myself, now what? Talked with God many, many times.

Thanked God that she is now in Heaven. Asked God to direct my steps.

Started to prepare the basic elements of the memorial service.

Asked God to give me wisdom repeatedly.

What wasn't I ready for?

The quietness. The loneliness. The self-sorrow. Running the house all by myself—
paying the bills, cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping, etc.

What helped me most?

Meditating on Psalm 23.

Talking with God.

Reading the book, Suffering and the Sovereignty of God.

What did I want to do with this unexpected event?

Bring glory to God because of it!

What lessons have I learned?

Being prepared theologically is key.

Eternity awaits everyone. If you are a Christian, you know without a doubt what happens after death. My wife's trust was in the finished work of Jesus Christ for her salvation. Her hope was not a wish, but a wonderful assurance from God found clearly in His bible.

My suffering and sorrow are for me, not my wife. She is happier than ever!

Suffering and sorrow is not just mine, but my family's and friends'.

Since others suffer with me, my actions and decisions do affect them. What may be appropriate to me may seem too fast, too rash, too early, etc for someone else.

Family and friends need to check on me, and many of them do.

I really appreciate it when someone does something special, out of the norm, to let me know they are thinking of me.

People suffer in their own way and at their own pace.

I must listen to friends/family even if they stumble in their expressions of condolences.

I must be wise, seek counsel, seek help if feeling overwhelmed, listen to others.

I should not make any major decisions without much thought, prayer and counsel.

I am now more aware of and prepared to comfort others. 2 Cor
"Weeping may last the night, but joy comes in the morning." Ps 30:5 New days do come.

What can you do when someone else is suffering?

Pray for them. Contact them. Pray with them. Go to them and just listen, or talk if you must. Stay in touch with them. Include them. Visit with them. Follow up with them. Be available. Offer or suggest something out of the norm to do with them (go to a ball game, movie, dinner, meal, boat ride, phone call, letter, email, ice cream cone, etc.). Share the hope that you have—not only in a coming tomorrow, but a good and loving God today.

How can you use this as an opportunity to bring glory to God?

What can you do before you or spouse or parent gets terminally ill or dies?

Get right with God. Create a will. Consider a physicians' directive. List all your policy numbers, banks and account numbers. Know each other's desires about burial, cremation, body donation, organ donation, funeral/memorial service ideas—songs, readings, flowers, donations, pictures, etc.

Two questions I now ask you to ponder--

What has God taught you about life?

What has life taught you about God?

Taking God at His Word--

God is with me!	Josh 1:9	Isa 43:1-3	Ps 46:7	Ps 23	
God is my hope!	Lam 3:19-26 Rom 5:3-5	Ps 56:8-11 Ps 43:5	Rom 8:18 Job 13:15	Phil 1:20-21 Hab 3:17-18	John 14:1 Ps 23
God is my comfort!	Jam 1:12	Jer 31:13b	Matt 5:4	2 Cor 1:3-4	Ps 23
God is my strength!	Ps 46:1-5 Jer 16:19	Is 40:31 Eph 3:20	2 Cor 12:9-10 Ps 23	Phil 4:19	Ps 27:13-14
God is good!	Ps 23	Lam 3:32-33	1 Thes 5:16-18		
God is my deliverer!	Ps 9:9 1 Cor 10:13	Ps 30:5 Ps 23	Ps 27:5-6	Ps 34:4, 17-19	
God is my peace!	Matt 5:11-12 Ps 23	Act 5:41 Ps 30:5b	Phil 3:7-9a	John 16:33	Phil 4:6-7
God hears my prayers!	Ps 23	Ps 22:24	Ps 34:15	Ps 55:22	Ps 34:4
God knows my pain!	Is 49:16	Rom 5:3-5			
God is in control!	Lam 3:37	Rom 8:28	1 Pet 4:12-19	Phil 3:30-32	Job 42:2
God has a purpose!	Job 23:10	2 Cor 4:17-18	2 Cor 12:9-10	Eph 1:11	Jam 1:2-4
God is trustworthy!	Prov 3:5-6	Is 26:3-4	Lam 3:20-23	Ps 118:6	Ps 23
God loves me!	John 3:16	Is 40:11	Rom 8:35-39	Ps 63:3	Jer 31:3