



## Truth Talk: The Glory of God in Our Pain – Scott Sanders

When we hurt, there are two things true. We...

1. Have a question asked
2. Have a condition desired

The question we ask is “why?” We are pre-wired, created if you will, to want to know the purpose for our pain. [Now, I’m not talking about the consequences of suffering that comes because of our sin – that requires repentance. We usually, unless in denial, know when our sin brings us pain]. When we hurt, and it is not because of sin, not knowing “why” can be extremely distressing. Somehow, it helps me get through the pain if I know the reason (think, “childbirth”).

The condition we desire is not to be left alone in the pain. We want someone there, anyone will do, but even better if that person knows by experience the same pain. In a twisted way, this is why we want those that hurt us to experience the same pain; so, we won’t go through it alone (there may be some sinful, malicious intent there also, I mean, who better!?).

Let’s talk about the glory of God!

We know “glory.” **Glory is the manifest presence of God. As a noun, it is the reflection of His majesty and His beauty. As a verb, it is all the things we do (or He does!) for Him to be magnified,** that is, His presence enlarged before us; anything that exalts Him, in others words, anything that brings Him glory!

He was revealed in glory

First, through creation Psalm 19:1 – “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.” (He is worshipped in Revelation as Creator).

Then, various times to people

the burning bush

pillar of fire by night (cloud by day)

on Mount Sinai – (giving of the Law and instructions for the Tabernacle construction)

filled the Tabernacle (dwelling with men!)

through the Christ child – John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth;” Hebrews 1:3 “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”

in the Church – Ephesians 3:20-21 “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

Finally, we read of God’s glory in Heaven (Revelation 21:11).

However, an aspect of glory is revealed when Jesus prayed to the Father, hours before He would be tried, convicted, and crucified. John 17:1-5; Luke 24:26 (Road to Emmaus, vss. 25-27)

Later in His prayer He says, John 17:22-24 (understand in context)

Like Christ, when we magnify Him in our pain/suffering, we demonstrate that the Lord is more glorious and precious to us than any pain or difficulty we might endure. Sometimes, it takes the suffering to get us to release our grasp on temporal things we’ve depended on to finally grasp Him.

This answers the question of “why?” because the ultimate purpose is God being magnified through our lives whether in joy or suffering.

It also addresses the condition of suffering alone. Have you considered that no one has suffered more than Jesus? He knows of poverty, being misunderstood by family, ignorance of His followers, rejection by the religious establishment, ungratefulness, betrayal, fake trials where liars and deceivers testified against Him, brutal torture and extreme physical pain, shame,

He fully understands every pain we bear (and more, for He bore the world’s sin penalty) and promises, as Jerry reminded us last week, “I will never leave you or forsake you.”

So, do we need the Church to experience the “I will never leave you or forsake you.” In Colossians 1:24-27 an imprisoned Paul states, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and

in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

[the "hope" is just not for our future glory but that we would be the manifest presence of Christ in the world in the now].

As the Babe in the manger is the embodiment (not a metaphor) of the Holy God, so, we are the body of Christ.

So, to conclude:

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 – In the way we receive His comfort in our pain, we become vessels of glory to those in the same pain... We mourn with those who mourn. And this magnifies and glorifies God in the earth!

#### Tear Catchers

Date to OT times but were common in the Roman period. Mourners (sometimes paid) would fill small bottles or cups with tears and place them in burial tombs as symbols of respect. The more tears collected, the more valued the deceased person.

They reappeared during the Victorian period of the 19<sup>th</sup> C. Tears would be collected and the bottles set out to evaporate; when the bottle went dry the mourning period would end.

In some Civil War stories women were said to have cried into tear bottles and save them until their husbands returned from battle, to show the men how much they were adored and missed.

Psalm 56:8-11 – "You have taken account of my wanderings; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book? Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; this I know that God is for me. In God whose work I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?"