

Suffering and Tunnel Vision

Our struggles do something to our vision - they turn it into tunnel vision. We only see what is in front of us.

Suffering and struggles also affect another sensation - our feeling of the passing of time. We can come to think that suffering is forever. How can we know that it is not forever?

Scripture(s): 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

I. The first reason we can embrace that suffering is not forever is faithful believers show us the _____ we

are on. Realizing that we are not alone in our struggles changes those struggles from unending to _____.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 23 Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

✓ Are you going through a difficult, almost impossible season? Spend _____ with someone who can understand your struggles.

II. The second we can embrace that suffering is not forever is others remind us that we trust a God who conquers _____. Suffering can take our eyes off of eternal _____ and onto temporal fallacies.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

✓ Pour out your heart to the One who died so that you might _____, and let this victorious One give you _____.

III. The third reason we can embrace that suffering is not forever is we have people _____ for us. Prayer is a great _____ to those who are struggling.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

✓ Make prayer a "like _____" thing in your life.

Remember this - Fellowship with faithful believers can lead us to make _____ our compass rather than merely our _____.

Our challenge: Find believers who can faithfully walk the path of life _____ you.

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