

Grace for the Wounded

"Amazed By Grace" Series- Part 03

Connect:

Is there a person in your life, now or in the past, that really encouraged you in the midst of suffering? If so, who and in what way?

Hook: As a painfully shy 17 year old, I went to work with my dad (he was the foreman) on a construction crew. On my second day of work, one of the men asked me to go to the work truck and bring him back the "catawambas". I didn't know what it was, but knowing there were just a few tools lying on the truck, I thought I could figure it out on my own. After about three minutes of searching the truck, I could hear all of the men laughing at me as I searched for a non-existent tool. I was red-faced, embarrassed. More than the embarrassment, the question that really haunted me that day was this: *"Why did my Dad allow those men to make a fool of his own son?"*

I have to admit that was not the last time I would question why someone would allow something painful to happen in my life. Even as God's children, we may question why our Heavenly Father allows us to suffer hurt. It is a question that is as old as time. In our text for today's study, the Apostle Peter would instruct hurting and wounded Christians on the proper response to life's hurtful moments.

Book:

1Pe 4:12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.

1Pe 4:13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in His suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing His glory when it is revealed to all the world.

1Pe 4:14 So be happy when you are insulted for being a Christian, for then the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. [On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.]

1Pe 4:15 If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs.

1Pe 4:16 But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by His name!

1Pe 4:17 For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God's household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Good News?

1Pe 4:18 And also, "If the righteous are barely saved, what will happen to godless sinners?"

1Pe 4:19 So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for He will never fail you.

Look:

Why are Christians often "*surprised*" when "bad things happen to God's people"?

Peter says that instead of being surprised, we should be "very glad". How can we feel good or glad about suffering or being wounded?

According to our Bible Text, what are the possible causes of our suffering and/or trials?

How can we know, in the midst of a trial, whether it is a “cross to bear” or if it is a “rod” to bring about correction?

What does God’s grace look like in our times of trouble?

Making it Personal:

Think for just a moment about a recent or present trial that you are experiencing. Now look at the following questions, and reflect on what your answers would be.

(1) How am I responding to it?

(2) How should I respond to it?

(3) Am I learning from it?

(4) Does my response demonstrate faith, love for God and for others, Christ-like character, core values, commitment, priorities, etc.?

(5) How can God use it in my life?

(6) How is grace being extended to me?