

A silhouette of a person walking away from the viewer down a long, dark tunnel towards a bright light at the end. The tunnel walls are textured and the floor is reflective, creating a sense of depth and journey.

This is Not What I had
Planned:
Walking Through Suffering

**“Evil is anything that we prefer
over God and who He intended us
to be.”**

More to Life

- We have the promise of eternity (Revelation 21:3-4)
- We have the certainty of knowing where we are going. (Eph. 1:13-14)

Anticipating Future Glory in Heaven

- *I see a world in decay and trouble-I consider a renewed, perfect world to come.*
- *I watch my body deteriorating-I consider my new body*
- *I can make no sense of things here-I consider a world where all is integrated*
- *I am tempted to sin here-I consider a world of perfection to come*
- *I see in part now-I consider a time when I shall see Jesus.*

1. Learning to Lament

“Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3)

- **“When our grief and anguish drives us not FURTHER into the promises and comfort of God, but rather FARTHER from God.” (Rob Brockman)**

1. Learning to Lament

“Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3)

- They were not looking to God for help or trusting that He would provide, they just wanted to go back to what they were comfortable with.

“Then Job answered and said:

² “Today also my complaint is bitter; my hand is heavy on account of my groaning.³ Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!⁴ I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.⁵ I would know what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me.⁶ Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would pay attention to me.⁷ There an upright man could argue with him, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.

⁸ “Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive him;

⁹ on the left hand when he is working, I do not behold him; he turns to the right hand, but I do not see him.¹⁰ But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.¹¹ My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his way and have not turned aside.¹² I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.¹³ But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does.

¹⁴ For he will complete what he appoints for me, and many such things are in his mind.

¹⁵ Therefore I am terrified at his presence; when I consider, I am in dread of him.

¹⁶ God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has terrified me;¹⁷ yet I am not silenced because of the darkness, nor because thick darkness covers my face.

(Job 23)

1. Learning to Lament

- Lamenting may have complaining in it, but it always resolves to TRUST in God and what He is doing in our lives.
- Whereas grumbling or complaining causes us to grow further away from trusting in the promises of God, lamenting trusts in God and DRAWS us closer into the promises of God and the good that He has for us.

2. Gratitude in Suffering

“...Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; BLESSED be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:21

- *“All circumstances whether favorable or unfavorable to our desires are to be occasions for thanksgiving.” (Jerry Bridges)*

“Give thanks in ALL circumstances; for this is the WILL OF GOD in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18

2. Gratitude in Suffering

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything but in EVERYTHING by prayer and supplication with THANKSGIVING let your requests be made known to God. And the PEACE OF GOD, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:4-7

2. Gratitude in Suffering

- Could it be that gratitude or thanksgiving reorients our thinking back to God versus what it is that we are suffering.

3. Walking Through Suffering w/Others

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. ¹² And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. ¹³ And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3. Walking Through Suffering w/Others

- Tragedies rarely happen at convenient times, so to walk with someone through a tragedy, you must clear your schedule and schedule and appointment with this person by showing up.
- We must mourn with others or share in their sorrow authentically.
- Don't worry about what you are going to say because words will be forgotten, but just be present.

3. Walking Through Suffering w/Others

- When you are present with someone and sharing in their suffering, opportunities will present themselves to serve them and be a blessing.
- Be committed for the long haul!

Application

Road, Rocks, and Weeds by John Mark McMillian

“And what to tell my daughter
When she asks so many questions
And I fail to fill her heaviness with peace
When I've got no answers
For hurt knees or cancers
But a Savior who suffers them with me”

The Gospel

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