

Finding Comfort and Joy in Pain

by Joy Collins | August 11, 2019

Introduction: Trusting God's Providence

Catechism 27: *What is God's Providence?*

God's providence is His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing of all His creatures and all their actions, to His own glory. (Adapted from the Westminster Shorter and Larger catechisms, Qs 11, 18)

Catechism 28: *What is the benefit of our knowing about God's providence?*

The benefit of our knowing about God's providence is that it makes us patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity, so that we may place our firm trust in our Heavenly Father concerning everything that befalls us. (Adapted from the Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 28)

What to focus on during times of pain

The two greatest commands are:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,” and “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:37, 39

Love God

How do we love God?

If we don't know God, we won't love God.



Catechism 4: *How can I know about God most completely?*

I can know about God most completely by the Holy Scriptures.

Loving God involves our affections.

When there is a gap between my circumstances and my understanding of those circumstances, I must fill that gap with who God is and trust Him for he knows what is best.

~ Ken Collier

When I don't understand, I must trust in the Lord and not lean on my own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Loving God involves my entire being - my heart, soul, and mind.

If you seek me, you will find me if you search for me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13



None work so well as they who work for love: the fear of punishment, or the desire of reward are principles of far less power. They do the will of God best who do it from the heart. ~ J. C. Ryle

We love him
because he first
loved us.

1 John 4:19

God's Sovereignty

Catechism 18: *How is God related to all other things?*

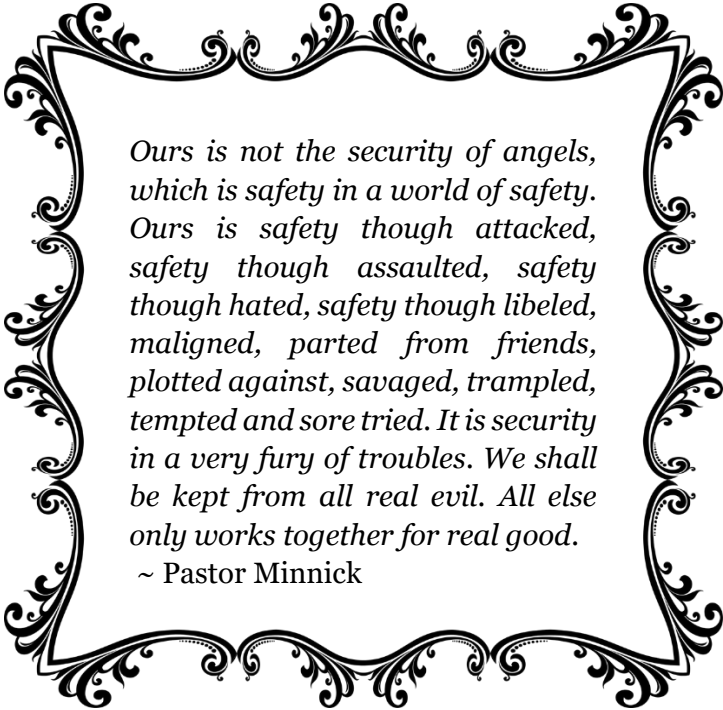
God is related to all other things as their Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign. He does by them, for them, or upon them whatever He pleases, and in doing so He is most holy in all his counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands. (Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), II. 2)

The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all. Psalm 103:19

The Sweetness of Becoming Like Christ

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:28-29



*Ours is not the security of angels,
which is safety in a world of safety.
Ours is safety though attacked,
safety though assaulted, safety
though hated, safety though libeled,
maligned, parted from friends,
plotted against, savaged, trampled,
tempted and sore tried. It is security
in a very fury of troubles. We shall
be kept from all real evil. All else
only works together for real good.*

~ Pastor Minnick

It is good for me that I was afflicted that I might learn your statutes. Psalm 119:71

You may feel like Zion and say,
“The Lord has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me.”
“Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion
on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not
forget you. “Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of *My*
hands.” Isaiah 49:14-16

Dealing with Past Hurts

If you are a Christian, you have “...access to the same
limitless power to heal your hurts as you had to save
your soul.” (Beneth Jones, *Mount Up on Wounded*
Wings, 9)

*Satan's hold on your yesterdays does not extend to your
today or tomorrow. He is a **defeated** opponent;
whatever his grasp, it can be loosened by the all-
powerful hand of God.* (Beneth Jones, *Mounted Up on*
Wounded Wings, 44)

How long is it right to grieve, sorrow or be in pain?

1. Sorrowing is not a sin.
2. As long as you have sorrow in your heart, keep taking it to God and pouring out your heart to Him. Look into the Word of God to see what God's answers are to your sorrows.
3. It may be that you will always carry a sorrow in your heart, but you want to make sure it is not hindering you from serving the Lord.

You may feel like Jeremiah:

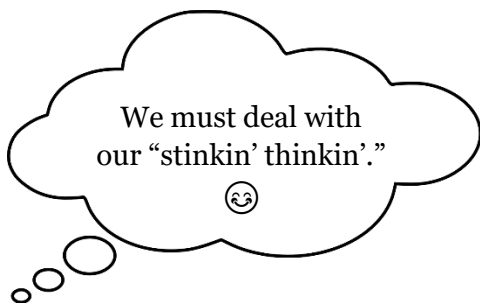
My soul has been rejected from peace; I have forgotten happiness. So I say, “My strength has perished, and *so has* my hope from the Lord.”

[Prayer:] Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness. Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me.

This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope.

The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. *They* are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I have hope in Him.”

Lamentations 3:17-24



Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Love others

Summary of Galatians

- Christ gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from this present evil age.
- We are justified by faith and not by the works of the law.
- Walk by the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

Do good to everyone, especially other Christians

Doing good to others in the family of God

Doing good to everyone includes the Great Commission

Conclusion – Focus on Eternity

Hebrews 13:12–14 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

The big picture of the Bible:

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Recommended resources:

- *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job* - Layton Talbert
- *God is More Than Enough* - Jim Berg
(taken from the *Quieting a Noisy Soul* series)
- *Mount Up on Wounded Wings* - Beneth Jones
- *Not by Chance: Learning to Trust a Sovereign God* - Layton Talbert
- *Quieting a Noisy Soul* video/mp3 series - Jim Berg
- *Safe in the Arms of God* – John MacArthur
- *Spiritual Depression* - Martyn Lloyd-Jones
- *The Mystery of Divine Providence* - John Flavel
- *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts* - Jerry Bridges
- *What Do I Know About My God?* - Mardi Collier
- *When Trouble Comes* - Jim Berg

Verse Resources: *Quieting a Noisy Soul*

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(These verses are also available in ESV on
quizlet.com or on the quizlet app.)

God is always good – always! That means...

He will always meet my genuine needs – always.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:19

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches
in glory in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 6:31-33

Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we
drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles
eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows
that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and
His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

He will always forgive my sin – always.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us
our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalms 51:1-4

Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;
According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my
transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and
my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned
and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are
justified when You speak and blameless when You judge.

Isaiah 66:2b

But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

He is always up to something good in my life – always.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 8:26-34

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of* God.

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

He will always love me personally – always.

Romans 8:35-39

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written,

“FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG;
WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.”

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jeremiah 31:3

The LORD appeared to him from afar, *saying*,
“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.

John 17:23

I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

He will always give me the grace I need – always.

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.

1 Corinthians 15:10

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, or 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. 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.

God is always great – always! That means...

He is always in control of all things – always.

Psalm 103:19

The LORD has established His throne in the heavens,
And His sovereignty rules over all.

Isaiah 14:27

For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate *it*?
And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?

Isaiah 46:9-10

Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’

He is always present with me – always.

Psalm 139:7-12

Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.
If I take the wings of the dawn,
If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,
Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.
If I say, “Surely the darkness will overwhelm me,
And the light around me will be night,”
Even the darkness is not dark to You,
And the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are alike *to You*.

Isaiah 41:10

‘Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

Jeremiah 23:23-24

“Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD, “and not a God far off? “Can a man hide himself in hiding places so I do not see him?” declares the LORD. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.

He is always the same – always.

Malachi 3:6a

For I, the LORD, do not change.

Hebrews 1:10-12

And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”

He is always trustworthy – always.

2 Timothy 2:13

If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Psalm 36:5

Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
Your faithfulness *reaches* to the skies.

Numbers 23:19

God is not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should repent;
Has He said, and will He not do it?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Deuteronomy 31:8

The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

He is always wise in what He does – always.

Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Colossians 2:3

In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.