

LESSON 9

Why Does God Permit Suffering?

Why does God allow suffering? It is hard at times to comprehend why God would allow people to suffer intense pain and very difficult circumstances. Some suffering is brought about by natural causes—tornadoes, fires, earthquakes, etc. Philosophers call this natural evil. Other suffering is the result of the actions of people who use their freedom to commit sinful, destructive, and cruel acts. Philosophers call this moral evil.

While we will never understand all the reasons why God permits suffering, the Scriptures do provide some consistent answers to the hard questions of life. In fact, the more we can learn about this subject now, perhaps while things are going well, the better we will face trial and hardship and the better equipped we will be to give answers to those who wonder why they suffer.

Job's life is an example of riches to rags. The first two chapters of the book of Job describe what happened to him. But the subsequent thirty-five chapters deal with what was happening inside of him. We are introduced to Job as a successful man. He enjoyed good health, children, and wealth. Yet God allows Job to suffer. God permits Satan to take away everything Job had. His good health is shattered; his workers murdered; his animals stolen or killed; and his sons and daughters perished. In the midst of this calamity, Job's reaction is honorable. "Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship" (Job 1:20). Job's reaction to suffering is a great model for us. He realizes that the things of this world are temporary. His children and possessions belonged to God. Job understood that, as humans, we come into this world with nothing, and we leave with nothing.

Moreover, instead of cursing God for his suffering, Job asks rhetorically, “Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” (Job 2:10). In the midst of all his loss, Job does not sin with his words. While he expresses great anguish and even wishes to die (read Job 3), he never abandons his faith or curses God. Later, God comforts Job and restores him to good health and greater prosperity than before.

Nobody wants to suffer, but the truth is that there are some lessons that can only be learned through suffering.

LESSON OUTLINE

Suffering Produces Fruit

The Product of Good Character

Suffering at the Hands of Satan

Suffering Rebukes Our Sin

Suffering Unites Believers with Christ

Suffering Teaches Dependence on God

Suffering Equips Us for Ministry

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. *Explain how suffering aids in the development of the fruit of the Spirit.*
2. *Explain how suffering produces good character.*
3. *Identify tactics Satan uses against God's people.*
4. *Explain why God uses suffering to discipline disobedient Christians.*
5. *Describe how suffering unites us with Christ.*
6. *Explain how suffering increases our dependence on Christ.*
7. *Point out how suffering equips Christians for ministry.*

Suffering Produces Fruit

Objective 1:

Explain how suffering aids in the development of the fruit of the Spirit.

Producing Fruit

God insists on fruit in our lives, and He has many different ways of producing it. Some of these ways include the effect of the Word of God on our lives, the outcome of prayer, and even suffering. None of us looks forward to adversity, but if God allows it in our lives, it is meant to produce good fruit. God longs to see fruit in our lives. Jesus said, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:8). Dr. Norman Vincent Peale said,

The only people who do not have problems are those in the cemeteries, and some of them really have problems. If you have problems, it simply means you are alive and the more problems you have the more alive you are. If you don't have man-sized problems you should get on your knees and ask God to "trust" you with a few.

While suffering can produce good fruit, it also has the potential to produce bad fruit. How we respond to suffering is our choice. We can either become bitter or better, grateful or hateful. Let us discuss some good fruit that suffering produces.

Patience out of Suffering

Patience is a characteristic that seems lacking in many people these days, yet it is an essential feature of Christian maturity. As we face trials and learn to wait on God, patience and perseverance develop. Luke 8:15 says, "But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."

A story is told about a young Christian who went to an older believer for prayer. The young man wanted more patience. The elderly man prayed that the Lord would send the man tribulation all throughout the day. When the confused younger man asked why he was praying for tribulation and not patience, the older man replied, "It's through tribulation that we learn patience."

Thus, we must allow God to work in us until His job is finished! James 1:2–4 advises, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Joy in Suffering

Joy is a product of suffering. Some of the greatest joy you will ever experience will be in the lessons you learned through adversity. After suffering, you will have a testimony for the rest of your life. Jesus told us tough times would come: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33). We can find joy in knowing that God will bring us through, so there is no need to worry.

The Product of Good Character

Objective 2:

Explain how suffering produces good character.

Suffering produces a character of moral excellence and strength. Our character is revealed by how we react to suffering and adversity. Let us look back at Job. The Bible describes him as blameless and upright, one who feared God and hated evil (Job 1:1). This was before he faced any misfortune. His true character was not seen until after calamity struck. Notice what the Bible says following Job's hardship, "In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrong-doing" (Job 1:22). When you

seek God while suffering, He will enable you to react well and build much fruit in your life.

Are you a person of good character? Character has been described as what you are when no one is looking. Allow me to touch on three areas of character that have the potential of developing when we suffer.

Suffering Toughens the Weak

First, suffering helps you to become stronger. A vacationer watched with curiosity as a lumberjack occasionally jabbed his sharp hook into a log, separating it from the others that were floating down a mountain stream. When asked why he did this, the worker replied, "These may all look alike to you, but a few of them are quite different. The ones I let pass are from trees that grew in a valley where they were always protected from the storms. Their grain is coarse. The ones I've hooked and kept apart from the rest came from high up on the mountains. From the time they were small, they were beaten by strong winds. This toughens the trees and gives them a beautiful grain. We save them for choice work. They are too good to make into plain lumber." This story is a great example of how suffering produces strength.

First Peter 4:12–13 reads, "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed." When will Jesus' glory be revealed? Certainly it will happen with the splendor of His second coming, but

His glory is also revealed when He sends deliverance our way. Moreover, Jesus' glory is revealed as we reflect His character, as we are molded into the people God wants us to be.

Correction through Suffering

Second, suffering helps to correct faults. We all have defects and blemishes in our lives—some small and some rather large ones. Often we are blind to our own

imperfections or willing to tolerate them. Jesus told us, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). The Greek word for "perfect" is *teleios*, which can be translated as "complete." God desires to see us "complete," not lacking in any moral and spiritual virtue.

Suffering has a way of steadily working out our imperfections. Just as a potter callously kneads clay to remove the air bubbles that damage the pot in the furnace, so the Holy Spirit works on us. It may be painful, but it is worth it in the end. Our lack of patience is sorely tested through suffering when things are simply out of our control. Our tendency towards materialism and riches is often touched through suffering as well. God works on us just as he worked on all of our heroes in the Bible. He tests every area of our lives through suffering, and this suffering builds great strength.

Stability through Suffering

Third, suffering steadies our fluctuations. Most of us struggle with vacillation. We are hot then cold, up then down, in then out. When we become believers, we might think that our lives will be steady and solid. But soon we fall off track. Great leaders and persons in the Bible also struggled with consistency. For instance, when Timothy needed encouragement, Paul reminded him to "fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6). On the other hand, an entire church at Corinth was given to extremes of spiritual highs until they were abusing spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul reprimanded them for their over zealotness. Suffering has a wonderful way of protecting us from the extremes.

All of us are subject to spiritual weakness, but we can be assured that God will strengthen us. If we continually measure our human strength against the job we have been called to do, we will become discouraged. However, God sends trials at just the right time and in just the right measure to exercise our faith and increase our strength. He never sends a trial to destroy, only to build our character. We tend to look forward to relief from suffering, but learning what our Father wants us to gain is much

more important. In Luke 22:31–32, Jesus says to Peter, “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Our suffering equips us to help others.

Suffering at the Hands of Satan

Objective 3:

Identify tactics Satan uses against God’s people.

A Real Enemy

First Peter 5:8–9 reads, “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” So how does one suffer at the hands of Satan? Three common tactics of the enemy that cause us harm are discouragement, deception, and distraction.

Discouragement

Can you identify with the following situation? Say you are having a rough time. Things are not going well at work. You have been battling sickness. Someone you love is struggling. After many weeks of hardship, you feel weak and vulnerable. Invariably some callous, unthinking individual says something negative, unfair, or hurtful to you.

Satan knows that if he can get us discouraged, he can render us ineffective. Elijah the prophet was discouraged and spoke of quitting his ministry after the attack of Jezebel. Jonah the prophet was also discouraged and resentful; he spoke of dying after his ministry at Nineveh. These are only two of the many leaders in the Bible who faced discouragement.

As a Christian, you must also recognize discouragement as one of Satan’s fiery darts. Do not let it live in your spirit and develop into anger or bitterness.

Pray about it. Talk to a trusted Christian friend or pastor. And stand firmly against the enemy.

Deception

Satan is the master deceiver. He has brought more suffering into the church through deception than through any other means. The primary way Satan deceives is through distorting the truth, and especially the truth of Scripture. The apostle Peter warned us against this trickery. In 2 Peter 3:16, he writes, "Ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

Satan speaks the Word of God in half-truths. In Matthew 4, Satan himself came to Jesus and told Him half-truths on divine provision, divine protection, and divine position. But Jesus resisted him with the truth of God's Word. Today, false prophets still believe half-truths. They are trying to turn stones into bread, advocate levitation, and even gain power and authority through these counterfeit measures. But the only way to know the difference between God's whole truth and Satan's half-truths is by being a student of the Word of God.

Distraction

If Satan cannot bring suffering into your life through discouragement or deception, then he will try to attack the strategic center of your life—your mind. The mind is where the decisions of life and eternity are made. The mind is an armory where we forge the weapons for our victory or our destruction. Satan does not have to fill your mind with evil thoughts all day to win; all he needs to do is distract you.

He seeks to cause confusion, weariness, fear, busyness, or anything that will shut out the voice of God. Nevertheless, our greatest stance of spiritual power is to be led by the Holy Spirit and not by the flesh. We must have the mind of Christ in all we do. Paul advised the Christians in Rome, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test

and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

We do not have to suffer at the hands of Satan for long. Yes, he will continue to attack, but the sooner we recognize his efforts, the sooner we can engage in countermeasures. So, be sober and vigilant and stand against the tricks of the devil.

Suffering Rebukes Our Sin

Objective 4:

Explain why God uses suffering to discipline disobedient Christians.

Sin Gets God's Attention

There is no quicker route to suffering than to habitually engage in sinful behavior. Sin itself carries its own set of natural and unavoidable consequences. If you lie, you may be exposed as dishonest and untrustworthy. If you steal, you may go to jail. If you gossip, you may find yourself with few genuine friends. Moreover, in the life of a believer, sin will always elicit a response from God.

God loves us too much to ignore the sin in our lives. Count on it—if you practice sin, God will attempt to correct you just as a good parent corrects his or her disobedient child. God's correction or discipline entails varying degrees of suffering.

The Price of Salvation

When Christians rebel and sin, they sometimes think that those who warn them are overreacting. They make excuses for their behavior and pretend that their sin is minor or inconsequential. They even assume God will just wink at their shortcomings. But God will not excuse sin! Christ paid an incredible price for our salvation. God has a huge investment in our lives. He will do whatever it takes to get our attention and turn us back to Him. He will even allow pain into our lives now so that we will not miss the future blessings.

The writer of Hebrews says, “In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood” (Hebrews 12:4). Our struggle against personal sin is minimal compared to the price Christ paid to save us. At first, we may think that God’s discipline in our lives is an overreaction, yet Psalm 103:10 tells us, “He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.” God is never as severe with us as we actually deserve. He is a gracious God, who only desires the best for us.

The Father Acts in Our Best Interest

It is important to understand what family we belong to. When we were without Christ in our lives, our father was the devil. Now, since we are Christians, God is our heavenly Father. The apostle John writes, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” (1 John 3:1). Everyone knows that a parent has the right to speak to and discipline his or her child. Parents can tell you that when it comes to children and discipline, there are two common temperaments: strong-willed children and compliant children. Strong-willed children tend to resist discipline, so parents work extra hard to train them. Compliant children need little discipline. In fact, a little discipline goes a long way for them.

We see these basic reactions among believers under God’s discipline. While both temperaments of people require the Lord’s correction from time to time, some fight it while others embrace it. Hebrews 12:5–6 says, “Do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” God disciplines us because He loves us.

A Lesson from the Prodigal

The devil comes to kill, steal, and destroy, but Christ comes to give, restore, and build. Read the parable of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32). This father’s heart remained faithful to his wayward son. He welcomed him

home, restored him to sonship, and celebrated his return. The father in this story represents God.

Unlike the prodigal's father, some self-righteous Christians fail to appreciate the grace of God involved in restoring a wayward follower of Christ. Rather than celebrate the triumph of God's love, these self-righteous Christians secretly wish they could impose their own brand of discipline on the believers who return to the family of God. But Christ desires us to love unconditionally and accept into His family the believers who have strayed.

Suffering Unites Believers with Christ

Objective 5:

Describe how suffering unites us with Christ.

Suffering Is Unavoidable

Some people assume that Christians should be exempt from most suffering. Shouldn't being a follower of Christ protect us from the worst difficulties and hardships? What about the hedge of protection we often hear about? Shouldn't that keep us from all pain and sorrow?

According to Peter, Christians are not exempt from suffering. First Peter 4:12–13 records, "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed." The apostle Paul also wrote, "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Philippians 3:10).

Both of these great men of God expected suffering in the Christian life. This does not mean that there are never temporal blessings to enjoy or that no divine protection is available. As Christians, we believe that we are under the watchful eye of God. No blessing or suffering comes into our lives without God's permission.

The Fellowship of Suffering

The apostle Peter says that we “participate in the sufferings of Christ” (1 Peter 4:13). Paul speaks of wanting to know the “fellowship of sharing in his [Jesus’] sufferings” (Philippians 3:10). To fellowship means to share the same experience of another. Rather than avoiding suffering on life’s journey, we should expect it, and even welcome it. Why? When we endure pain, assuming we are not suffering because of sin, we experience a special unity with Christ. As hard as this may seem, Paul understood that it would only benefit him to suffer. Our suffering allows us to associate, in some small degree, with Christ’s ultimate suffering.

Why Jesus Suffered

Throughout eternity past, it was God’s plan to allow His Son to suffer for our sins and thereby purchase our salvation. The prophet Isaiah wrote, “Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him [Jesus] and cause him to suffer” (Isaiah 53:10). This is strange to our human minds; we cannot fathom why any father would desire to have his son endure such pain.

God’s ways often seem foolish to the unbelieving human mind. His ways are higher and wiser than ours. Thus, it pleased God to wound His Son because of the end result it would produce. Even earthly fathers will permit their children to suffer some pain if it will bring about a greater good. If a child falls and severely breaks his arm, he probably will cry and fear anyone touching his arm lest it hurt more. However, the father in love will permit a doctor to reset the arm bones, although the procedure may be excruciatingly painful. If surgery is necessary to correct the damage, the father will also permit that even though it requires more suffering. The greater good justifies him in doing so.

When John the Baptist first acknowledged Jesus in public, he announced, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). Jesus repeatedly told the disciples that He came to earth to suffer and die. In Luke 24, we find two of Jesus’ disciples on the road

to Emmaus on that first Easter. Jesus had been crucified days earlier, and these disciples were sorrowful and confused by the news that Jesus had been seen alive. Jesus rebuked them, "Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" (Luke 24:26).

It was essential to the plan of God that Jesus suffer. The writer of Hebrews tells us, "In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering" (Hebrews 2:10). Jesus was already in a state of sinless perfection. The work of Calvary did not make Him perfect in regard to sin. The Greek word translated *perfect* means "to finish or to fulfill." Calvary's cross was the culmination of Jesus' earthly mission. Without it He could not have finished or fulfilled God's will. Thus, Jesus cried out on the Cross, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Jesus also learned obedience through suffering. As a man, He had to learn to obey God; He had to make choices. We even see Him struggling in the Garden of Gethsemane just before His arrest and trial. "He fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will'" (Matthew 26:39). God the Father could have delivered Jesus from death (Hebrews 5:7), but even our wonderful Savior, fully divine and fully human, had to endure suffering.

God has a plan for your life, too. He wants us to be conformed to the image of his Son. For that to happen, we must participate in the sufferings of Christ.

Proper Attitude Is Important

Suffering is not easy. Consider the children of Israel who spent forty years in the wilderness prior to entering the Promised Land. Moses reminded them, "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands" (Deuteronomy 8:2). We can trust that the same God to test us. He will also bring us through our suffering.

Suffering Teaches Dependence on God

Objective 6:

Explain how suffering increases our dependence on Christ.

The Problem of Self-Reliance

The apostle Paul learned a valuable lesson through his intense suffering. He states in 2 Corinthians 1:9, "In our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead." The natural tendency for all of us is to become self-reliant. We forget God. But God knows exactly what we need. He knows what it will take to keep us solely dependent on Him, and that may include periods of suffering.

There will be times when it feels that God is far away from you. You may wonder if He has forgotten about you. King David experienced this and wrote about it in Psalm 22. Jesus also experienced this sense of abandonment. While hanging on the Cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

We serve the God who promised never to leave us (Hebrews 13:5). A.W. Tozer said, "For each of us the time is coming when we shall have nothing but God. Health and wealth and friends and hiding places will be swept away, and we shall have only God. To the man of pseudo faith that is a terrifying thought, but to real faith it is one of the most comforting thoughts the heart can entertain."

What do you do when it seems that God is missing from your life? You keep praying and worshipping. You continue to study His Word. You quote Scripture. You persist in living for Him. You call to remembrance the stories of deliverance you read in the Bible and have heard from the lips of your fellow Christians. You recall the good things God has done in your life. You never stop confessing your confidence and faith in the Lord. Eventually, the fog will lift.

We Are Witnesses

Through our adversity the world finds out what we are made of. Unbelievers observing us will ask if we really depend upon God or if Christianity is just another empty religion. They will wonder if our faith is strong enough to get us through. Suffering, in this sense, requires or forces us to depend upon God like never before. While in suffering, we must hold to the truth that God is still with us. A great verse to memorize is Isaiah 46:4: "Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." Holding to such promises will give you the strength to be an effective witness even while you are suffering.

Suffering Equips Us for Ministry

Objective 7:

Point out how suffering equips Christians for ministry.

Good and Bad Experiences

God knows how all experiences interrelate, and He is able to move all things toward His final end. Therefore, we can look at every situation as ultimately part of a greater good. Romans 8:28 notes, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." No experience is a wasted experience in the grand scheme of God. He uses everything, whether good or bad, for our benefit and for the benefit of others.

Moses' Example

Look at the life of Moses. He started out as the son of Hebrew slaves and was nearly killed. But later, thanks to divine providence, Moses was adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh. For forty years he lived in luxury, enjoying the best of Egypt. He became acquainted with the language and customs of the Egyptians.

Then, one day everything changed. While trying to aid a Hebrew being abused, Moses took the life of an Egyptian. This brought the wrath of Pharaoh upon him. Moses was forced to flee from Egypt and dwell in the Midian desert for forty years. There, he married the daughter of a nomad and ended up tending his sheep. No doubt, this was a humbling and painful experience. It was also necessary if Moses was going to become the great leader God wanted him to be. Thus, some lessons can be learned only through suffering. Samuel Rutherford said, "When I am in the cellar of affliction, I look for the Lord's choicest wines."

Compassion Ministry

Suffering gives us a unique compassion for others. Some churches offer recovery groups such as sexual abuse recovery, divorce recovery, grief recovery, and chemical abuse recovery.

Many of the workers in these groups are people who themselves have struggled with these difficulties. These ministries are borne out of a heart of compassion.

The Ability to Encourage

Suffering not only teaches compassion but also gives us valuable insight to encourage others who are suffering. Having suffered, we can tell people how God brought us through; we can testify to God's unfailing love and care. We can let others know they are not alone in their suffering and that they can bear up under a lot more pressure than they realize.

Conclusion

Whether or not you are bearing up under suffering at the present time, these simple biblical truths are able to transform your attitude and outlook on life. You do not have to be ashamed of or even fear suffering. Do not let anyone despise you or question your commitment to Christ if you find yourself bearing up under painful circumstances. God is at work in your life. His grace is always sufficient for you no matter what you are facing.

Scripture Verses to Memorize

Romans 8:28

Romans 12:2

Hebrews 13:5

1 Peter 4:12–13

1 John 3:1

SELF-TEST

After studying the lesson, please read each study question carefully and circle the correct response. There is only one correct response for each question.

1. *Job's reaction to suffering is a good model for us because*
 - a) *he never showed his sorrow and always presented a happy face to others.*
 - b) *despite his suffering, he chose to worship God.*
 - c) *he listened to his friends who gave him great advice.*
2. *God permits us to suffer at times to produce good fruit in the long run, but sometimes we react incorrectly and allow bad fruit to develop.*
 - a) *True*
 - b) *False*
3. *God allows us to go through trials in order to*
 - a) *build our character.*
 - b) *destroy us.*
 - c) *prove that He is divine.*
4. *Why is it good to understand the ways Satan causes us to suffer?*
 - a) *We can run away from all situations where it appears that Satan is at work.*
 - b) *It is not good to know the ways of Satan, for it might cause us to stumble.*
 - c) *When we are aware of the tactics of the enemy, we can stand strong against him.*
5. *When we practice sin, we bring suffering upon ourselves. This suffering serves as a warning so will not continue to make the same mistakes.*
 - a) *True*
 - b) *False*

6. *Why should we want to know the fellowship of sharing in Christ's sufferings?*
 - a) *It automatically makes us holier than others.*
 - b) *It creates a special unity with the Lord achievable in no other way.*
 - c) *It will cause people to look up to us with more respect.*
7. *It is a cruel God who would willfully allow His children to suffer.*
 - a) *True*
 - b) *False*
8. *When God seems distant during our times of suffering,*
 - a) *we must remember that God is still nearby; He will never forsake us.*
 - b) *it is an indication of our sin.*
 - c) *this means that we are not as special to Christ as we originally thought.*
9. *One of the greatest things we gain from suffering is*
 - a) *compassion for others who suffer.*
 - b) *insight leading to an ability to encourage others who suffer.*
 - c) *both a) and b).*
10. *Which of the following statements is true?*
 - a) *Suffering comes only as a result of one's own sin.*
 - b) *God's correction entails various degrees of suffering.*
 - c) *God's grace is not sufficient to carry us through all suffering.*

ANSWERS TO STUDY QUESTIONS

Note: You can check your answers by using the answer guide. The numbers in the parentheses indicate which objective in the lesson to check.

1. *b* (9.1)
2. *a* (9.1)
3. *a* (9.2)
4. *c* (9.3)
5. *a* (9.4)
6. *b* (9.5)
7. *b* (9.5)
8. *a* (9.6)
9. *c* (9.7)
10. *b* (9.4)

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