



## CHRISTIANITY Q&A "What About Pain and Suffering?" 1 Peter 1:3-9

No. 5082

Stuart Briscoe

The German theologian, Helmut Thielecke said, "Americans have an inadequate view of suffering." Whether or not he was right, there is no shortage of suffering in America. We need to ensure our view of it is "adequate."

### I. The Realities of Pain and Suffering.

A. The immensity.

B. The intensity. e.g. Job.

**"If we are one** in body, mind, and spirit, we are one in suffering and **health.**"

- McKenna

1. Physical.

2. Psychological.

3. Relational.

4. Spiritual.

### II. The Reasons for Pain and Suffering.

**When suffering comes we ask, "Why me? Why this? Why now?"**

A. Physical factors.

1. The nervous system.

2. The aging process.

B. Human factors.

1. **Man's independence of God.**

2. **Man's inhumanity to man.**

3. **Man's insensitivity to need.**

C. Satanic factors.

1. Strategy: destroy faith at all costs.

2. Tactics: attack at the weakest point.

D. Divine factors.

1. The challenge of the sceptic.

a. If God is good He is not God.

b. If God is God He is not good.

2. The conviction of the believer.

a. God is all-loving.

b. God is all-powerful.

c. God is all-wise.

i. He could have chosen not to create.

ii. He could have created men who were not free.

iii. He could have created free men who would not sin.

iv. He could have created free men who would sin.

v. He chose – because: **"It is the best of all possible ways to achieve the best of all possible worlds."** - Geisler

### III. The Response to Pain and Suffering.

A. The response of trust and dependence.

1. Because God in Christ has suffered.

2. Because none of the alternatives offer hope. See Job 13:15; 19:25; 23:10

B. The products of trust and dependence.

1. The development of character. Romans 5:3-5

2. The development of compassion. 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4

3. The development of composure. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18