

## Purpose of Suffering

1. The Bible clearly declares that God is sovereign over all things—even suffering (grief)
  - ~ God is not the author of our suffering but He is with us **in our grief**
    - Ex 4:11; 1 Sam 2:2-7; Dan 4:34-35; Prov 16:9; Ps 60:3; Isa 45:7; Lam 3:28; Amos 3:6; Acts 4:27-28; Eph 1:11
2. The Bible clearly says that **God is good**
  - ~ Ps 25:7-8; Ps 34:8-10; 33:5; 100:5 136; 145:4-9
3. The Bible clearly says that God has a **purpose for our suffering**
  - ~ It does not present suffering as a hindrance to our redemption but as a tool God uses to work his redemptive purpose in us
  - ~ Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 1:3-6; Phil 2:5-9; James 1:2-8; 5:10-11; 1 Peter
4. The Bible explains the ultimate reasons why we suffer
  - ~ We suffer because we live in a fallen world plagued by disease, natural disasters, dangerous animals, broken machinery, etc.
  - ~ We suffer because of our flesh. Much of our suffering is at our own hands. We make choices that make our own lives painful and difficult
  - ~ We suffer because others sin against us. From subtle prejudice to personal attacks, we all suffer at the hands of others
  - ~ We suffer because of the Devil. There really is an enemy in our world, a trickster and a liar who divides, destroys and devours. He tempts us with things that promise to give life but actually destroy it
  - ~ We suffer because of God's good purpose. God calls his children to suffer for his glory and for their redemptive good.
5. The Bible is clear that God's sovereignty over suffering never:
  - ~ Means the suffering isn't real (2 Cor 1:3-9; 4:1-15)
  - ~ Excuses the evildoer (Habakkuk; Acts 2:22-24; 3:14-23)