

To learn more, John Piper's book, *Disability and the Sovereign Goodness of God*, is available online at: [www.desiringgod.org/articles/disability-and-the-sovereign-goodness-of-god-free-ebook](http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/disability-and-the-sovereign-goodness-of-god-free-ebook)

**Reflection Questions:** How has suffering shaped my character for the better? Have I thanked God for the suffering He's allowed into my life? How do I view the disabled? Do I see them as God does?

How can we pray for one another and our church this week?



*The God of Suffering*

*Sermon Notes*

September 2, 2018

### **Quotes to Ponder**

*At the time of the crucifixion, the disciples couldn't see how anything good could result; similarly, as we face struggles and trials and suffering, we sometimes can't imagine good emerging. But we've seen how it did in the case of Jesus, and we can trust it will in our case too... The greatest Christians in history seem to say that their sufferings ended up bringing them the closest to God—so this is the best thing that could happen, not the worst.*

Peter Kreeft

*We are all disabled in some sense, whether it is spiritual, emotional, relational, or physical.... Before God we are all deeply and profoundly needy people and God's grace is rich for us when we embrace this truth.*

*The problem is that when one does not respect life as inherently valuable, as created in God's image, the ruling ethic for value becomes what a person can do rather than who he or she is.*

Michael S. Beates

*God's sovereignty doesn't mean He merely permits disability... He sovereignly intends it, bot for His glory and for our good.*

John Knight

*Sometimes Christ sees that we need sickness for the good of our souls more than healing for the good of our bodies.*

Matthew Henry

*Jesus modeled for us how to care for those with disabilities. He caused the paralytic to walk, but He first forgave him of his sins (Mark 2:1-12). He made the blind man see, and later He sought him out and gave him spiritual sight (John 9).*

Steve and Patty Burchett

*His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.*

William Cowper

Ashland Bible Church  
[www.ashlandbiblechurch.com](http://www.ashlandbiblechurch.com)  
541-482-8644

1. What in the text/sermon impacted you most? Encouraged you? Convinced you? Challenged you? Confused you?

2. What do the following verses teach us about disabilities?

*Exodus 4:11* —

*John 9:1-3* —

*Psalms 139:13-16* —

*1 Corinthians 12:22* —

*Jeremiah 1:5* —

3. What is the cause of suffering in the following verses?

*Ezekiel 18:4* —

*1 Corinthians 5:5* —

*Romans 6:23* —

*1 Corinthians 11:27-29* —

4. What is the cause of suffering in these verses?

*Job 1:1-12* —

*Romans 5:3-4* —

*Job 5:7* —

*Hebrews 12:4-11* —

*Psalms 119:67* —

*1 Peter 2:20-21* —

*John 9:1-3* —

5. According to *2 Corinthians 1:9*, what was the purpose of the suffering Paul and his companions went through?

6. Why must we be careful not to judge someone who is suffering?

7. What kind of problems can arise if we always think God is trying to discipline us by our suffering?

8. Read *2 Thessalonians 1:3-7*. What about these verses reveal God as our Protector?

How do these verses reassure us about our suffering?

9. How do we know that God is love, even though He allows pain and suffering (*1 John 4:7-18*)?

10. It's more important to God that we trust Him than that we understand what He's doing. How does that fit with what Jesus says in *Matthew 18:2-4*?

11. Read *James 1:1-8*. How can we be joyful when we face trials?

How does the testing of our faith make us pure and complete?

Why do we need to ask God for wisdom in the midst of trials?

12. Do you think ministry to one segment of society is more important than ministry to another segment of society? Why or why not?

13. Is ministering to people's physical needs or spiritual needs more important? Explain.