

## Sermon Questions

*Don't Waste Suffering*

*Romans 5:3-5*

*Pastor Jeff Hinds*

### **CONNECT:**

What is a type of suffering you have endured?

### **GROW:**

Read Romans 5:1-5. In verse 3, the Apostle Paul writes about a second thing we rejoice in – what is it? What is the first thing we rejoice in (from Romans 5:2)? From a human standpoint, which of these two makes more sense to us to rejoice in and why?

In what ways does the Apostle Peter address this same “odd” combination in 1 Peter 1:3-6?

Coming back to Romans 5:3-5, what is the progression that suffering produces in the life of a Christian? How is the outcome of verse 5 similar to the outcome of verse 2?

According to Romans 5:3-5 suffering builds all the way up to hope – it would be a terrible shame and a waste if the hope that we have for an eternal inheritance with Jesus is unattainable. But God's love for us (per verse 5) will not put us to shame because it doesn't depend on us! What does it depend on (Romans 5:6, 8, 10-11)?

Have you personally experienced a greater joy in Christ and a stronger hope through your own suffering? How does it help to know that no trial in a Christian's life is random or purposeless (from Romans 8:28 and 1 Peter 1:6 – from the phrase “if necessary”)?

What lesson did Paul learn in his own suffering (see 2 Corinthians 1:8-9)?

### **GO:**

How can the perspective on suffering from Romans 5:3-5 help you next time something doesn't go the way you hoped? How does praying for and practicing this perspective in the little disappointments build a stronger faith and godly perspective in you? How can reaching out to other Christians help you?

## Sermon Notes

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While Christians are not looking to suffer, when we suffer, let us learn to spiritually grow through it. Let us not waste sufferings—as God can use sufferings to grow us in the sanctification process!

1. We do not rejoice because of sufferings, but we rejoice in the midst of sufferings knowing that God can grow us through sufferings (Romans 5:3). When used wisely, sufferings can cause us to: grow in dependence upon God; can increase our understanding of Who God truly is; can grow us in our prayer lives; can cause us to be more Scripturally dependent; can grow our empathy towards others who suffer (2 Corinthians 1:3-4); etc.

2. We waste sufferings by allowing it to embitter us; to drive us towards hurtful habits (human coping mechanisms) or bad influences; and/or by pulling away from God.

3. God designed sufferings, partially, to build character (dokimen) within us (Romans 5:3-5). This word means “full of integrity”—which God desires to grow in us. When we miss the opportunity to grow in the midst of suffering, we waste a good that God intends in our lives.

4. Occasionally, God also causes targeted sufferings in order to bring needed discipline into our lives (Hebrews 12:5-7).

5. God sometimes even uses sufferings to bring people into a saving knowledge of Jesus (John 9).

**Romans 5:12-21**