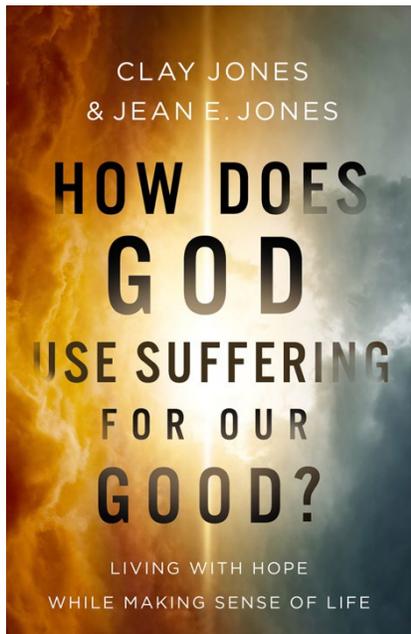


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How Does God Use Suffering for Our Good? *Seven truths about suffering that every believer should embrace*

LAGUNA NIGUEL, CA – No one gets through this life without suffering, disappointment, or pain. While some Christian preachers imply that suffering can come from a lack of faith, most of us know differently. We have experienced it or currently live with it. The Bible clearly states that all who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution, and most of Jesus' first disciples were martyred for their faith. Prophets were persecuted, saints have suffered, and Jesus Himself serves as an example of suffering.



In *How Does God Use Suffering for Our Good?* (Harvest House Publishers), authors Clay and Jean E. Jones say, “We Christians are going to suffer.” They speak from personal experience – from battles with cancer to the painful loss of miscarriages. They don’t hold back, explaining that hardship is part of the Christian experience: “Hardship and persecution and difficulties are not our enemy. Worldliness is our enemy. A life of leisure is our enemy.”

The question isn’t *if* we will suffer but *when*. How we handle our hard times becomes a testimony to others who also suffer. The Joneses write, “When we honor God through suffering, we threaten the devil and his angels . . . Anytime we honor God through suffering, we are testifying to the world that our faith in a loving God stands.”

In *How Does God Use Suffering for Our Good?*, the authors examine seven truths about suffering as reminders that we are not alone in the suffering journey. Most important, they remind us that this life is temporal and that living with eternity in our sights provides perspective, hope, and encouragement. “It’s impossible to overemphasize the importance of focusing on the glory of eternal life in times of suffering,” say the Joneses.

“God’s plan A for your life is to take you through regular periods of suffering,” says Clay. While these times are rarely welcome, they can become steppingstones to building growth and character, as God did in the lives of Moses, Joseph, David, and the Apostle Paul. If you are

suffering, be encouraged. If you are discouraged, find hope in the fact that you are not alone and that God loves you and is working out His purposes in your life.



Clay Jones (DMin) is a former pastor who for 16 years was a professor in the Master of Arts of Christian Apologetics program at Talbot School of Theology. He's the author of *Why Does God Allow Evil?* and *Immortal*. See clayjones.net.



Jean E. Jones is co-author of five books, including *Discovering Joy in Philippians*. She's a member of Women in Apologetics and a Bible teacher. She's published with Crosswalk.com, *Today's Christian Woman*, and *HomeLife Magazine*. See jeanejones.net.

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Harvest House Publishers, a Christian publishing company based in Eugene, Oregon, publishes more than 100 books per year and carries a strong backlist offering more than 1,700 titles. Over 145 million Harvest House books have been sold worldwide through diverse distribution channels, and additional millions have sold in over 75 different languages.

Suggested Questions

How Does God Use Suffering for Our Good?

Clay Jones & Jean E. Jones

Christians can be victorious while suffering . . . even if we are experiencing immense emotional or physical pain.

1. You start out by saying that no one gets through this life without immense suffering. How has suffering impacted your own life?
2. Why do you say the glory of eternity has become an also-ran doctrine?
3. How can Christians be victorious *while* suffering?
4. What is a "truth journal," and how has it been helpful?
5. You refer to seven truths that give us victory in times of suffering. What do you say about them?
6. How does embracing the truth that everyone suffers bring peace to sufferers?
7. Why is it important for us to remember times in the past when God has delivered us?
8. You encourage those of us who are going through difficult times to share it with others. How does sharing about our suffering help us?
9. How does God work out hardship for our good?
10. Is it possible to be joyous and to grieve at the same time?

11. You say that suffering well is evidence of our faith. How so?
12. How can we learn to control our minds when we fear a negative possible future?
13. What does it mean to share in Christ's suffering?
14. Based on your own experience, what are some ways we can support others who suffer?
15. At the end of your book, you tackle some difficult questions about suffering. What are some of these?
16. Can you share any advice to those who are hurting or suffering today?
17. You talk about our glorious inheritance. How does our understanding of eternity ease our suffering now? [This should be the final question for all interviews.]