



Guided Analysis: Suffering Worksheet

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Address the following questions, responding to each one directly below the question. Your total word count (including all questions and answers combined) should be between 900-1150 words. Include a reference page.

1. Describe a time when you experienced a significant period of suffering. How did you deal with that experience? How did you find comfort in the midst of suffering?

The worst period of suffering for me was for 6 consecutive weeks after my husband and I divorced. I had moved out of the house and was living with a friend. She rented me a room in the basement, so it was dark and quiet. I spent many hours in the dark place, crying and asking God so many questions and had even gotten to point of being angry at God. I had prayed about my husband for 2.5 years and God consistently told me that this man was who He had chosen as my husband and that He was preparing us separately before He brought us together. So how, then did I end up in the place of divorce from a man who was abusive in every sense of the word? I asked God if He knew the beginning from the end, why on earth did He put us together? But even in my pain, suffering, and anger, I did not stray from the things of God. The whole time I was crying and asking God questions, I was still going to church and listening to Christian music, specifically the songs "Praise You In This Storm" by Casting Crown and "I Surrender All" by Cici Winans. Those were the only things that gave me comfort during this very time.

2. Briefly summarize the problem of evil and suffering. Cite and reference the topic overview and/or Chapter 9 in the textbook.

Suffering exists because Adam and Eve wanted to experience a world that was not what God had intended for them. They wanted to know what it was like to be like God but had to suffer the consequences of disobedience. Pain and suffering now had to become a of their lives (Sharpe, 2016). Since that fateful day in the Garden of Eden, we are now all born as sinners into a sinful world. (Psalm 51:5). Romans 3:23 says "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Bible Gateway, ESV).

3. Briefly summarize the Christian worldview's response to the problem of evil and suffering. Cite and reference the topic overview and/or Chapter 9 in the textbook.

The Christian worldview's response to the problem of evil and suffering is to stand on the promises of God to trust that he will be with them even in the midst of the worst suffering like Job, but in the end, God will bring his ultimate good (Sharpe, 2016). Suffering is going to come no matter what and it is alright to ask God questions, but we are not to blame God for evil or question his goodness. As hard as it may seem to do, we must trust God enough to know that he hears us, he loves us, he's with us, and he will be revealed as completely good in the end. And finally, as Roman 3:28 states, "for those who love God all things work together for good" (Bible Gateway, ESV).

4. Imagine that a close friend has just suffered through a great personal loss (death of a loved one, natural disaster, disease, job loss, divorce, or a broken relationship) and your friend asks you why God would let such a terrible thing happen. How would you respond to your friend?

I don't even have to imagine this because I have been living it for the last 6 months. A guy I dated years ago lost his mother in April. She mother was like a 2nd mother to me. She came into the church a year after I did and truly had a ministry and love for hurting people. Her son, however, is not saved. His grieving process really didn't start to manifest itself until about August, but it got to the point of him not wanting to survive. He stated that he just wanted to go to sleep and never wake up again, so he stopped taking all his medication. He ended up in the hospital on suicide watch about a month later. After all the visitors left, I was allowed to stay. That's when all the tears and questions began.

He wanted to know why his mother had to suffer so much because she was such a good person and she loved God. He wanted to know why God had to take her out of his life knowing how much he loved and needed her.

His mom was very sick, and he sacrificed his own life to take care of her for 9 years. I told him that God saw his mother, saw the pain and suffering that she was enduring. Yes, he's now enduring pain and suffering because she's gone, but she was in physical pain for years and could barely do much for herself. God saw that and didn't want her to go through that anymore. Regarding him wanting to die, I reminded him that his mother would not want that. She knew the sacrifice he made for her and would want him to take his life back and do something great with it. I also reminded him that his mother and many others have prayed prayers for him that have not come to fruition yet and because I know her prayers weren't prayed in vain, he needs to turn his life around and seek to be saved and have a relationship with God for himself.

5. According to Chapter 7 in the textbook, how might the problem of evil and suffering lead one to the conclusion that moral absolutes exist?

Moral absolutes exist by proven truth and being factual. Absolute truths are experienced in our life every day. All humanity will experience some type of suffering, but it is up to their belief in God to stay stuck or allow themselves to be freed from it. Life is completely changed after going through a significant time of pain and suffering. However, suffering can lead to answers when the relationship with God is strengthened (Jibbens, 2016).



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References:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/>

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