

Wednesday's Wisdom

a weekly short note from Mike Minear

My Bout With Gout

Some of you are aware that since the first of the year I have had several severe gout flare ups, along with Plantar Fasciitis, in addition to a root canal re-work. It has got me thinking, is there any benefit in human suffering? How can a loving God allow suffering in the World? We have several devout members in our congregation suffering from cancer and one in intense pain which seems there is no solution for. There are some things that we do not understand... (Deuteronomy 29:29). Is it possible to understand the tragedies and suffering of life without losing faith?

Some have argued that human suffering proves that God does not exist. We need to understand the source of suffering does not come from God. All that God provided of our existence was "good" (Genesis 1) Verse 4: the Light was "*good*". Verse 10: the land and sea were "*good*", Verse 21: the birds of the air and creatures of the sea were "*good*", Verse 25: all creatures on the land were "*good*". Verse 18: the sun and moon were "*good*" Verse 31: everything was "*very good*". What caused all of this to change? All was well with the world, until people exercised their free will. In Genesis 3:1-7, Eve, and then Adam, used this freedom to choose to sin. This choice opened the door to suffering. Pain in childbirth; toil of life; and mortality: physical ailment and death were the consequences of their choice (Genesis 3:16-17) Philosophically: The fact that we know a standard of "goodness" at all, is important to our faith. Any person who condemns the idea of God's existence based on the evil of human suffering must admit a presupposed idea that there is a difference between good and evil. There could be no such judgment made by anyone who does not recognize some standard of good and an ultimate good. We recognize ultimate good as God.

Next week...Is There Value in Suffering?