

## Parenting Suffering Children, Part 2 | the God of suffering

Charles Spurgeon once said that “*Men will never become great in theology until they become great in suffering.*” The inverse is also true. Those who are great in theology are great in suffering.

### I. God is Holy.

- Leviticus 11:44
- Holiness refers to being set apart. So all that God is is set apart to a very specific purpose. He never transgresses His own character. Therefore, when we know His character, we know exactly what God will and will not do.

### II. God is Good.

- Luke 18:19
- Since God is holy, he will never not be good. God is entirely set apart to goodness in such a way that no one else is. He cannot be bad. He cannot be evil.

### III. God is Love.

- I John 4:7-8
- God wants our *absolute* best. And — since He’s holy — He will never not want our absolute best.

### IV. God is Omnipotent.

- Job 38-42
- The Bible — from Creation through the Eternal Heaven, Earth, and Lake of Fire — is a testament to the fact that God can do whatever He Wants. We need never fear that He’s too impotent to accomplish our best!

### V. God is Omniscient.

- Psalm 147:5; I John 3:20; Hebrews 4:13
- The Scriptures are overflowing with the infinite knowledge, understanding, and wisdom of God.

### VI. God is Omnipresent.

- Proverbs 15:3; Psalm 139
- There is nowhere you can go run in the whole of the created and uncreated realms where God is not present. He won’t miss something. He won’t be caught off guard.

### VII. God is Sovereign.

- Psalm 115:3; Proverbs 16:9; Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 1:11
- God is completely separate from everything that is evil and unloving. He has all strength, and all knowledge, and sees all things. And He’s completely sovereign over the events of this life.

**VIII. God is Wise.**

- Romans 16:27; James 1:5
- God is the possessor of wisdom and gives it freely to those whom ask.

**VIII. God's Word is Truth.**

- Psalm 119:160; John 17:17
- Of Himself – Jesus proclaims, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”* There is no Truth outside of God.

**VIII. God is Trustworthy.**

- He is the best, He wants the best, He's capable of knowing what the best is, He's capable of accomplishing the best, He promises that He is actively accomplishing the best.
- The God of the Christian is this God.
- The God who is sovereign over suffering is this God.

The westernized world has lost a biblical theology of suffering because we haven't experienced that much deep suffering in the first place, and then we've bought into the American dream that suffering is bad and shouldn't happen to us. We view suffering as divine punishment or proof of God's nonexistent.

I'm going to argue that the confusion does not live in the character of God and the experience of life; the confusion comes from the fact that we're trying to squeeze God into our tiny little boxes.

Your kids are going to do this. They are going to question and doubt and eventually wander if they try to understand God in light of their experiences.

In order to parent our children through suffering, we need to start with a biblical understanding of Who God is. His character and glory need to fill our eyes. Only then can we hope to enter into a season of suffering with the right understanding of suffering and a knowledge of the response we're to have to our suffering.

Now, please understand that questions and doubts and the struggling of a finite mind to comprehend the infinite are not wicked and terrible.

I'm so pleased that the apologetics movement is helping parents understand that we shouldn't be afraid of questions. We should embrace the questions and doubts because we know that God has the answer!

In conclusion, to parent well in suffering, we need to precede it with good theology. Only then will the suffering deepen and prove our theology.

When we enter suffering with nothing more than empty secular platitudes and Failure Philosophies, suffering will challenge what little theology we have left.