

Five Lessons Learned Through Suffering

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[0 : 00] Let me tell you a little bit about me. And you say, do you have a text? Yes, my text is Romans 8, 28. We know that all things work together for good to them to love God. And to those who are called according to his purpose.

That's one of the most misunderstood verses in all the Bible. Many people believe that verse says that everything that happens to you is good. That's not true. Everything that happens to us is not good.

But everything that happens to us, whether good, bad, or indifferent, is an ingredient that God wants to use in your life and my life to bring about a good result. That's the text.

To tell you a little bit about me, my name, as I told you, was Rudy Holland. I was raised in a Christian home. Mom and dad loved the Lord. When I was 13 years of age, we moved to Lynchburg, Virginia.

We were free will Baptist. There was no such animal as a free will Baptist church in the city of Lynchburg. So when we moved there, we began to look for a church. My mom and dad worked at General Electric.

[0 : 58] And some people at General Electric invited them to go to a church that was just getting started good. Passed by a young man who wasn't even married at the time. I mean, his name was Jerry Falwell. And so we became a part of the Thomas Road Baptist Church.

My dad and mom and they joined the church and my sisters. And they got active. And I was lost as a goose in a cane patch and had no interest in the things of God. But they were serving the Lord.

And when I was 18 years of age and a senior in high school, the church had a revival on a Thursday night, just like tonight. I came home from school. My mother began to beg me to go to revival.

She said, I'm going to have some special music and a lot of music. And there's a choir coming in from Danville, Virginia. And there's a quartet coming from Texas and all this kind of stuff. And the preacher's really unusual.

And finally, she talked me into going with her to church. And I did that night. And my friends were not there. Unusual. But I sat with my family that night. And that night, the preacher preached.

[1 : 55] And though I did not pay attention, God did. And he paid attention to me. And great conviction came into my heart. And during the invitation time, I stood holding on to the back of a pew to determine I was not going to step out and go forward.

And my mother, with tears raining on her face, leaned over, laid her hand on mine and said, son, if you'll go, I'll go with you. And I stepped out that night. And she followed me down the aisle. And the old deacon by the name of Mr. Mayberry met me at the altar.

Went into the counseling room. I knelt beside him. I knew the verses. My mom and daddy shared the gospel with me many times. And so had Dr. Falwell, who we, at that time, lived three doors down from.

And I, but I, that night, I invited the Lord Jesus into my life. And as I prayed and asked the Lord to save me, I could feel my mother's tears falling on the back of my neck. I got up and went outside.

And Dr. Falwell recognized the fact that I trusted Christ. By the way, that evangelist was an unusual evangelist, one of the most unusual evangelists in the world. His name was Lester Roloff. And so I was saved under Brother Roloff's ministry.

[2 : 56] Many of you may know of his ministry. I was having my life all planned and laid out for me. I was going to go into the restaurant business. I worked at the Holiday Inn in Lynchburg, Virginia.

As an 18-year-old, I was kitchen manager. I cooked all the steaks. I did all the, cut all the meat. I did all of that. I was trained to do all of that by the time I was 18. My claim to fame, folks, is I cooked for Johnny Cash one night.

He came in and asked for a filet mignon Pittsburgh. And so Wilma, the waitress, came by and she said, Johnny Cash is out there. I said, yeah, I saw that. She said, he wants a Pittsburgh filet mignon.

I said, all right. She said, do you know what that is? I said, I ain't got a clue. And I said, but I'll find out. So I went and found the manager, Jack Quick. He was in Pennsylvania. He said he wants it to look like a piece of coal all over, just as black as it could be, charred about a quarter of an inch.

But in the middle of it, he wants it to be cold, red, raw. He said, can you do it? I said, I can do it. So I went and I turned those burners up and got them real hot, dipped that filet in some grease and some oil and put it on and hit it.

[4 : 07] And it just flamed up. I held it with tongs at the top. I got it charred real good and got it black. I just wait, he had described. Put it on toast points and put it on the plate and sent it out.

Wilma said, I'm not serving that. You burn it. I said, serve it. It's Pittsburgh. And so she took it out. And he ate it. And she came back and she said, Johnny Cash wants to see you.

My heart dropped. I said, oh, Lord. He's going to nail my hide for burning his steak. So I go walking out there and I said, yes, Mr. Cash. He said, sonny boy, did you cook that filet?

I said, I did. He said, it's the best one I've had since I left Pittsburgh. He gave me a \$10 tip and the steak only cost \$9.99. I tell people I've been walking the line ever since. I mean, I tell you.

But anyway, I had all my life planned. But my pastor came to me after I got saved and said, would you consider going to Bible college? I said, well, I don't even know where one is. He said, well, I want you to go to Tennessee Temple.

[5 : 09] And I said, well, I'll pray about it. And so I did. And I went to Tennessee Temple. And the first day I was there, I was standing in the registration line behind a young lady. Her last name was Hopper. My name's Holland.

And she was a cute little girl. And I started shooting. I might want to see if I can get a date while I'm here. And so I began to talk to her. And I said, would you like to go to church Sunday? She said, well, I would. But I've already got a date. About that time, her roommate walked up.

Her name was Doris. And she was cute, too. I said, I think I'll ask her. And she didn't. So I said, hey, you want to go to church Sunday night? She said, yeah. So we went to church together. That's the only kind of dating you could do back then at Tennessee Temple.

And couldn't go do anything else to go to church. And so we went to church. And so Monday morning, I was standing there on the third floor of the Temple building with my roommate, Dan Manley. And Doris was coming over to go to work in the registrar's office where she worked.

It was in the first floor of the building that we lived in. And I said, hey, Dan, you know who that is? He said, yeah, that's Doris Davis. I said, yeah, I'm going to marry her. He said, you're crazy. You've been out with her one time to church.

[6 : 09] And you're talking about marrying her. I said, well, crazy enough, I'm going to marry her. That became the joke of the dorm until two years later. And I married her. And we stayed married for 54 years.

And this past February, the Lord took her home to be with him and left me alone for the first time in 54 years. God gave us two wonderful children.

We found out we were going to have our first child. And she said, I want you to pray with me, honey. We'll have a little boy. I said, well, I'm praying for a little girl. She said, no.

Now, we've got a lot of young people here. Y'all don't understand this sermon. Because, see, back in those days, you didn't know what you were going to get until they got here. And whenever they did come, the husband was put in a little room.

You didn't even know what it was until they finally got around to come and telling you after the child was born. But anyway, she said, I'm praying for a little boy. I said, I'm praying for a little girl. And so nine months later, sure enough, we went.

[7 : 15] The baby came. And it was a little girl. We know who had the power. Amen. But two years after that, the Lord gave us the little boy that she so wanted. We named him Paul.

Actually, Paul Rudolph Holland II, after my father, he went by Paul. Paul was an unusual little boy. He was very, very, very brilliant. There was a man who, matter of fact, I did his funeral here three, four years ago over in Cummins, who used to come to our house.

And at five years of age, Paul and him played chess. He was very, Paul was very intelligent. And the educators told us he'd have to have special classes and challenges because of his intellect.

I tell people he got his intelligence from his mother. She graduated magna cum laude. I graduated laudy how cum. But I did graduate. Paul was not only a very brilliant little fellow, but he also was a very spiritually minded little fellow.

I remember one day my wife called me at the office and she said, Paul just came up and said he just got saved. I said, what? What? She said, yeah. He said he was downstairs. He'd been listening to you preach on Sunday morning. Been listening to what we'd be talking about in family devotions.

[8 : 24] And he realized that he knew he was a sinner and he believed that Jesus died on the cross for him. So he got on his knees and he asked Jesus to forgive him of his sins and to come into his life and to save him. And he wanted to just come up and tell me he just got saved.

That's pretty good testimony. Amen. I said, well, don't say anything to him. Let me see what he says to me. And that night at dinner, he told me the same thing. I never said anything about joining the church or being baptized.

But the next Sunday morning, the invitation time, here he came right down the aisle. And I stepped down to greet him. He didn't speak to me. He went over to my associate and he said, I got saved this week. I need to be baptized. I want to join the church.

A few weeks later, I baptized him. Wasn't too long after that, a man named Marshall St. Clair was teasing with him. And he said, Paul, what are you going to do when you grow up? He said, well, I want to be a preacher. Marshall said, well, you're going to be a preacher.

Where are you going to preach? He said, I'm going to preach here at the church. Marshall said, well, what about your dad? He said, he'll be dead by then. Marshall said, do you have any sermons?

[9 : 24] He said, don't need any. Dad's got hundreds of them. I'll tell you all that just so you can kind of get an idea of what kind of little boy our Paul was. It wasn't long after that, all of those things I just talked to you about, about six, eight months later, Paul began to have some physical problems.

We took him to the doctor. And for the sake of time, I'll just shorten it. He was diagnosed with a brain tumor. He went in and had his first surgery. It was a benign growth, a cranial pharyngoma.

They were able to get about 85, 90% of it, but it affected his optic nerves, and he didn't have any peripheral visions. But really, the main thing was it did damage to his pituitary glands, and he had to be placed on synthetic hormone, every hormone of the body he took synthetically.

He had to measure every drop of water that went into his body, and every drop that came out. He was so smart, though, he was able to do that and measure the specific gravity of his urine and give himself the medication as he needed it within just a matter of a few weeks.

The doctors told us it wouldn't grow back, and the tumor would not grow back. Maybe never, but at least for 10, 12 years, but it grew back in 11 months. This time when they went in, Dr. Stevens came out, and he looked at me, and he said, he's got a year or less.

[10 : 42] We weren't satisfied with that. We began to look for other possibilities of treatment, found out that there was experimental treatment at Boston's Children, and Paul was number 29 to experience that, and it did kill the tumors, calcified it, but it left two tumors, two cysts.

After he got out of the hospital, we went on vacation, and those cysts ruptured, drained down on the left hemisphere of his brain. He was in a coma for 32 days at University of Virginia Hospital, came home and was in the hospital another 30 days in a coma.

We finally brought him home. Our little boy was less than an infant. We had to take ice and teach him how to smile. He didn't know night from day. He finally learned who we were, Mama, Daddy, Angie, a few other words.

He could quote John 3.16, though. He loved souls. He used to go on visitation, bus visitation every Saturday. And the first sentence that he ever said was he looked through the bars of his hospital bed at his nurse.

I got up that morning. She was sitting there crying. I said, Iris, there's something wrong. She said, no. Paul just said his first full sentence. I said, what did he say? She said he looked through those bars and said, are you saved?

[12 : 01] I thought about it a lot. That tumor took away a lot, but it couldn't take away what the Lord Jesus had done in his little heart. It was during that time that I asked the Lord something. I said, Lord, what is it you want me to learn?

I don't want to miss what you have for me. You see, most of you I do not know in this room tonight. But I can tell you something about every one of you. Every one of you, you've either been through a tragedy, you're going through a tragedy right now.

Or if Jesus tarries his coming, you'll face one in the days of time. Tragedy is not always the illness of a child. It's not always the death of a child. It's not even always the illness in your own body, but it could be.

It can be a broken relationship. It can be a disappointment of all call measure. It can be an untimely death of a spouse or a loved one. You see, I don't know what you're going through.

Maybe it's something really sort of secret. But in the darkness of the night and quietness of the evenings, you lay alone and you remember that abuse, that mistreatment, that violation.

[13 : 10] And it eats at you, but you never say anything. But all of us have been through or going through or will go through a tragedy. If you're in that time, I was traveling to speak to a bunch of preachers in Richmond, Virginia, that God laid on my heart five things.

And for whatever time I have left, which is about 20 minutes, I want to share with you those five things. You say that God taught you. I wish I could say yes.

That God is teaching me. Because there are things that I began to learn. Yes, and I identified, but there are things that I'm still learning. Maybe they'll help you to get over what you've been through, get you through what you're going through.

Or maybe get you ready for what you may have to go through. Let me give them to you. First of all, I have learned of God's unfailing grace.

The grace of my God is sufficient. In the book of 2 Corinthians, chapter number 12. I don't have time to read it, and I don't have time to give you an exposition of the text.

[14 : 22] Sometimes I do that. But we had the occasion of the Apostle Paul writing, and he says in verse number one, It is not expedient for me, doubtless to glory.

I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. If you go on down and keep reading through those verses, You'll note that Paul talks about that 14 years prior to this time, That he knew a man who had been caught up to the third heaven.

And he says there that he heard unspeakable words, Which is not lawful for a man to utter. Verse number four. Every scholar that I know of, and every book I've ever read, Identifies this man that Paul is referring to, Who was caught up to the third heaven 14 years prior to this time, Is Paul himself.

And he's talking about how he was caught up. What he was saying in this verse was, God had highly honored him. He had been caught up into the third heaven. Heard words unspeakable.

But he doesn't stop there. He goes on, and he begins to talk about in verse number seven, And lest I should be exalted above measure, Through the abundance of the revelations, There are given to me a thorn in the flesh, A messenger to buffet me, Lest I should be exalted above measure.

[15 : 39] What Paul was saying was, The God who had honored me, And allowed me to be caught up to the third heaven, Now humbles me, By giving me a thorn in the flesh. Now there was a lot of preaching about, What that thorn in the flesh was.

I don't know if I could identify it exactly, But I will say to you without reservation, That I believe it was some type of physical infirmity. You say, well why would you believe that? Well first of all, His name was changed from Saul to Paul.

Paul means little one, a frail one. Secondly, at least on one of his missionary journeys, The apostle Paul traveled with a medical doctor, A man by the name of Dr. Luke. Then when he was writing to the churches in Galatia, He said if it were possible, They would have plucked their eyes out, And given them to heal.

Why would they need his eyes? Probably because he has some type of eye disease, And that bothered him. Later on, the Lord of God says, In the last chapter of the book of Galatians, That he wrote unto them a large letter in the King James, But in the original way it says, He wrote unto them in large letters.

Why would he write with them in large letters? Probably because he couldn't see well. Whatever the case, Paul three times comes to the Lord, And asks him, You have honored me, And allowed me to be caught up to the third heaven, Now you have humbled me with this thorn in the flesh, Would you now bless me, And take this thorn in the flesh away?

[16 : 57] God does not take it away, But God does say, My grace is sufficient for thee. The God who had honored him, The God who had humbled him, Said I'll help you, And the help that I will give you, Is my grace.

Ladies and gentlemen, And I'm here this evening to tell you, That no matter what you're going through, No matter what you've been through, Or no matter what you may have to go through in the future, That God has grace, To see you through every trial, Amen.

And every trouble, Every disappointment, Yes, And every failure, That may come to your life. I've learned of his unfailing grace.

You say, You mean unmerited favor. Well, That's the definition we assign to it, And is given to the word grace, But I would like to, Maybe not define it, But describe it. The grace I'm talking about, Is when you cry unto you, And cry no more.

And you've hurt, Until you don't think you can hurt anymore. You don't think you can face another day, But some way, Somehow the sun rises, And you rise, You face the challenges of the day, You go and do what God's given you to do that day, And at the end of the day, You look back and you say, You know, I didn't think I could do it, But I was able to do it, And only I could do it, Because of the unfailing grace of God, To see me through the day.

[18 : 21] I've learned, Of an unfailing grace. I've learned of an inexhaustible supply for every need. Several years ago, I sat down with a pen one day, I don't know why I did it, But I did, And began to pin the cost, Of what that would have been, That I knew, That I could honestly, Put to the, The cost of Paul's illness.

Paul required, Registered nurses with him, 24-7. My wife went back to college, And got her BS in, So she would be there, When we did not have nurses, As a nurse.

But we had 24-7, Nurses with him for years, And after that, We had 16 hours a day, And we chose to take care of him, In the evenings ourselves.

Paul was in and out of emergency rooms, Paul had multiple seizures, Sometimes as many as 17 seizures a day, Grandma's seizures, Most of them at night, We went 26 years, And never slept all night, One night in our home, Because we'd have to, One of us would have to be up with Paul, And be sure he came out of the seizures, And you start trying to figure out, All the medications, He had one medication, Cost over \$2,000 a month, He had other, Other hormones he had to have, Plus in and out of the, Of the intensive care units, And in and out of the hospitals, Plus all the nursing's care, It was several millions of dollars, You say, Guess you had good insurance, Not that good, You say, Well how'd you pay it?

My God shall supply all of your needs, According to his riches in glory, By Christ Jesus, Time will not allow me to tell you, How many times, God has miraculously met the need, For us to pay our bills, Buy the medicine, Pay the nurses, And I don't care, What you're going through in your life, Or where you are in your life, I want to tell you, My God can take care of you, He has an inexhaustible supply, For every need, That you may have in your life, Those of you that go into the mission field, There may be at times, When you'll say, There's no way, And all of a sudden, There is a way, It's because of a way that God made, There will be a supply, That you, That'll come in some surprising way, But God will, Take care of you, I've learned, I've learned of his inexhaustible supply, For every need, Number three, I've learned, That he has an unquestionable purpose,

[20 : 55] I grew up in small churches, Before we moved to Lynchburg, And when we moved to Lynchburg, The church ran less than 300, And I had the privilege of being there, And watch God grow that church, And, But anyway, Those small churches, Sometimes those preachers, They were good men, But they weren't trained, And sometimes their theology, Was not exact on target, I remember hearing preachers say, Well, You know, You ought never ask God why, I even heard preachers say one time, It's a sin to ask God why, When you're going through difficult times, After I got some Bible training, And learned a little bit of the word of God, I always want to get those preachers together, And ask them one question, Why?

Why is it wrong to ask God why? Job asked God why, Some 16 times, And God never reprimanded him, Who is our great example? Is it not Jesus the Christ?

And yet, When he went through the greatest trial, And trouble of his life, When he was placed on a Roman cross, Hanging between two thieves, In the darkness of a thousand midnights, Buried in your sin, Your sin, Your sin, Your sin, And my sin, In his own body, God pulled the shades of heaven, Turns out the light, And there comes a voice from the cross, That says, My God, My God, Come on, You can talk, Why?

Why hast thou forsaken me? If he who was God yet, Man and man yet, God could ask his father, When he was going through a horrible time, Why? Don't you think he understands, When you and I say why?

Sure he does. You say, Well, Can you tell me why? I've been through what I've been through, What I'm going through, Why I'm going through what I'm going through? Well, Probably not. But we'd like to give you three suggestions.

[22 : 48] Sometimes God allows things to come into our lives to conform us to his image. My text was Romans 8, 28. And I bet you didn't think I was even going to fool with it, But I'm going to give you an explanation of Romans 8, 28.

Now, it's deep stuff. It's deep theology. So you'll have to listen close. How many of you like homemade biscuits?

Real homemade biscuits. Now, you young guys, When your wife tells you she's going to make you homemade biscuits, And you hear a noise come from the kitchen that says, Boosh!

They ain't homemade. You understand? Did you ever think about how you make homemade biscuits? Make homemade biscuits, You've got to have flour.

When you get home, And I get you a big handful of flour in these. You say, well, pretty good, Choke you to death. I know that. But you've got to have flour to make biscuits. To make good biscuits, You'll need to have lard.

[24 : 02] Now, if you get a spoonful of that, You probably won't make it out much tomorrow. But to make good biscuits, You've got to have lard. To make good biscuits, You've got to have buttermilk.

Now, there are some poor souls that drink that stuff. I don't know why. I don't like buttermilk. But to make good biscuits, You've got to have buttermilk. A little pinch of salt. A little pinch of baking soda. Take that old dry flour.

That old greasy lard. That old bitter buttermilk. That salt and that baking soda. Mix it all together. Knead it up real good. Pitch it off. Roll it out. Patty it down.

Put it on the grease pan. Stick it in the oven about 350 degrees. It'll rise up about this big. Brown on the top. Brown on the bottom. And if for some crazy reason, You would take that pan out.

Take one of those biscuits out. Open it up. Put a slab of butter on it. And set it on top of your head. Your tongue slap your brains out Trying to get to it. That's Romans 8.28.

[25 : 02] You say, I don't believe I got that. Let me see if I can help you. God takes the flour of life. God takes the lards of life. And the buttermilks of life.

And the baking sodas. And the salts of life. With nail scarred hands. He mixes it all together. Sticks it into the oven of his grace. And brings out a result.

That's good. You see. What you've been through. And what you're going through. What you may have to go through.

At the moment. May not seem good. It may seem to be bitter and dry. And all the rest. But just give it a while. God may pull a result out.

It might shock you. Because it may be. That these are ingredients. That are happening in your life. To conform you. To make you.

[26 : 00] More. Of what God wants you to be. Sometimes God allows. Tragedies. To come to our lives.

To confirm our faith. How could I ever know. He was the God of all comfort. If my heart was never broken. How could I know. He was a God. Who could supply.

Every need. If I never had a need. Greater than that. I could meet myself. See I've learned more about God. In the valleys of life. Than I ever learned. In the mountains. Confirm our faith.

Sometimes God allows. Things to happen to us. In our lives. To confound. An unbelieving world. You see. The world looks at our lives. And says. Well they said. They love God. And everything's going good. And all of a sudden. Everything goes bad.

Goes south. And they sit back and say. Well let's see. What about his God now. That could be the very opportunity. That God uses. To touch the life. Of somebody you've been praying for. And they might get saved.

[26 : 59] Confound. An unbelieving world. Number four. I've learned that God. Has an unexplainable peace. The peace of my God. Which passes all understanding. The apostle Paul said. It was my life.

My wife's life verse. Let me just give you an illustration. Of that. May I? Paul had gone into seizures. And I'd come out.

He was having a problem. With electrolyte balances. And all the rest. We had taken him to the hospital. He was in the hospital. My wife had stayed two nights with him. So I went over. And I said. Honey you need some rest. Why don't you go home.

I'm going to stay with him tonight. She went home. To get a night's rest. And clean up. I stayed the night. And Paul was not doing well at all. His vitals were dropping. And he got all right.

And he lived years after that. But it didn't look good that night. Early, early in the morning. Dr. Michael Sisk come by. And he said. Pastor. I need to tell you. Paul's not doing well. I think this could be the day that he dies.

[27 : 56] My wife came. Early in the morning. And I said. Honey. I'm going to go. I did a daily radio broadcast. For 16 years from my office. I said. I'm going to go home. And get Angie. Take her to school.

Do the broadcast. I told her what Dr. Sisk had said. And I said. But if anything happens. You call the office. They'll find me. Those cell phones in those days. And I'll get here as quickly as possible.

We prayed. And I kissed her goodbye. And I left. The rainy days. More like what I drove in today. Except it was cold. I remember getting in the car. And starting driving down 581.

Toward. Interstate 81. To where we lived. Off at 581. And all I could think about. This could be the day my boy dies. I began to cry.

So much so. I couldn't see the road. So I pulled off the side. And I fell across the steering wheel. And I prayed this prayer. I started. I said. Lord. If you want. You can take him home.

[28 : 53] I'll take his little body. And I'll go with him. As they go to the cemetery. And I'll watch him. As they lower him beneath the sod. And I'll watch him. As they put the sod back in place. And I'll stand at the grave.

And I'll tell the world. You'll steal God. And you'll steal good. And I still love you. I'm pretty sure I didn't have any extra biblical experiences. That morning. But it seemed to me.

That the heavenly dove. Took flight and left. Heaven came. Took up his abode. Fluttered his wings. And my soul. And there came over me. A peace. Like I'd never known before. You see. Have you always had that peace since?

No. I've had to ask for it. Time and time again. But every time I've asked for it. I've received it. And every time I've sought it. I've found it. Because my God has promised me. Peace. In the midst of the storms. An unexplainable peace.

And you're going through the hard times. And the difficult times. There's peace. Peace. God's peace. Number five.

[29 : 53] I've learned to expect an unpredictable result. You see. You never know how God's going to use your tragedy. When you're going through the midst of it.

You don't see it. You know. All of a sudden you look back and say. Wow. We sing the song. It is well with my soul. The wife of Horatio Spafford and his girls were making their way to Europe.

Through a tragedy. Some people say a storm. Some say a wreck. I don't really know. It doesn't really matter. But his girls were swept overboard and lost at sea.

Horatio Spafford received the word from his wife. And boarded the ship. And went to join his wife as quickly as possible. But he told the captain of the ship. When we come to the place where my daughters. Fell off the ship and were lost.

You get me. And sure enough one day. Early one morning. The captain came or somebody came and knocked on the door. Mr. Spafford. Mr. Spafford. We're at your place. And he got up.

[30 : 58] And while the boat sailed over the watery graves of his daughter. He wrote the song. It is well with my soul. No tragedy. No song. 1986.

Around that area. I made my first trip to Israel. My dear friend was there. He was an adjunct professor. At what was called the Institute of Holy Land Studies. His name was Dr. Harold Wilmington.

I went by to see Dr. Wilmington. And he said. Come on. I really want to show you something. He took me out the back door. Into a little German cemetery. And there were headstones. Mr. and Mrs. Horatio Spafford.

I said. What in the world are they doing here? He said. Oh. He said. After they went back home. They sold all their earthly goods. And came to what was in Palestine. And started orphanages.

To reach children with the gospel. They died here. He said. I am told that some of those orphanages. Are still in existence. No tragedy. No orphanages. No tragedy.

[31 : 59] No book. No tragedy. No message. Five lessons I learned from tragedy. You see. You never know how God. Is going to use.

The tragedy of the trial. That you may be going through. A challenge to you though is. Give your hurt. Give your tragedy. Give it to the Lord.

Let God have it. You can't do anything with it. Let God have it. You might be surprised. Or God might use it.

To bless many, many others. I close with a final story. My message tonight. Has not been my usual type of message. I normally am. More of an expositional preacher.

But. Testimonial message. Paul had. Been diagnosed with the. A return of the. Of the tumor.

[33 : 00] He had the first surgery. He had returned. I called my mom and dad. They live in Lynchburg. A few hours after that. Mom and dad came. And. Dad said. So would you help me.

We bought Paul a toy. I want you. I want you to help me. Put it together. Some kind of riding toy. Big wheel type thing. And we put it together. And I went in and got Paul. And Paul came out. The tumor had grown back.

But. It was still functional. He jumped on that. Went flying. Toy went flying down the driveway. Whirled around. Coming about halfway back up. Though. He stopped. And grabbed his little head.

And began to scream. Oh my head. Oh my head. The motion. It caused. The cranial pressure. From that tumor. To begin to give him great pain. I went and got him.

And took him to the house. And I got to the door. My mom met me. She said. Doris. That's my wife. Is on the phone. I'll take care of him son. I went back. And helped my dad clean up. And I went in the house. And I heard my mother.

[33 : 56] With Paul up in Paul's room. He was vomiting. From the cranial pressure. So I started up. To check on him. And as I started up.

The stairs. I heard my little boy. Do what he did. Many many many times. When his head was hurting. And when he was so sick. I heard him again. To sing. How he sung.

The same little song. Jesus loves me. This I know. For the Bible. Tells me so.

I got to the head of the steps. And I didn't go in his room. I went into Angie's room. Fell on my knees. I said.

Dear Lord. Please help me learn. What my little boy knows. When my head is hurting. When my heart is broken. When I don't understand. Help me remember.

[34 : 53] Jesus loves me. This I know. For this Bible tells me so. If you forget everything this old man says tonight.

Will you remember this? When you go through the dark hours of life. When you go through the hard times of life. When you go through the times that you don't really understand. Would you remember one thing?

Jesus loves you. I know he does. You say. How you know? Because this Bible. Tells me so. I know. Probably everybody here tonight.

Knows the Lord Jesus. But maybe there may be one. That's not. If you're here. And you don't know Christ. You're going to go through the hard times too. Where will you find grace? How will you have your needs met?

Where will you get your answers? Where will you find peace? My dear friend. If you don't know him tonight. You ought to come to know him. You ought to come and receive him as your savior.

[35 : 55] If there was no hell to miss. No heaven to gain. I'd still want to know Jesus. So I'd have a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. To go with me.

For the difficult times of life. Where will you bow your head and close your eyes? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. And no one's looking around.

Maybe you're here and your heart's heavy tonight. Maybe you'd just like to come and kneel at the front.

Or if you can't kneel, just sit on the front seat. But you need to come and just tell Jesus. Jesus, I'm hurting tonight. My heart's heavy.

Maybe you want to come and say, Lord, I need grace. I need grace. Maybe you need to come and say, Lord, I've got a great need.

[36 : 55] And only you can supply the need. Lord, I need the answers to the whys of my life's tragedies. I don't know.

But if God has spoken to you, will you come? Will you come? Will you do now what you, you'll be glad you did after you, you bring that burden to the Lord.

I'm going to wait just a moment. The girls are going to begin to sing. Will you come? You say, we're not standing. You don't need to stand. Get up and come. What about it?

Will you come? I'll be saying, you come. Jesus said that if I thirst, I should come to Him.

No one else can satisfy. I should come to Him. God.

[37 : 59] Jesus said that if I am weak, I should come to Him. God. No one else can satisfy my strength.

I should come to Him. I should come to Him. I should come to Him. You need to come. Come on. For the Lord is good and faithful.

Yes, He is. He will keep us day and night. We can always run. Yes, you can. You can always run to Jesus. Yes, you can.

Jesus strong and kind. Amen. God bless you, Pastor. God bless you. God bless you. Jesus said that if I fear, I should come to Him.

No one else can be my shield. I should come to Him.

[39 : 07] For the Lord is good and faithful. He will keep us day and night.

Ah, yes. You can always run to Jesus. Jesus strong and kind.

You know, God understands every circumstance of our life. You say, well, you don't know what I'm going through. No. You don't know all that I've been through.

February. February. February. One Saturday morning, my wife woke up and passed out. The next morning, she was with Jesus. Fifty-four years we lived together.

I went to Louisiana to preach. Went into the motel room, passed out, and lay unconscious for three hours on the floor.

[40 : 12] Man up in the hospital. I just recently had a procedure to hopefully keep that from ever happening again. I'm not complaining. I'm just reporting.

Through it all. Through it all. Through it all. I've learned of his unfailing grace. I've learned that he has an inexhaustible supply for every need.

When my wife died, we had to have two funerals. We had the funeral in Florida. Then we had to fly our body to North Carolina. Had the funeral. Two funeral home costs.

And I can go on. God met needs. He always does. I've said, why God? Why? Why? She was my prayer partner. Why?

Why not take me? Why her? Beautiful woman. Great Christian. God said, well, I might want to use that to make you a little more like me, son.

[41 : 23] Could be I'm just testing your faith. See if you'll trust me. And who knows? God might use even this to bring some souls to me. And in the midst of it, don't worry.

My peace will be available. And it has been. And sit back and watch. See what the result might be.

God's not done with you. Just because you're going through a hard time. He's just getting you ready. For the next great thing. He wants to do in your life.

Amen.