

Hope in suffering

Chapter 11

1

“Suffering is a great mystery. It doesn’t make sense to us. Our culture concentrates time and attention on avoiding suffering.

And when it becomes impossible to eliminate the suffering, man decide to remove the suffering person through euthanasia.

Common sentence: “He doesn’t deserve”

2

The mystery of suffering

Suffering came into the world through sin.

Considered as cause of suffering

Hinduism: karma (resignation to fate)

Buddhism: loss of attachment and of individual identity

Islamism: submission to the will of Allah

Animism: curses, magic, witchcraft, etc.

Humanism: lack of knowledge or stupidity (control through science)

New Age Mysticism: wrong thinking, or imbalance of energy

3

What can we do to relieve suffering?

- As Christians practicing in a pluralistic health care system, we need to heed the Lord: “be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Mt 10:16)

4

From a personal experience:

Instilling hope is the heart of Christian nurse. Technical competence is extremely important, but to those who are suffering and afraid, the absolute fact of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to restore us to relationship with God holds ultimate weight.

That is not an abstract theological concept, but the practical reality that grounds our hope.

(p. 216)

5

- (Rm 8: 35-39) "Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

When we meet very difficult times, we need an anchorage. When things beat on you and sorrows overwhelm you, you need an anchorage. The only anchor that will hold in all this is God's love for you.

6

HE GIVES MORE GRACE

He gives more grace when the burdens grow greater,
 He sends more strength when the labors increase;
 To added affliction He adds His mercy;
 To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
 When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,
 When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
 Our Father's full giving is only begun.

Fear not that thy need shall exceed His provision,
 Our God ever yearns His resources to share;
 Lean hard on the arm everlasting, availing;
 The Father both thee and thy load will upbear.

His love has no limit; His grace has no measure.
 His pow'r has no boundary known unto men;
 For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
 He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again!

Annie Johnson Flint

2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

