

The Problem – and Purpose – of Pain

My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights. Proverbs 3:11,12

Pain comes in all forms: physical ... emotional ... etc. ...

For most people, most of their pain is just the result of living in a fallen world. For **some**, much of their pain is 'self-inflicted' – 'lifestyle pain.'

In ancient times, it was common for people to link pain/loss to their sin. See I Kings 17:17,18 – "... *have you come to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?*" ...

Also John 9:1,2 – "*Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?*"

Cf.: John 9:3 – *Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him."*

God will use disabilities – congenital or acquired – to demonstrate His grace and power.

'Cause and effect': Romans 1:20 – *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.*

'Cause and effect': I Corinthians 11:27-30 – taking Communion in an unworthy manner resulted in weakness, sickness, even death.

Parallel passage to Proverbs 3:11,12: Hebrews 12:5-11 ... *afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

A good question to ask is, "Lord, what are You trying to teach me?"

*Oftentimes you are the most pliable when you are in the fire of God.
Mickey Robinson*

The same pot of boiling water can either harden an egg or soften a carrot. Be the carrot!

The pastor (or anyone!) who is most Christlike is not the one who is most gloriously fulfilled in every moment of his ministry, but the one whose ministry has in it unbelievable elements of crucifixion.

C.S. Lewis