

WEBVTT

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00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:06.310

Ray Hammond: Which is it? Urban campus for Gordon Cop. And we're looking at

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00:00:06.390 --> 00:00:12.210

Ray Hammond: American Christianity and the problem of racism, and really wrestling with some of the

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00:00:12.360 --> 00:00:14.870

Ray Hammond: ways in which

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00:00:15.120 --> 00:00:21.490

Ray Hammond: America's issues around race and ethnicity and indigenous people so on.

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00:00:21.660 --> 00:00:36.940

Ray Hammond: has both bled over into and been deeply influenced by. the Christian church. And how do we recognize that and deal with that in the kind of the that a phenomenal class? But it's meant I've had to miss

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00:00:37.530 --> 00:00:44.790

Ray Hammond: Bible study. So it is so good to be back with you here today. You gotta volunteer to open this up in prayer.

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00:00:56.380 --> 00:00:57.720

Aaron T: I'll pray faster

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00:00:57.920 --> 00:00:58.830

Ray Hammond: where he's got.

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00:00:59.640 --> 00:01:00.400

Aaron T: Okay.

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00:01:01.420 --> 00:01:13.200

Aaron T: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for this time to study our work together, and we pray, Lord, that your spirit but cover our session tonight, and that you will give insight

and revelation.

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00:01:13.240 --> 00:01:17.430

Aaron T: and to what you would have us to know from your word. Thank you for bringing past the ray to us.

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00:01:17.520 --> 00:01:22.200

Aaron T: Thank you for all those who have gathered, and for those who are on their way, and Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

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00:01:22.520 --> 00:01:32.300

Ray Hammond: Hey fantastic. I want to begin by first asking somebody to give me who is here last week, who was listening carefully, maybe even took notes.

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00:01:32.650 --> 00:01:38.900

Ray Hammond: Give me an overview of what you heard, what you learned about the issue of suffering.

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00:01:39.010 --> 00:01:42.630

Ray Hammond: I know it involved in part around

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00:01:42.730 --> 00:01:50.700

Ray Hammond: some of the writing. Howard Thurman, the American theologian black theologian. And is there someone give me kind of an overview?

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00:01:56.430 --> 00:02:13.370

June Handy: Some of the things we talked about was, which ways did you just suffer? And we looked at the Scripture, so figure out, which parts did we believe he suffered? And what is the point of suffering like? Why

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00:02:13.380 --> 00:02:15.070

June Handy: do we go through suffering.

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00:02:15.220 --> 00:02:17.070

Ray Hammond: Okay, fantastic.

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00:02:17.890 --> 00:02:22.090

Ray Hammond: Other points that stood out for other people in terms of last week's study.

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00:02:32.030 --> 00:02:34.920

Marie Doubleday: Correct me if i'm wrong. But

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00:02:35.580 --> 00:02:47.900

Marie Doubleday: I think one of the topics is, I remember, that was brought up was about Jesus helping people as opposed to Jesus, necessarily saying he was God.

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00:02:51.900 --> 00:02:54.730

Marie Doubleday: They didn't like the one of the

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00:02:54.760 --> 00:02:58.500

Marie Doubleday: once again i'm going by memory was the

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00:03:00.140 --> 00:03:01.980

Marie Doubleday: That's it. The blind man

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00:03:02.120 --> 00:03:04.760

Marie Doubleday: I don't know.

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00:03:05.270 --> 00:03:09.210

Marie Doubleday: But yeah. maybe someone could.

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00:03:09.400 --> 00:03:14.050

Ray Hammond: Somebody else remember that that that additional detail around.

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00:03:14.670 --> 00:03:31.660

June Handy: Yeah, we talk about how the Scripture, how it's perceived that the reason he was blind is because he send or his parents send. And we talked about the stigma that goes along with someone having a disability or suffering, and it's because of

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00:03:33.260 --> 00:03:40.690

June Handy: people believe it's because you did something, and God is going to punish you and your family for doing something because you disobeyed God.

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00:03:41.280 --> 00:03:42.790

Ray Hammond: Okay, fantastic.

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00:03:42.990 --> 00:03:43.630

Ray Hammond: All right.

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00:03:45.200 --> 00:03:46.040

Ray Hammond: All right.

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00:03:46.070 --> 00:03:51.280

Ray Hammond: I want to come back to the point that this to June raised the sister

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00:03:51.290 --> 00:03:54.060

Ray Hammond: we touch on a little bit, and that is

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00:03:55.330 --> 00:04:00.420

Ray Hammond: why do we have suffering? And I want to say that that's really 2 questions.

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00:04:00.560 --> 00:04:15.030

Ray Hammond: One question is. Where does suffering come from? Where does natural disaster? Where does sickness, disease. grief, part a heartbreak? All that? Where does that come from

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00:04:15.360 --> 00:04:19.060

Ray Hammond: in a creation? By a good God? That's one question.

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00:04:19.589 --> 00:04:23.030

Ray Hammond: And then there's related question, is.

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00:04:23.530 --> 00:04:26.780

Ray Hammond: Does it serve some purpose? Does Does it?

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00:04:27.080 --> 00:04:32.760

Ray Hammond: Is it just random? Does it? Does it play some role

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00:04:32.770 --> 00:04:45.520

Ray Hammond: in this plan or this creation that Guy has made? So. in a way, one question: Why is there suffering? But it's really 2 questions. Where does it come from? What purpose does it serve?

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00:04:45.930 --> 00:04:49.180

Ray Hammond: And and i'd love to hear. you know.

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00:04:50.350 --> 00:05:03.780

Ray Hammond: Take Take a minute, 30 s. Just kind of reflect on it. and I just want to ask you just to share your sense of it. So is there anybody who wants to get the ball going, and I may just

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00:05:04.020 --> 00:05:13.290

Ray Hammond: ask somebody randomly, ask a few people randomly, Just tell me, what do you think about this thing called suffering. What! How do you make heads or tails?

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00:05:26.860 --> 00:05:30.920

Joyce Marshall: Got a volunteer? So it me Go ahead, Joyce. Thank you.

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00:05:32.550 --> 00:05:36.970

Joyce Marshall: I'm thinking suffering comes because we we live in a broken world.

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00:05:37.120 --> 00:05:42.790

Ray Hammond: Okay. so suffering is a reflection of the brokenness

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00:05:42.970 --> 00:05:45.910

Ray Hammond: of creation. It started out good. But

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00:05:45.970 --> 00:05:51.930

Ray Hammond: so you know. because of sin, because of human choice, because of other things.

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00:05:51.970 --> 00:05:58.400

Ray Hammond: not only people, but the whole creation suffers. Is that a. Is that accurate Joyce?

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00:05:59.960 --> 00:06:01.350

Joyce Marshall: Yes, yes.

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00:06:01.490 --> 00:06:04.540

Ray Hammond: okay. Fantastic. Thanks, Joyce? Anybody else?

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00:06:04.620 --> 00:06:07.520

Ray Hammond: Where does it come from? What purpose does it serve.

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00:06:10.330 --> 00:06:12.290

Ray Hammond: and what does it serve any purpose?

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00:06:16.310 --> 00:06:17.770

Marie Doubleday: I have? A question

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00:06:19.360 --> 00:06:23.710

Marie Doubleday: is being blind, I mean. I'm not. Obviously. I'm not blind, but

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00:06:23.860 --> 00:06:29.600

Marie Doubleday: is being blind really suffering. I mean. as I have said

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00:06:31.060 --> 00:06:34.380

Marie Doubleday: sometimes before, I've got twin cousins.

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00:06:34.600 --> 00:06:39.990

Marie Doubleday: We're about 3 years older than me. They were born 2 or 3 months premature. They were tiny.

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00:06:40.210 --> 00:06:42.740

Marie Doubleday: and they were considered legally blind.

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00:06:43.090 --> 00:06:53.260

Marie Doubleday: They have done really well, and they will raise as much as possible to be normal. Then what comes into my is Stevie Wonder?

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00:06:53.340 --> 00:07:00.820

Marie Doubleday: No, i'm i'm once again i'm not in the skin, but I

don't know. I mean it's just

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00:07:03.410 --> 00:07:05.240

Ray Hammond: anybody have any thoughts about that?

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00:07:10.350 --> 00:07:12.630

Anthony Martin: I don't think I would. People

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00:07:12.940 --> 00:07:14.210

Sharon Whittaker: no go ahead.

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00:07:14.350 --> 00:07:18.670

Anthony Martin: Go ahead that I was gonna say that I think suffering

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00:07:19.060 --> 00:07:24.000

Anthony Martin: in some ways praying People who don't believe close to God.

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00:07:24.130 --> 00:07:27.890

Anthony Martin: They look for that reasoning, and, you know, turn the guy where the

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00:07:28.030 --> 00:07:36.630

Anthony Martin: for relief or questioning. So that's one way to look at it. I guess it may serve the purpose of

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00:07:37.520 --> 00:07:41.760

Ray Hammond: pressing people driving people, drawing people closer to God

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00:07:43.290 --> 00:07:44.230

Anthony Martin: correct?

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00:07:44.700 --> 00:07:49.650

Ray Hammond: And would you agree that for some people it drives them away from God?

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00:07:50.010 --> 00:07:51.630

Sharon Whittaker: Absolutely.

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00:07:52.260 --> 00:07:54.030

Ray Hammond: Yeah, absolutely.

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00:07:54.150 --> 00:08:03.890

Ray Hammond: Yeah. It. Do you think one group for dominate to the other. Is it a even draw? Is it more driven away than those drawn? What do you think?

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00:08:04.480 --> 00:08:14.320

Anthony Martin: I think the people that it drives away, had already believed in God to the extent, and then felt disappointed. I think it may bring more new

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00:08:14.870 --> 00:08:22.450

Anthony Martin: folks to God, you know, wondering about the suffering, and and how to get released from it.

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00:08:22.770 --> 00:08:25.870

Ray Hammond: and let me go back just for a minute to Maurice a question

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00:08:26.120 --> 00:08:35.659

Ray Hammond: which I would have answered very differently 10 years ago. Right, I would have said in a minute. I I can't think of many people who, if they had the opportunity to regain their site

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00:08:35.679 --> 00:08:40.419

Ray Hammond: for their hearing. for their ability to speak. Wouldn't wouldn't do it

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00:08:40.490 --> 00:08:41.260

Marie Doubleday: right.

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00:08:41.280 --> 00:08:46.270

Ray Hammond: What I would say is, I think that's true for many people.

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00:08:48.340 --> 00:08:53.000

Ray Hammond: though i'm not sure it's true for every person, for 2 reasons.

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00:08:53.560 --> 00:08:55.140

Ray Hammond: one of which is

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00:08:55.180 --> 00:08:59.160

Ray Hammond: the stigma of being blind or depth, or

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00:08:59.320 --> 00:09:03.420

Ray Hammond: having difficulty speaking. I mean many of the things it used to be

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00:09:03.950 --> 00:09:11.930

Ray Hammond: that that kind of cuts you off and marginalize you like are much less than they used to be. The stigma of the isolation of marginalization.

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00:09:12.440 --> 00:09:21.260

Ray Hammond: The second thing is that it turns out that people who lose one sense sometimes develop incredible abilities

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00:09:21.490 --> 00:09:24.300

Ray Hammond: in their other senses compensation.

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00:09:24.510 --> 00:09:28.860

Ray Hammond: and I suspect some people might say I wouldn't

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00:09:29.410 --> 00:09:32.030

Ray Hammond: want to give up those

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00:09:32.100 --> 00:09:35.300

Ray Hammond: other senses that I've sort of developed

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00:09:35.810 --> 00:09:39.960

Ray Hammond: for the restoration of the site, but I still think probably most people

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00:09:40.280 --> 00:09:52.450

Ray Hammond: would probably say so so to the extent that I've got to live with something that i'd like to have change. It could be a kind

of suffering, but I suspect, because the world is so different. It's not. This is

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00:09:52.770 --> 00:09:55.290

Ray Hammond: much suffering, as was the case before

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00:09:55.710 --> 00:09:57.150

Ray Hammond: that. That's my sense

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00:09:58.880 --> 00:10:00.630

Ray Hammond: that that answer your question.

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00:10:01.730 --> 00:10:03.000

Marie Doubleday: Can you speak to me?

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00:10:03.040 --> 00:10:03.660

Ray Hammond: Yeah.

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00:10:04.050 --> 00:10:11.840

Marie Doubleday: I mean, I, My guess is going to my cousins. Or even if Stevie Wonder was in the room. If they could have site, they would.

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00:10:11.850 --> 00:10:21.670

Marie Doubleday: but you know, and and my cousins have possible site. They considered legally blind. One's an attorney. They both went to tough. I mean they've done well.

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00:10:23.440 --> 00:10:24.920

Marie Doubleday: but I think

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00:10:25.710 --> 00:10:35.750

Marie Doubleday: they've made They've had a happy a a a happy life, and you know I mean. I can't speak for Steve Rwanda, but

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00:10:37.380 --> 00:10:44.330

Ray Hammond: certainly there no question their degrees of suffering degrees of the sense of loss, no no doubt about that.

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00:10:46.460 --> 00:10:53.390

Ray Hammond: Other questions the other thoughts on this question of where to suffering. What purpose does suffering serve? Sharon?

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00:10:54.340 --> 00:11:05.000

Sharon Whittaker: Yeah, I I would say to Maurice question that it really is a matter of perspective. I mean, I listen to 2 podcasts that that really have

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00:11:05.880 --> 00:11:20.310

Sharon Whittaker: it challenge my thinking about suffering. One is terrible, thanks to asking. The other one is by a Christian woman. I can't recall her name, who, you know, had this sort of ideal life and sort of midlife, or struck with some really great diagnosis.

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00:11:20.530 --> 00:11:23.870

Sharon Whittaker: and she started this podcast to sort of

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00:11:25.020 --> 00:11:31.010

Sharon Whittaker: think about suffering, and how we might answer the questions that you're asking.

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00:11:31.080 --> 00:11:49.490

Marie Doubleday: So I think in terms of what the blind person see a life, a life of blindness, suffering, kind of depends. It almost goes back to the man who had those shoes, you know. Worried. You know what about having your shoes until I don't know what the accident is. But you you know where i'm going with that so? I think that I think that question is a matter of perspective

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00:11:49.490 --> 00:11:55.630

Sharon Whittaker: in terms of purpose, of suffering. I think that suffering is one of the things that bonds humanity

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00:11:55.890 --> 00:12:08.680

Sharon Whittaker: because no one goes without it. As you said, it might be degrees. It might look a different way, and different lights. But I think it's one of the common things that threads humanity.

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00:12:08.910 --> 00:12:13.050

Sharon Whittaker: and the only thing I would say in terms of why, suffering

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00:12:14.680 --> 00:12:38.540

Sharon Whittaker: that that i'm struggling with, I mean because I have people who have in my life who are not Christian, who say in the moment, I think I I express a belief in God, or whatever they say, things like, Where was God during the holocaust? And where was God during? You know the drought, and you know, so I can't respond to those questions, but that's often a response. So I don't know that I have a reason for it.

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00:12:38.540 --> 00:12:42.720

but I do think it's the one thing that binds all humanity

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00:12:43.080 --> 00:12:45.600

Sharon Whittaker: as as a as a sense of purpose.

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00:12:45.890 --> 00:12:47.980

Sharon Whittaker: I think that could be one of them.

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00:12:48.920 --> 00:12:50.370

Ray Hammond: Okay.

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00:12:50.640 --> 00:13:02.360

Beverly Williams: I I I to agree and to pick up with you, and we all go through it. And when I think it was, Marie said, no Joy said, broken this

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00:13:02.660 --> 00:13:10.740

Beverly Williams: broken this of the relationships also. I know when we were looking at Jesus, and then he

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00:13:11.350 --> 00:13:25.750

Beverly Williams: and then he said, You know, here comes the one who betrayed me, and you know we were thinking about the pain when you feel betrayed by someone that that type of suffering.

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00:13:25.870 --> 00:13:31.710

Beverly Williams: But it is broken. This, and not just brokenness of systems, but broken this

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00:13:32.180 --> 00:13:38.640

Beverly Williams: in relationships not just with God, but as she has alluded to humanity.

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00:13:40.100 --> 00:13:42.590

Beverly Williams: and we don't say.

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00:13:44.570 --> 00:13:46.010

Beverly Williams: Why does it rain?

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00:13:46.860 --> 00:13:54.160

Beverly Williams: Why does the sun come out. You know we don't. We don't question that it's like the ying and the yang it's for

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00:13:54.350 --> 00:14:02.600

Beverly Williams: it's probably for balance for us to to be reminded to be

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00:14:02.750 --> 00:14:09.160

Beverly Williams: self-effective, and where we are. but everything in life has an opposite.

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00:14:10.590 --> 00:14:12.360

Beverly Williams: So this joy

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00:14:13.650 --> 00:14:14.900

Beverly Williams: why not suffered

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00:14:17.430 --> 00:14:32.930

Ray Hammond: great point Did you raise? Now let me ask you this just to push that just a little bit further. You're right. We don't ask about rain. We do ask, Why does it rain so much that it floods people's houses, get washed away, folks drown.

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00:14:34.430 --> 00:14:40.100

Ray Hammond: you know my stock or drowning thousands of animals humans being solved

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00:14:42.910 --> 00:14:43.510

Ray Hammond: it.

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00:14:43.830 --> 00:14:46.920

Ray Hammond: Why why are we asking that question, and

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00:14:48.960 --> 00:14:52.350

Ray Hammond: and and what is, what purpose is served by

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00:14:52.840 --> 00:14:59.390

Ray Hammond: floods and fires and earthquakes to kill and tsunami that kill 100,000 people?

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00:15:03.630 --> 00:15:17.860

Beverly Williams: How will. I mean, it sounds kind of crazy, but it's kind of like. How are we going to respond? 2? How are we going to respond to each other.

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00:15:18.350 --> 00:15:20.250

Beverly Williams: You know

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00:15:21.370 --> 00:15:23.080

Beverly Williams: it's about humanity.

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00:15:23.280 --> 00:15:29.470

Beverly Williams: you know. I mean sometimes it's it's, you know, just like in New Orleans. It it was horrible.

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00:15:29.880 --> 00:15:31.610

Beverly Williams: but there was

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00:15:33.040 --> 00:15:38.710

Beverly Williams: like when the Levy's book that could have been prevented. You know it it.

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00:15:40.420 --> 00:15:46.690

Beverly Williams: you know people were ignoring the need to other people infrastructures, I mean. So

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00:15:47.020 --> 00:15:47.980

Beverly Williams: it's

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00:15:49.560 --> 00:15:53.030

Beverly Williams: we don't see all the little pieces that tie into it.

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00:15:53.320 --> 00:16:00.560

Ray Hammond: Okay. can I ask, Can I just put something out there provocative not to done? Is it possible that it has no purpose.

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00:16:00.770 --> 00:16:08.540

Sharon Whittaker: Is it possible that we don't know the mind of God, and not every? Why does the sunrise? Why does the sunset?

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00:16:08.950 --> 00:16:21.000

Sharon Whittaker: Why does it rain? I mean, we understand rain. We need sun when you rain for the for food, etc. But is it possible that it has no, that that there there is no purpose. I think it's a human pursuit to make meaning.

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00:16:21.470 --> 00:16:23.990

Sharon Whittaker: But maybe there's not a place for

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00:16:24.020 --> 00:16:26.250

Sharon Whittaker: meaning in every situation.

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00:16:26.330 --> 00:16:34.000

Ray Hammond: I just need you to be. Help me understand. Are you saying there's not a purpose we can see, or that there's no purpose at all.

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00:16:34.390 --> 00:16:42.420

Sharon Whittaker: There's not a purpose we can see. I mean, you never really know the mind of that. I don't think so.

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00:16:43.860 --> 00:16:53.630

Ray Hammond: And and yeah, no, no, no, no doubt about it. And I guess part of the question is, is there any purpose at all? And if so, what makes you believe

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00:16:53.840 --> 00:17:01.870

Ray Hammond: that all suffering has a purpose, and and i'm not asking you to answer that right? I'm just. I'm just raising this right. Let me tell you how

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00:17:02.210 --> 00:17:07.690

Ray Hammond: crucial this issue I think really is, and why I think it's so important

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00:17:08.170 --> 00:17:15.920

Ray Hammond: for every believer to wrestle with this and keep wrestling with it. We're going to touch on some of this. You'll continue to do it next week as well.

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00:17:16.609 --> 00:17:22.520

Ray Hammond: It's important one, because typically we don't want to think about it. We don't.

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00:17:22.589 --> 00:17:31.170

Ray Hammond: Nobody wants to spend a whole lot of time thinking about the brokenness and the suffering of the world. It's kind of overwhelming and frankly a little depressing right?

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00:17:33.630 --> 00:17:37.450

A. And that's true. Whether you're just talking about what we go through personally.

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00:17:38.100 --> 00:17:41.850

Ray Hammond: And when you start to think about that on a global basis.

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00:17:41.930 --> 00:17:46.350

Ray Hammond: it it really can be overwhelming. It certainly can shift your thinking

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00:17:46.770 --> 00:17:48.140

Ray Hammond: most. The

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00:17:48.620 --> 00:17:51.860

Ray Hammond: There, there's a tell you 3 quick stories.

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00:17:52.200 --> 00:18:01.450

Ray Hammond: It. It turns out that most people think because of things like atomic weapons, and the wars that they hear about, and so on, and

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00:18:01.510 --> 00:18:11.670

Ray Hammond: all the stuff we hear about the abuse and trafficking, and so on, that the world is a much more violent place. There's actually a few people.

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00:18:11.690 --> 00:18:21.790

Ray Hammond: and there's a debate about this who argue that the world has never been more peaceful than it presently is. That's not to say it's a peaceful place. It's simply to say

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00:18:22.340 --> 00:18:24.310

Ray Hammond: that it is more peaceful

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00:18:24.480 --> 00:18:39.650

Ray Hammond: that it's every bit that war abuse conquest all these things where it's common in days going by as they are now. if not more so, they would argue. What's the difference is that you know about.

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00:18:40.080 --> 00:18:46.470

Ray Hammond: I will say almost everything but a lot of things that people in prior times had no idea

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00:18:47.460 --> 00:18:51.010

Ray Hammond: that the consequence of a 24 h news, safe cycle

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00:18:51.130 --> 00:19:05.550

Ray Hammond: that the consequence of being able to get reporting from any place in the world, the consequence of camera, phones and all kinds of other things is that you know more about the suffering in the world. Not that there is more.

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00:19:06.380 --> 00:19:07.080

Sharon Whittaker: Hmm.

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00:19:07.200 --> 00:19:11.260

Ray Hammond: But we feel it right because we get

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00:19:11.530 --> 00:19:20.540

Ray Hammond: input on a daily Basis news, the presence, the reality, the pictures of suffering globally.

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00:19:22.450 --> 00:19:25.720

Ray Hammond: Second story that I want to tell you is about a a

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00:19:26.960 --> 00:19:29.370

Ray Hammond: the wonderful theologian and scholar.

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00:19:29.660 --> 00:19:32.730

Ray Hammond: still very active, but I,

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00:19:32.750 --> 00:19:39.200

Ray Hammond: red number of his papers, loved some of the work that he was doing. who grew up

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00:19:39.240 --> 00:19:53.110

Ray Hammond: and sort of a nominally Christian household, when he got into his teen years, made a confession of Jesus crisis lord of his life, and became actively and deeply involved in the Church, and

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00:19:53.270 --> 00:20:01.320

Ray Hammond: attended to Christian College, and then ended up going to a seminary. There was, maybe a little bit more progressive.

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00:20:01.470 --> 00:20:10.910

Ray Hammond: began studying the Scriptures, and found that, you know. He was challenged around some of the things that he had believed and said.

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00:20:11.230 --> 00:20:16.100

Ray Hammond: He ended up believing the Church that he had made a confessional crisis.

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00:20:16.260 --> 00:20:23.610

Ray Hammond: and and 15 years after that became an agnostic. And he said: the thing that I could never resolve

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00:20:24.540 --> 00:20:31.610

Ray Hammond: is. how do I square a loving God with a suffering.

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00:20:32.990 --> 00:20:39.890

Ray Hammond: I I just I just couldn't make it, and it's not just true for a Phd. Theologian

187

00:20:39.940 --> 00:20:40.590

and

188

00:20:40.660 --> 00:20:49.030

Ray Hammond: New York Times bestseller and all that I can think, and I bet many of us can sing of people we know

189

00:20:50.280 --> 00:20:56.150

Ray Hammond: active in the church, maybe very much so. I got a good friend. I remember deeply.

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00:20:56.230 --> 00:20:59.050

Ray Hammond: Love the Lord deeply involves the trick.

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00:20:59.360 --> 00:21:01.620

Ray Hammond: The death of his mother

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00:21:01.650 --> 00:21:05.700

Ray Hammond: rocked his world, and he never recovered.

193

00:21:05.950 --> 00:21:11.670

Ray Hammond: Spiritually and emotional. He couldn't understand how God

194

00:21:12.210 --> 00:21:17.200

Ray Hammond: to allow his mother not only to die, but to the way that she did

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00:21:17.520 --> 00:21:22.690

Ray Hammond: with so much pain, so much so how could a loving God do that.

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00:21:25.400 --> 00:21:34.150

Ray Hammond: The last thing I want to suggest is understanding and being honest about what we believe in suffering is crucial for us.

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00:21:35.010 --> 00:21:40.170

Ray Hammond: For the same reasons. It was crucial for Job and crucial for saints down through the years.

198

00:21:41.310 --> 00:21:43.880

Ray Hammond: What do you do when you get

199

00:21:44.000 --> 00:21:48.900

Ray Hammond: it in a way that upsets and changes your life. What do you do

200

00:21:49.170 --> 00:21:53.570

Ray Hammond: when a global pandemic completely up ends your world.

201

00:21:54.490 --> 00:21:57.170

Ray Hammond: What do you do when the chronic pain

202

00:21:58.640 --> 00:21:59.250

Ray Hammond: that

203

00:21:59.540 --> 00:22:03.820

Ray Hammond: we can't treat very well. What do you do with a heartbreak?

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00:22:03.970 --> 00:22:07.730

Ray Hammond: It's incredibly hard to heal, and you have to ask yourself.

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00:22:08.140 --> 00:22:10.360

Ray Hammond: I don't know where it is gotten all this

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00:22:11.590 --> 00:22:14.480

Ray Hammond: So so thinking through

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00:22:14.870 --> 00:22:21.130

Ray Hammond: and wrestling through this issue of suffering, I, I think, is one of the keys

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00:22:21.760 --> 00:22:22.810

Ray Hammond: to

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00:22:23.870 --> 00:22:26.440

Ray Hammond: both a healthier spiritual life

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00:22:27.270 --> 00:22:32.320

Ray Hammond: and a healthier ability to help others, and we'll we'll touch on that very, very quickly.

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00:22:32.440 --> 00:22:40.650

Ray Hammond: Let me tell you that all the things that all that you've been saying here along they're They're wonderful. They're honest.

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00:22:40.910 --> 00:22:44.670

Ray Hammond: They have the same kinds of insights that people have been

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00:22:44.890 --> 00:22:49.290

wrestling with, literally from the start of the church. You see it in the pages of the New Testament.

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00:22:49.490 --> 00:22:57.600

Ray Hammond: There are books written about there's a whole area of religious studies on this, and anyone know the name of it if you heard it this before

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00:22:57.960 --> 00:23:01.950

Ray Hammond: the term. See Odyssey. Anybody familiar with that?

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00:23:02.090 --> 00:23:03.830

It literally means

217

00:23:04.250 --> 00:23:07.570

Ray Hammond: righteousness or righteous god.

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00:23:08.400 --> 00:23:21.830

Ray Hammond: and it's it's a defense of the righteousness and the goodness of God in the face of evil and suffering. How does a righteous and loving God allow a hitler?

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00:23:22.540 --> 00:23:26.830

Ray Hammond: How does a righteous and a loving God allow an idi, a me.

220

00:23:27.160 --> 00:23:42.730

Ray Hammond: or Charles Taylor in West Africa, or a Joseph Stalin right? Or you name it right? How or how does a a, a loving God? Does this say? Allow 100,000 people to get like that?

221

00:23:43.990 --> 00:23:44.730

Ray Hammond: So

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00:23:44.860 --> 00:23:56.120

Ray Hammond: these are the the issues people have been wrestling with, and let me just give you a little list of some of the ways that people have responded, and then let's talk about

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00:23:56.170 --> 00:23:58.100

for ourselves.

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00:23:58.280 --> 00:24:07.410

Ray Hammond: How do we come to a place where we both? Not that I think we ever have an answer All answer.

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00:24:08.100 --> 00:24:12.360

Ray Hammond: but we have a clearest sense of how we see suffering.

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00:24:12.410 --> 00:24:16.720

Ray Hammond: because that will affect how we can also minister to other people.

227

00:24:17.750 --> 00:24:28.240

Ray Hammond: Pastor Hammond, Before you read the list, Brother Aaron had his hand up. I'm so sorry, my brother. They are. Go ahead. No, that you can go past it. I'll go after you. Finish.

228

00:24:28.570 --> 00:24:29.970

Aaron T: Okay, that that's

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00:24:30.260 --> 00:24:35.770

Ray Hammond: Here's one approach that often people say God allows evil events

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00:24:35.800 --> 00:24:38.620

Ray Hammond: in order to bring a greater good.

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00:24:40.170 --> 00:24:51.830

Ray Hammond: All right. Sometimes they don't specify exactly what that is. Some would say that that that greater good we can't see it now, but it may be 5 years, 10 years, 100 years from now.

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00:24:53.190 --> 00:25:01.460

Ray Hammond: That's not unlike. I think the point is to share, and is that there's something being worked together for good that we simply can't see

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00:25:01.490 --> 00:25:02.060

Ray Hammond: right.

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00:25:02.230 --> 00:25:09.320

Ray Hammond: God allows evil in order to challenge us the spiritual growth and maturity

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00:25:10.880 --> 00:25:16.530

Ray Hammond: that that suffering is kind of like exercise, spiritual exercise.

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00:25:17.150 --> 00:25:26.770

Ray Hammond: Right? That in the same way you gotta suffer a bit if you're going to physically get stronger, you gotta have sort. This

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00:25:26.920 --> 00:25:32.680

Ray Hammond: got a muscle p you may have to have. You may have polls, you may have. you know.

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00:25:33.980 --> 00:25:36.120

Ray Hammond: you know all kinds of

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00:25:36.780 --> 00:25:43.840

Ray Hammond: ligamentous injuries or soreness at the least. And maybe

there's a sandries that require treatment at the worst.

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00:25:43.900 --> 00:25:54.860

Ray Hammond: But it's all part of the spiritual growth and maturity. Process number 3 that may allow tragedy. but he rewards us

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00:25:55.300 --> 00:25:58.710

Ray Hammond: in exchange for that with greater blessings in heaven.

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00:25:59.180 --> 00:26:05.380

Ray Hammond: Now some people would call that the after a while, by and by version, or the in the sky version right

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00:26:06.690 --> 00:26:12.610

Ray Hammond: here's the the fourth one. God is in control of what happens, and God's ways

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00:26:12.890 --> 00:26:17.410

Ray Hammond: are inscrutable. We can't fully know them, and fully understand.

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00:26:19.030 --> 00:26:21.840

Ray Hammond: And lastly.

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00:26:21.930 --> 00:26:28.880

Ray Hammond: God punishes the wicked through suffering and disasters, and so on.

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00:26:30.560 --> 00:26:42.040

Ray Hammond: Now i'm listing all these, because again, these are quick summaries of a number of viewpoints that have rain, and we could find Biblical examples of all of those. I think you've looked at. Some of you talked about the mask of the blind man.

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00:26:42.530 --> 00:26:45.070

Ray Hammond: and in that case Jesus

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00:26:45.300 --> 00:26:52.880

Ray Hammond: rejects the diagnosis of the disciples and other standing around the either the man or his parents must have sin.

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00:26:53.470 --> 00:26:54.090

Alright.

251

00:26:54.120 --> 00:26:56.860

Ray Hammond: He says you that both of those are Wall.

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00:26:57.570 --> 00:27:00.450

Ray Hammond: right. There's something else going on here

253

00:27:00.880 --> 00:27:03.090

Ray Hammond: for the Kingdom of God. Right?

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00:27:04.700 --> 00:27:10.280

Ray Hammond: Why why do people want to connect suffering to

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00:27:10.520 --> 00:27:17.280

Ray Hammond: the sin of the person who's suffering, or maybe their parents, or whatever. Why, why do we do that? Why do you think we do that?

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00:27:17.840 --> 00:27:21.080

Beverly Williams: Well, Pastor God has given us free will.

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00:27:21.170 --> 00:27:28.920

Beverly Williams: and and I hopefully. We make some bad choices, and good and bad choices. There are

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00:27:29.210 --> 00:27:34.340

Beverly Williams: collateral, especially with bad choices, collateral damage.

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00:27:34.380 --> 00:27:38.810

And so, if God allows us free, will

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00:27:39.310 --> 00:27:41.560

Beverly Williams: it? Then you can't avoid some suffering.

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00:27:42.010 --> 00:27:49.060

Ray Hammond: Okay, and and let me throw this out again. My part? The question I was asking was. It's one thing to say.

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00:27:49.110 --> 00:27:51.680

Ray Hammond: bad choices can lead to suffering.

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00:27:53.960 --> 00:28:02.060

Ray Hammond: Why do we sometimes assume that whenever we see suffering, it has something to do with the bad choices of the person suffering

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00:28:02.590 --> 00:28:06.770

Beverly Williams: because a lot of times that the bad choice is a sin.

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00:28:07.020 --> 00:28:11.070

Ray Hammond: No, no, i'm not disagreeing with you. I'm. I'm asking the question

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00:28:12.310 --> 00:28:19.920

Ray Hammond: going back to that example. Why would people say, If this guy is blind, it must be his sin or his parents sense?

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00:28:22.320 --> 00:28:33.490

Judi Cadore: I think it's because people want a sense of control. If if I could figure out why this happened to this person, then I have a false sense that maybe I can avoid it by something I can do.

268

00:28:33.690 --> 00:28:36.690

Ray Hammond: Okay. So we're all in agreement.

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00:28:38.570 --> 00:28:40.540

Natalie Rice: Can I

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00:28:40.740 --> 00:28:48.100

Ray Hammond: can lead to suffering? No question about it, right? But not all. Suffering is a consequence of bad choices. Is that fair to say

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00:28:49.570 --> 00:28:50.520

Aaron T: Yes.

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00:28:51.940 --> 00:28:54.760

Raynya Simmons: Yeah, I think

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00:28:54.820 --> 00:28:55.820

Raynya Simmons: I'm sorry.

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00:28:56.930 --> 00:29:07.630

Natalie Rice: Let me just ask this to Natalie. She was just about to say something, and then let's bring others in as well. Yeah, I was gonna say that, you know. Sometimes, you know, when bad things happen, we look for

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00:29:07.690 --> 00:29:21.300

Natalie Rice: a reason or look for somebody to blame, or you know justification. It's not necessarily. You know, that the person did the bad thing. Sometimes it's just you know what happened. It's just something just happened, and you know

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00:29:21.300 --> 00:29:28.520

Natalie Rice: that's it. But I think that you know we, as human people, look for justification, or you know some reason or to cast blame.

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00:29:29.190 --> 00:29:30.780

Ray Hammond: Okay. all right.

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00:29:32.420 --> 00:29:54.420

Raynya Simmons: Other people were responding as well. I'm sorry. Go ahead. And you know, over the years when I was younger. I used to think that way, but I don't think that way at all now, because I have too many examples of people who've never had a drink in their life. Never smoke, run marathons, and die from cancer at 50,

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00:29:54.420 --> 00:30:11.580

Raynya Simmons: and then I know people who drink all the time and smoke. May I want and never work on. They live to a 104, and I know a lot of people that have had both cases. So I just have to trust God. And when I went to the funeral and my girlfriend Carol, I forget the Scripture, but the Scripture was saying, You know

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00:30:11.580 --> 00:30:29.020

Raynya Simmons: God tells you when you're born, and when you're gonna die, and and we can't sit there and be the judges only one judge. But when I was younger I should think that we cause things in our lives, I mean we could suffer more by our choices. But I don't think it's for me to decide why something happened to someone and not another person.

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00:30:29.260 --> 00:30:31.420

Ray Hammond: Okay. the point?

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00:30:33.670 --> 00:30:46.820

Hannah Brooks: Yes, I just wanted to say something real quick, I think, in order for certain things to be true in Christianity you have to open your mind up to other religious thought like to me

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00:30:46.950 --> 00:30:55.500

Hannah Brooks: like a certain things are true in Christianity. You really need to like. Certain things are true in other religions. I don't know if i'm making sense.

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00:30:55.820 --> 00:31:05.450

Hannah Brooks: but we have an example of that. like, for instance, like reincarnation, right

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00:31:08.300 --> 00:31:19.390

Hannah Brooks: like what I don't know. Like I said, reincarnation I my my understanding was people back in the Bible days. They used to believe in reincarnation, because remember when I think it was

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00:31:19.470 --> 00:31:24.660

Hannah Brooks: He, Jesus acts. Who am I? Who it is Jesus?

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00:31:25.010 --> 00:31:31.270

Hannah Brooks: And Peter said, oh, he might be a to come back, or you know they were saying things like that.

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00:31:31.430 --> 00:31:33.960

Hannah Brooks: So

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00:31:34.220 --> 00:31:42.540

Hannah Brooks: like I'm saying, in order for certain things to be true, increase Christianity, you have to open your mind up to other religious for our idea.

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00:31:42.670 --> 00:31:51.040

Ray Hammond: Well, you is a great point there, because I think people often misunderstand that verse when they talk about Elijah coming back.

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00:31:51.630 --> 00:31:58.350

Ray Hammond: and and you're right. They do end up reading reincarnation for the Old Testament, and but, in fact, actually

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00:31:58.580 --> 00:32:10.760

Ray Hammond: the prevailing view was the one that you see, both in New and Old Testament. You have once to die. And then there's the judgment. That particular reference is actually to the fact

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00:32:11.070 --> 00:32:23.760

Ray Hammond: that in Malachi It says that before the final day of the Lord Elijah would come back to turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers and the fathers to the children.

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00:32:23.990 --> 00:32:33.880

Ray Hammond: So in that instance they're kind of connecting Jesus to that prophecy of Malachi. That's what they when they talk about Elijah coming back.

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00:32:34.760 --> 00:32:36.910

Hannah Brooks: So okay?

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00:32:37.160 --> 00:32:41.300

Ray Hammond: No? Well, that I mean you raised. I I've heard people share that before, and

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00:32:41.370 --> 00:32:45.790

Ray Hammond: and, as I say, I think it's I I understand it sounds that way.

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00:32:46.120 --> 00:32:50.970

Ray Hammond: But I, in fact, I think it's really the connection and a

reference back to now.

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00:32:51.060 --> 00:32:53.580

Hannah Brooks: Oh, okay, I I see what you're saying.

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00:32:53.640 --> 00:33:05.560

Ray Hammond: No, no problem. I mean, let me let me say a couple of things here, and I i'm sorry there were other people. Go ahead, finish If if anyone else was offering some thoughts, and I don't want to interrupt you.

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00:33:08.510 --> 00:33:15.690

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I I've been listening to to the discussion and agree with many of the the points

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00:33:16.270 --> 00:33:25.330

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I've just come to the point, having had a real tragedies in my life to take place. Yet it did not erase my faith

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00:33:25.630 --> 00:33:33.540

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: that I have. I. I came to the point where I realized and recognized there were some things I just couldn't control.

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00:33:33.880 --> 00:33:39.810

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I had no control over. and regardless of how good, better and different things

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00:33:39.970 --> 00:33:46.310

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: were, or things seem to be, that there were just some

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00:33:47.720 --> 00:33:52.360

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: forces, and there were just circumstances that were beyond my control.

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00:33:52.680 --> 00:34:03.450

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and I had to trust and believe truly believe that in the long run things were going to work out and just

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00:34:03.670 --> 00:34:07.500

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: i'm using myself as an example into some of the

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00:34:07.630 --> 00:34:15.090

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: the really scary stuff I've had to go through. Just sheer belief and prayer.

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00:34:15.120 --> 00:34:19.270

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: were the answers to move me through, and

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00:34:19.460 --> 00:34:36.030

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: you can. You can look at things as rationally as possible, and explain things as as rationally as possible. And there there's some incidences and stories and historical facts where there is no rationale for how things have happened, because

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00:34:36.130 --> 00:34:37.540

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: as a human.

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00:34:38.670 --> 00:34:40.310

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I am only

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00:34:40.330 --> 00:34:45.070

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: i'm limited in terms of how much I can really see

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00:34:45.190 --> 00:35:03.280

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: from not only a world, not only from a country perspective, from but from a world perspective. So i'm not giving the example Where? Oh, it you know it's just it's in God's hands. We just have to put things in God's hands. I i'm not i'm not resigning myself to that.

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00:35:03.520 --> 00:35:10.350

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: But i'm saying that because I am human, and there's some things I I just can't control.

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00:35:10.600 --> 00:35:14.220

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I have to hang on to my faith

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00:35:14.390 --> 00:35:19.170

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and belief to to see me through and see my life through.

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00:35:20.040 --> 00:35:25.720

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: because otherwise you go crazy. You'd say this person lived, and this person died.

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00:35:26.110 --> 00:35:32.760

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and similar circumstances. and and there is no explanation as to why

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00:35:33.490 --> 00:35:41.240

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: my 17 year old son died, and other people can hit a tree, hit a wall or whatever, and they live. I know it. Yeah.

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00:35:41.790 --> 00:35:59.510

Beverly Williams: yeah, that that I I say that all the time, too, based on my family, that but this is a whole another. But we're looking at this as suffering as something that is spiritual, which I believe that you know. That's a part of it.

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00:36:00.180 --> 00:36:05.860

Beverly Williams: Is there any part of this that may be physiological.

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00:36:07.540 --> 00:36:11.710

Beverly Williams: you know, like there may be some triggers that

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00:36:12.230 --> 00:36:15.380

Beverly Williams: that triggers some type of

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00:36:15.660 --> 00:36:31.730

Beverly Williams: by and logical reactions in your body and our bodies different things. Why do some people get cancer? Why, some people don't get cancer, and it's a it's, it may be in my mental may just be a physical makeup. Depression is is.

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00:36:33.160 --> 00:36:39.080

Beverly Williams: I I believe, that this is this is to be true. You could tell me, doctor, but

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00:36:39.450 --> 00:36:48.130

Beverly Williams: you know this certain chemicals in our body that jump off that causes

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00:36:48.280 --> 00:36:59.200

Beverly Williams: people like women who postpartum depression and things like that, and it's not always just postpartum, but it's part of this just

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00:36:59.660 --> 00:37:02.040

Beverly Williams: you know. physical.

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00:37:02.840 --> 00:37:10.110

Ray Hammond: Just a bit of you. We could spend the whole conversation with that right, because because part of the what

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00:37:11.310 --> 00:37:17.550

Ray Hammond: this cuts back to what Sister Sharon was suggesting a little bit before, that some of this is inscrutable, or

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00:37:17.670 --> 00:37:23.380

Ray Hammond: the old song will understand it better by and by. For longest time we all we wondered

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00:37:24.060 --> 00:37:26.840

Ray Hammond: Why is this something called sickle cell disease.

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00:37:29.030 --> 00:37:36.890

Ray Hammond: It turns out that where it arose in West Africa it actually conferred some benefits.

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00:37:37.540 --> 00:37:44.940

Ray Hammond: at least, that it seems to be the thinking right now, based on the search of people that that that

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00:37:45.390 --> 00:37:52.890

Ray Hammond: blood cell that had the sickle cell trade could better resist malaria.

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00:37:53.190 --> 00:37:53.910

Beverly Williams: Hmm.

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00:37:55.130 --> 00:37:56.530

Ray Hammond: The problem is

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00:37:56.590 --> 00:37:58.870

Ray Hammond: 2 Jeans

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00:37:59.300 --> 00:38:01.200

Ray Hammond: made you more

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00:38:01.760 --> 00:38:02.390

that.

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00:38:02.560 --> 00:38:13.530

Ray Hammond: or for other kinds of problems. So this gets back again to the whole situation that we it took us a long time to figure out that perhaps

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00:38:14.830 --> 00:38:17.550

Ray Hammond: the trade was a blessing

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00:38:18.580 --> 00:38:22.850

Ray Hammond: the double trait the this would lead to the Z.

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00:38:23.180 --> 00:38:23.930

Beverly Williams: Alright.

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00:38:24.970 --> 00:38:30.940

Ray Hammond: So you're you're raising a very good point, although then, of course, the question becomes

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00:38:31.430 --> 00:38:32.970

Ray Hammond: for some people.

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00:38:34.110 --> 00:38:37.040

Ray Hammond: How does it? Why does the loving got set it up that way?

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00:38:38.000 --> 00:38:47.010

Ray Hammond: Well, why is it that some people have the ability to resist and press through, and others for physiologic reasons. Don't. Why why do we have that

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00:38:47.130 --> 00:38:52.040

Ray Hammond: kind of difference? What feels like inequity in the world.

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00:38:52.110 --> 00:38:54.560

Ray Hammond: Why, why did God make us that way? So

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00:38:54.580 --> 00:39:07.700

Ray Hammond: So you You're raising a great point, and I going back to the point of things just to share me. We are given the point where we better understand some of these things that maybe didn't make sense at 1 point. By no means do we understand them all?

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00:39:10.210 --> 00:39:17.180

Ray Hammond: But but you're You're absolutely right. Some of the things that we thought were curses and factor connected to things as a blessing.

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00:39:17.430 --> 00:39:37.310

Beverly Williams: and some people went and look at it as inequity, like everybody suffers, and, like my son always says, you're gonna die from something. So if I die from doing what i'm doing. You know everybody is born to die, and so when you look at it as an equity, you know it, it it.

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00:39:39.380 --> 00:39:41.910

Beverly Williams: We we all suffered Jesus of it.

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00:39:42.150 --> 00:39:47.730

Ray Hammond: Jesus died What! You're raising a point, and and I as

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00:39:48.210 --> 00:39:51.640

Ray Hammond: as as we press through this, I want to

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00:39:51.900 --> 00:39:58.310

Ray Hammond: build on that and connect it also. What just to Carol said, is there anyone else who wanted to

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00:39:58.360 --> 00:40:01.760

Ray Hammond: share anything else before we go

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00:40:03.180 --> 00:40:14.700

Marcelle Thompson: for me? When you're you're talking about suffering. I'm, you know, all the time. I would say God, if

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00:40:14.990 --> 00:40:30.400

Marcelle Thompson: there, wasn't any suffering, would we have anything if everything was good like all the time for us. Would we have something to trust God about? We have anything to lean on him about? If he just made everything wonderful for us all the time.

363

00:40:30.940 --> 00:40:40.020

Marcelle Thompson: So for me, I'm like when I I look at things in life, i'm like, I think, that's when i'm like, okay, this is why you made suffering to come into place

364

00:40:40.200 --> 00:40:52.780

Marcelle Thompson: so that we can have you to lean on. And for you to depend upon that, no matter what you're gonna see us through our circumstances. What we're going through at the time, like

365

00:40:52.980 --> 00:40:57.430

Marcelle Thompson: when I was growing up like I had this condition on my skin.

366

00:40:57.520 --> 00:41:11.960

Marcelle Thompson: where, you know I had sores like Joe all over my legs and on my arms, and I I just remember being back home in my country, and everyone will pass by me and say, oh, look at the kids, and they wouldn't say so. They were like.

367

00:41:12.320 --> 00:41:15.450

Marcelle Thompson: or she have like in my

368

00:41:15.490 --> 00:41:20.740

Marcelle Thompson: my country, they would say, fossil all over your skin, but it was really soared.

369

00:41:20.790 --> 00:41:29.070

Marcelle Thompson: and then the flies will come down, and they were like. you know. I would just sit there all day long like hitting the flies, hitting the flies away from my skin.

370

00:41:29.430 --> 00:41:33.540

Beverly Williams: But like through it all, as I do older, I just.

371

00:41:33.680 --> 00:41:43.540

Marcelle Thompson: you know, through my faith and just watching God, and how he just made things and transform me. that the source healed over time.

372

00:41:43.580 --> 00:41:50.520

Marcelle Thompson: the sores went away, and not only that, even though my skin is scarred. you know, and people would say, Well, you have like

373

00:41:50.560 --> 00:42:00.770

Marcelle Thompson: these white marks on your skin, or they asked questions. You know. What would you change? And I'm like? Why would I change anything about myself? This is how God made me, and

374

00:42:00.780 --> 00:42:11.730

Marcelle Thompson: you know i'm just gonna go back. I don't want to bleach my skin. I don't want to wipe my skin. I just just let it be. If he didn't intend for it to be this way. He wouldn't have made me this way.

375

00:42:12.060 --> 00:42:31.410

Ray Hammond: So so suffering became a a place in a real sense where you learned to trust God, yes, to to heal the and to get past what people said Yes, right, and how people treated you. It became a real growing place spiritually.

376

00:42:31.410 --> 00:42:32.320

Marcelle Thompson: Yes.

377

00:42:32.370 --> 00:42:35.410

Ray Hammond: okay. let me throw out this one.

378

00:42:35.740 --> 00:42:40.080

Ray Hammond: We i'm sorry. Was this someone else? I don't want to leave anybody else out, was there?

379

00:42:40.090 --> 00:42:44.020

Aaron T: I I just wanted to speak. Say something briefly past. If that's all right.

380

00:42:44.070 --> 00:42:44.860

Aaron T: Okay.

381

00:42:46.420 --> 00:42:57.770

Aaron T: I just want to fill it off. Of Sister Marcel's point about the the a purpose for suffering. I think you know what she just mentioned, I think, is important, because it

382

00:42:57.910 --> 00:42:59.600

Aaron T: it speaks to

383

00:43:00.140 --> 00:43:06.240

Aaron T: a purpose that isn't always brought to the conversation. We talk about a loving God

384

00:43:06.420 --> 00:43:08.070

Aaron T: in a world full of suffering.

385

00:43:08.250 --> 00:43:11.100

Aaron T: If we look at the situation in the Garden

386

00:43:11.290 --> 00:43:13.560

Aaron T: of of Eden prior to the fall.

387

00:43:13.900 --> 00:43:17.940

Aaron T: we saw, we see Adam and Eve walking with God.

388

00:43:18.010 --> 00:43:20.250

Aaron T: having communion with God.

389

00:43:20.320 --> 00:43:29.800

Aaron T: not having any of the issues of suffering that that come with sin, that come with evil that come with all of the things that we struggle with.

390

00:43:29.990 --> 00:43:39.520

Aaron T: And yet, in spite of all of that, despite of walking with God, not having any of the struggles that we have. they still chose something else over God.

391

00:43:39.620 --> 00:43:42.020

Aaron T: They still had a preference

392

00:43:42.030 --> 00:43:44.370

Aaron T: for wanting to be like dog

393

00:43:44.540 --> 00:43:52.990

Aaron T: over God. They walk with God and get for them that wasn't enough. They didn't have any suffering, and yet that wasn't enough eden

394

00:43:53.160 --> 00:44:00.280

Aaron T: wasn't enough for them perfection wasn't enough for them, they still preferred something else. And so they.

395

00:44:00.290 --> 00:44:07.320

Aaron T: when the serpent tempted them. they fell because there was something in them that wanted something apart from God.

396

00:44:07.550 --> 00:44:14.440

Aaron T: And so I think, when we think of suffering, and what Sister Marcel raised. raised just now

397

00:44:15.230 --> 00:44:28.470

Aaron T: when we are put in a position where we are powerless, or we have, we do we don't have an answer, or we don't have a solution. It requires us to get into a posture of humility, a posture of faith.

398

00:44:28.550 --> 00:44:31.480

Aaron T: and to push through to

399

00:44:31.590 --> 00:44:42.800

Aaron T: prefer God over other things that we might not have done. If there wasn't a challenge to us through sin, or evil or suffering. I mean that I mean, I think that's

400

00:44:42.910 --> 00:44:48.090

Aaron T: that's clearly seen throughout throughout Scripture, and I think, in our own lives.

401

00:44:48.100 --> 00:44:57.100

Aaron T: You know, when we, if we are people of faith, you know suffering and evil, it does require us to at least pray to God. If we were praying before.

402

00:44:57.130 --> 00:44:59.070

Aaron T: it requires us to ask God

403

00:44:59.220 --> 00:45:06.760

Aaron T: in in any kind of sense. You know. What shall we do in the situation? It brings us into a place where we need him.

404

00:45:07.030 --> 00:45:10.180

Aaron T: and I think outside of that we wouldn't

405

00:45:10.600 --> 00:45:13.990

Aaron T: feel like we did need him, because we would feel that we were sufficient.

406

00:45:14.200 --> 00:45:22.380

Aaron T: And I think for God. That's the number. One issue is seeing Him as being our our all sufficiency, and not ourselves.

407

00:45:23.080 --> 00:45:23.890

Ray Hammond: All right.

408

00:45:24.160 --> 00:45:33.980

Ray Hammond: Thanks for sharing, for there let me let me throw out just a couple of things for us to think about. And again i'm building on all of the points that you raised here. Let me throw out one.

409

00:45:35.010 --> 00:45:41.690

Ray Hammond: We rarely understand the purpose of suffering in the beginning.

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00:45:43.330 --> 00:45:45.210

Ray Hammond: We understand it

411

00:45:45.290 --> 00:45:47.410

Ray Hammond: with hindsight

412

00:45:48.480 --> 00:45:50.090

Ray Hammond: looking back.

413

00:45:50.260 --> 00:45:52.620

Ray Hammond: watching it on full.

414

00:45:54.510 --> 00:46:00.560

Ray Hammond: So be very careful about making judgments about what God is doing here.

415

00:46:02.110 --> 00:46:03.850

Ray Hammond: You need time.

416

00:46:04.250 --> 00:46:11.780

Ray Hammond: You need spiritual insight. You need really grace to understand what some of the things

417

00:46:12.300 --> 00:46:18.700

Ray Hammond: and humility says: Even after some of these things unfold, I'm only seeing

418

00:46:18.760 --> 00:46:19.930

Ray Hammond: part of the picture.

419

00:46:21.520 --> 00:46:22.510

Ray Hammond: So

420

00:46:23.100 --> 00:46:30.890

Ray Hammond: the problem for the people who made the judgment about the blind man is that they're looking at a man who for the most part they don't know

421

00:46:31.740 --> 00:46:35.850

Ray Hammond: right. and making a judgment about what God is doing

422

00:46:35.880 --> 00:46:43.890

Ray Hammond: doing with insufficient facts. Insufficient time, insufficient discernment.

423

00:46:45.870 --> 00:46:53.520

Ray Hammond: Suffering is related to all the things that we've talked about. Suffering can be a consequence of the choices that we make

424

00:46:54.530 --> 00:47:01.310

Ray Hammond: suffering can be a way of bringing us to deeper spiritual maturity.

425

00:47:01.440 --> 00:47:06.730

Ray Hammond: Suffering can be a part of God bringing out some greater good that

426

00:47:06.810 --> 00:47:14.850

Ray Hammond: we can't completely fathom in the moment. Maybe not for years, decades, or even centuries. It can be all of these things.

427

00:47:15.380 --> 00:47:16.120

Ray Hammond: but

428

00:47:17.760 --> 00:47:27.410

Ray Hammond: I I can think of very few places in spaces, biblically or otherwise. where we know exactly what God is doing

429

00:47:27.620 --> 00:47:28.910

Ray Hammond: When we start out

430

00:47:30.140 --> 00:47:32.330

Ray Hammond: it's as we pass through it.

431

00:47:33.620 --> 00:47:36.210

Ray Hammond: and we then begin to look back on it

432

00:47:36.750 --> 00:47:40.340

Ray Hammond: that we get understanding of what God's doing.

433

00:47:41.890 --> 00:47:47.470

Ray Hammond: It's the first point that i'd like to make. The second thing I would say is that

434

00:47:48.480 --> 00:47:53.410

Ray Hammond: the different conversations that we've made there witness to the fact

435

00:47:53.830 --> 00:47:54.590

Ray Hammond: that

436

00:47:55.080 --> 00:47:57.100

Ray Hammond: the answers are difficult.

437

00:47:57.220 --> 00:48:09.890

Ray Hammond: and what I say to people is, if anybody can tell you exactly what the purpose of this suffering is. and exactly what God is doing. Run, Don't, walk in the other direction, because they're lying to you

438

00:48:11.180 --> 00:48:13.830

Ray Hammond: all right. So

439

00:48:14.980 --> 00:48:17.590

I want to focus, not on

440

00:48:17.830 --> 00:48:19.370

Ray Hammond: at least

441

00:48:20.730 --> 00:48:24.260

Ray Hammond: the beginning the things that I don't know.

442

00:48:24.380 --> 00:48:34.850

Ray Hammond: I really do want to hold on to the things that I do know. And there are some things that God says. The Gods Word says that our experience with God

443

00:48:34.950 --> 00:48:36.210

Ray Hammond: points to

444

00:48:37.360 --> 00:48:40.950

that are really crucial in the face of suffering.

445

00:48:40.970 --> 00:48:50.720

Ray Hammond: One of the first things, I think, that it's really critical for us to remind ourselves, is, we are going through the some of the same things

446

00:48:50.850 --> 00:48:56.650

Ray Hammond: to which God was willing to subject himself in Christ.

447

00:48:59.400 --> 00:49:04.040

Ray Hammond: Right. I mean, this is why the Incarnation, the notion.

448

00:49:04.110 --> 00:49:05.890

Ray Hammond: as Philipians puts it.

449

00:49:06.200 --> 00:49:23.540

Ray Hammond: What chapter of God emptying himself and coming down into human experience when he was where it talks about the reason that he can be our Redeemer and our Savior is because he has been tested. It uses the word tempted, but it means tested, tried

450

00:49:23.540 --> 00:49:26.920

Ray Hammond: in every way, just as we have been.

451

00:49:28.460 --> 00:49:29.890

Ray Hammond: alright, so

452

00:49:30.930 --> 00:49:36.220

Ray Hammond: that notion of serving a God who understands suffering

453

00:49:37.560 --> 00:49:43.100

Ray Hammond: a God who has been through the experience of is

454

00:49:43.170 --> 00:49:45.330

Ray Hammond: really critical

455

00:49:46.080 --> 00:49:47.960

Ray Hammond: from the

456

00:49:48.790 --> 00:49:57.450

in fact, we, the script just say very clearly: Well. the only way to be made into the image of this Christ

457

00:49:57.580 --> 00:50:03.470

Ray Hammond: is to also be willing to suffer, as this price is

458

00:50:04.770 --> 00:50:07.820

Ray Hammond: now that doesn't that doesn't get that doesn't raise offering

459

00:50:08.890 --> 00:50:15.320

Ray Hammond: right? That will get you a TV ministry or a private jet. That's the truth.

460

00:50:16.990 --> 00:50:30.770

Ray Hammond: And i'm not saying that this isn't about, you know, whipping ourselves, or you know, beating ourselves, or making ourselves suffer. He says, the nature of following this God

461

00:50:30.960 --> 00:50:35.360

Ray Hammond: is that in the same way that this God walked through life.

462

00:50:35.370 --> 00:50:41.540

Ray Hammond: and part of that journey included suffering. If you're going to follow this God in this Christ

463

00:50:41.610 --> 00:50:43.300

Ray Hammond: suffering comes along.

464

00:50:46.480 --> 00:50:47.260

Ray Hammond: Now

465

00:50:47.360 --> 00:50:54.820

Ray Hammond: it also makes some other points that are really critical. Right? It says that this guy in Christ.

466

00:50:57.330 --> 00:51:14.200

Ray Hammond: in in this broken world is a number of you've talked about in this central world, where the sins of others affect us. Our own sins affect us, the sin that is broken. Our creation affects us right. All of those things are having an impact on it.

467

00:51:14.500 --> 00:51:16.570

Ray Hammond: We know

468

00:51:19.180 --> 00:51:30.000

Ray Hammond: that though we don't understand what we're going through, we are going through it with a loving god. Scott says, i'll never leave you.

469

00:51:30.870 --> 00:51:39.410

Ray Hammond: I'll never forsake you. I'm telling you upfront in this life you will have trials and fibulations, the book of John Gospel of John.

470

00:51:39.470 --> 00:51:42.480

Ray Hammond: But be a good chair because I have overcome the world

471

00:51:42.590 --> 00:51:44.440

Ray Hammond: and multiple times.

472

00:51:44.640 --> 00:51:47.110

Ray Hammond: I won't leave you. I won't forsake you

473

00:51:49.220 --> 00:51:51.880

Ray Hammond: right. So this got

474

00:51:52.920 --> 00:51:54.200

Ray Hammond: commit

475

00:51:54.400 --> 00:51:58.350

Ray Hammond: himself to be the one who will be with us

476

00:51:58.540 --> 00:52:11.900

Ray Hammond: even, and maybe even more so in the places of suffering in the places of the confusion in the places of darkness. In fact, if somebody pointed out, if you go to the Book of Mark.

477

00:52:14.210 --> 00:52:18.690

Ray Hammond: Jesus is baptized by John

478

00:52:19.110 --> 00:52:26.380

Ray Hammond: the Holy Spirit descends on him. God says, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

479

00:52:26.460 --> 00:52:27.170

Ray Hammond: right

480

00:52:27.220 --> 00:52:40.220

Ray Hammond: unbelievable appearance of the Holy Spirit. All like very much like on the day of creation, when the Spirit is hovering over the waters, right Holy Spirit shows up, and the next verse, after all that is.

481

00:52:40.240 --> 00:52:43.840

Ray Hammond: and the same spirit drove him into the wilderness.

482

00:52:45.430 --> 00:52:50.100

Ray Hammond: He goes from the baptism right to the temptation of the world.

483

00:52:51.160 --> 00:53:01.950

Ray Hammond: because he can't get to the other side of ministry, can't get to the place of trust. He can't get to the place of obedience without also enduring

484

00:53:02.440 --> 00:53:03.670

Ray Hammond: some measure

485

00:53:03.730 --> 00:53:07.270

Ray Hammond: of temptation and trial and suffering.

486

00:53:10.140 --> 00:53:10.860

Hmm.

487

00:53:11.010 --> 00:53:14.080

Ray Hammond: Is that making sense is questions about that?

488

00:53:19.120 --> 00:53:29.470

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I, having been a member of Bethel these 30 years, I've grown in my spiritual walk of life, and I know

489

00:53:29.830 --> 00:53:35.260

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: quite often in your sermons, and the way the Church is led

490

00:53:35.290 --> 00:53:46.170

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: there is the reality that you can be a fervent Christian, but that does not inoculate you and keep you away from the troubles of the world.

491

00:53:46.730 --> 00:53:52.500

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: So I think it's it. My belief is that it's a false pretense to think that

492

00:53:52.520 --> 00:53:59.830

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: by you accepting Christ in your life by being a good Christian, then you're not ever going to

493

00:53:59.850 --> 00:54:03.190

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: suffer and have problems that's

494

00:54:03.480 --> 00:54:05.590

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: that's that's not part of the bargain.

495

00:54:06.260 --> 00:54:12.750

Ray Hammond: absolutely. And again as a state. because almost none of us like suffering right

496

00:54:13.340 --> 00:54:18.690

Ray Hammond: I I can. I can get a big full church. I can get a

497

00:54:19.690 --> 00:54:22.180

Ray Hammond: nice Bentley. and

498

00:54:22.470 --> 00:54:26.210

Ray Hammond: let's say a private jet if I tell you what you want to hear.

499

00:54:26.690 --> 00:54:33.820

Ray Hammond: which is. give me that tide. Give me that \$500 offering. Give me whatever it is.

500

00:54:37.500 --> 00:54:46.240

Ray Hammond: Do this, do that serve in the church, and so on, and you won't. Have to suffer. That's just not Biblical.

501

00:54:50.540 --> 00:54:53.530

Ray Hammond: So God said this look

502

00:54:54.060 --> 00:54:57.360

Ray Hammond: suffering isn't the way I would have wanted it.

503

00:54:58.690 --> 00:55:03.330

Ray Hammond: But suffering is part of what comes with a broken world.

504

00:55:05.260 --> 00:55:10.690

Ray Hammond: and my promise is not to deliver you completely from it.

505

00:55:11.260 --> 00:55:13.630

Ray Hammond: But to go with you through it.

506

00:55:14.130 --> 00:55:15.190

Beverly Williams: Hmm.

507

00:55:18.200 --> 00:55:19.850

Ray Hammond: Questions, comments.

508

00:55:21.240 --> 00:55:25.690

Sharon Whittaker: did I also interject. I mean, I think, one of the the the whole notion of culture.

509

00:55:25.790 --> 00:55:28.550

Sharon Whittaker: I think one of the reasons that

510

00:55:28.940 --> 00:55:34.040

Sharon Whittaker: denominations or individuals who preach. If you do ABC. You'll get.

511

00:55:34.070 --> 00:55:37.160

Sharon Whittaker: you know, Reward and Xyz

512

00:55:37.230 --> 00:55:47.180

Sharon Whittaker: is because we one where it's our meeting, making people as human beings, but also we live in a Western society, where

513

00:55:47.400 --> 00:55:58.360

Sharon Whittaker: this notion of individualism, if you work hard, and if you your character is right, you'll get a certain outcome, and I think this whole overlay of culture plays into that

514

00:55:58.360 --> 00:56:11.700

Sharon Whittaker: plays into this, you know notion of one to understand this and want to feel assured. If I do 1 2 3 4 I will receive 5 6 7 8, because if you look at some other cultures, and somebody mentioned this

515

00:56:11.970 --> 00:56:13.390
Sharon Whittaker: early year.

516

00:56:13.540 --> 00:56:25.910
there is an acceptance of the continuum of life. There is an acceptance of suffering. If you look at Asian cultures, if you look at African cultures, if you look at you know there is more of an acceptance of this whole.

517

00:56:26.090 --> 00:56:29.940
Sharon Whittaker: It's not a cake walk, and it's not something that we can

518

00:56:30.300 --> 00:56:40.510
Sharon Whittaker: divine by doing the right things, and I think that our culture, our Western society, our culture, complicates this whole notion for many Christians.

519

00:56:42.120 --> 00:56:42.710
Ray Hammond: Okay.

520

00:56:45.720 --> 00:56:47.090
Ray Hammond: other thoughts on this

521

00:56:48.360 --> 00:56:51.200
June Handy: I have a couple of dots.

522

00:56:52.520 --> 00:56:58.160
June Handy: One thing that keeps circling. My My mind is just this idea that

523

00:56:59.480 --> 00:57:10.370
June Handy: I guess in a sense, maybe we're all striving for perfection. like we think if we live a certain way. You do certain things.

524

00:57:10.600 --> 00:57:21.590
June Handy: you know you you won't be able to suffer. At least that's kind of what I was taught growing up in the church growing up, that this you know. It was a lot of.

525

00:57:21.750 --> 00:57:25.860

June Handy: you know, fire and brimstone, and you have to live this way and do this.

526

00:57:26.150 --> 00:57:35.080

June Handy: Live this way. Do these things, and God will reward you, and it's a lot of things I had to unlearn.

527

00:57:36.170 --> 00:57:39.680

June Handy: you know, in that in my adult life. And

528

00:57:40.260 --> 00:57:48.110

June Handy: so just listening to everyone talk, and even you, Pastor, just really just like keep reminding myself that

529

00:57:48.520 --> 00:57:59.580

June Handy: everyone is going to suffer and from suffering. You can either grow, or you can succumb to the suffering, and just live in that suffering.

530

00:57:59.950 --> 00:58:08.120

June Handy: or you can either grow, and you know, grow your faith in God, and move on with your life. But

531

00:58:09.240 --> 00:58:14.080

June Handy: I think I like hearing the whole discussion, and every month different opinions about

532

00:58:14.190 --> 00:58:19.150

Ray Hammond: suffering, and you know how it occurred to them in their lives.

533

00:58:20.160 --> 00:58:22.480

Ray Hammond: You your point of the

534

00:58:22.490 --> 00:58:31.500

Ray Hammond: That's what a really important point, and that that is, I mean very much the message. I want to just read the Scripture, those, if you can turn to John, chapter 16.

535

00:58:33.500 --> 00:58:41.620

Ray Hammond: This this is Jesus getting His disciples ready for His crucifixion, getting His disciples ready for His suffering

536

00:58:42.500 --> 00:58:44.510

Ray Hammond: right? Because

537

00:58:44.650 --> 00:58:47.020

Ray Hammond: I want you to think about

538

00:58:47.120 --> 00:58:48.420

the

539

00:58:48.480 --> 00:58:53.300

Ray Hammond: of what Jesus goes through again. We we are

540

00:58:53.410 --> 00:58:54.550

Ray Hammond: quite rightly

541

00:58:54.780 --> 00:58:59.390

Ray Hammond: looking at the Crucifixion through spiritualize.

542

00:58:59.560 --> 00:59:00.900

Ray Hammond: and we see

543

00:59:02.430 --> 00:59:03.540

Ray Hammond: Jesus

544

00:59:03.700 --> 00:59:13.620

Ray Hammond: being obedient even on to the cross, and we see the blood that shed, and the the

545

00:59:13.720 --> 00:59:16.820

Ray Hammond: that's absolutely all true, nothing wrong with that.

546

00:59:17.720 --> 00:59:20.900

Ray Hammond: What we may not see enough again

547

00:59:21.830 --> 00:59:33.220

Ray Hammond: is. oh, God. who sees the suffering of a thief. and is willing to get on the same cross to be near

548

00:59:34.140 --> 00:59:36.710

what we don't see enough

549

00:59:36.730 --> 00:59:40.550

Ray Hammond: is a Savior who is literally

550

00:59:41.380 --> 00:59:43.580

Ray Hammond: being lynch

551

00:59:44.140 --> 00:59:48.520

unjustly accused. falsely convicted.

552

00:59:50.290 --> 00:59:57.760

Ray Hammond: brutalized by the equivalent of that society's police, beaten with the cat of 9 tail.

553

00:59:58.170 --> 01:00:09.730

Ray Hammond: spat upon, stigmatized by the crowd that you would have thought would sympathize with them. humiliated by being stripped

554

01:00:10.080 --> 01:00:12.300

Ray Hammond: and hung out to dry.

555

01:00:12.720 --> 01:00:16.010

Ray Hammond: publicly humiliated and degraded.

556

01:00:19.570 --> 01:00:21.770

Ray Hammond: That's all described.

557

01:00:21.880 --> 01:00:25.950

Ray Hammond: and it in detail.

558

01:00:26.140 --> 01:00:28.800

and what the Gospel right is understood.

559

01:00:29.430 --> 01:00:38.540

Ray Hammond: And again, what we don't want to lose sight of. This is all about God saying. I know you're.

560

01:00:39.160 --> 01:00:40.860

I know you're hurt.

561

01:00:41.590 --> 01:00:44.880

Ray Hammond: I'm with you in your

562

01:00:48.520 --> 01:00:53.570

Ray Hammond: now. That's not where it stops. But that's an important point along the way.

563

01:00:53.590 --> 01:01:05.570

Ray Hammond: Let me read the those of you have it. You might take a look at as well. John, Chapter 16 verse 31. Jesus answer them. Do you believe now the time is coming, and is already here

564

01:01:05.720 --> 01:01:20.320

Ray Hammond: when all of you will be scattered, he's he's getting them ready. He's preparing them. Everybody is talking about how they gonna stand with him right each of you to your own home, and I will be left all alone. I will be abandoned.

565

01:01:21.290 --> 01:01:27.950

Ray Hammond: But I am not really alone, because the father is with me. I'm reading the good news translation.

566

01:01:28.530 --> 01:01:40.450

Ray Hammond: and I have told you this so that you will have peace by being united to me. The world will make you suffer. But be brave. I have defeated them.

567

01:01:43.390 --> 01:01:53.820

Ray Hammond: so you're not going to be delivered out of the world suffering. But i'm going through it with you and i'm promising you that ultimately

568

01:01:54.340 --> 01:01:57.860

Ray Hammond: that suffering will be meaningful, purposeful

569

01:01:58.390 --> 01:02:00.790

Ray Hammond: part of the process of victory.

570

01:02:06.340 --> 01:02:10.650

Ray Hammond: One last 2 of 2 last things i'd like to offer as well.

571

01:02:10.940 --> 01:02:16.000

Ray Hammond: and some people have alluded to this and and the Scriptures.

572

01:02:16.320 --> 01:02:22.180

Ray Hammond: Oh. talk about this as well, and i'd like you to turn over to

573

01:02:25.690 --> 01:02:30.530

Ray Hammond: another aspect of suffering, not not the full answer. Right.

574

01:02:35.650 --> 01:02:36.500

Ray Hammond: Hold on here.

575

01:02:55.960 --> 01:02:59.130

Ray Hammond: I want you to go to second Corinthians chapter one.

576

01:03:02.550 --> 01:03:07.600

Ray Hammond: and I believe I don't know if I think, Aaron, you may have moved to a couple of other people as well.

577

01:03:08.270 --> 01:03:13.410

Ray Hammond: When we talk about another aspect of it, it is part of our.

578

01:03:14.320 --> 01:03:18.770

Ray Hammond: It is part of our being made into the image of Christ.

579

01:03:23.090 --> 01:03:25.120

Ray Hammond: Second Corinthians, chapter One

580

01:03:28.620 --> 01:03:32.870

Ray Hammond: and again I'm. Reading from the Good News translation.

581

01:03:36.090 --> 01:03:47.310

Ray Hammond: Let us give thanks to the God, Verse 3 and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Merciful Father, the God from whom all help comes. He helps us in all our troubles.

582

01:03:47.570 --> 01:03:53.110

Ray Hammond: so that we are able to help others who have all kinds of troubles.

583

01:03:53.460 --> 01:03:59.290

Ray Hammond: using the same help that we ourselves have received from God.

584

01:04:00.760 --> 01:04:10.810

Ray Hammond: Just as we have a share in Christ's many suffering. so also through Christ we share in God's great help.

585

01:04:12.000 --> 01:04:12.620

Ray Hammond: Right

586

01:04:12.660 --> 01:04:24.250

Ray Hammond: If we suffer, it is for your help and salvation. If we are help, then you 2 are help, and given the strength to endure with patients the same that we also endure.

587

01:04:24.850 --> 01:04:30.810

Ray Hammond: So our hope in you is never shaken. We know that just as you suffer sharing our sufferings.

588

01:04:30.820 --> 01:04:33.970

Ray Hammond: you also share in the in the help that we receive

589

01:04:34.270 --> 01:04:39.150

Ray Hammond: again the Apostle. He is drawing this picture very Biblical picture that says

590

01:04:40.600 --> 01:04:43.660

Ray Hammond: i'm able to strengthen you

591

01:04:44.370 --> 01:04:47.420

Ray Hammond: with the strength I've received

592

01:04:47.680 --> 01:04:48.560

Ray Hammond: through my

593

01:04:49.770 --> 01:04:58.610

Ray Hammond: and I've seen that over and over again. I've seen it tonight as numbers of you have testified right. You've talked about the hard places I've had to walk.

594

01:04:59.660 --> 01:05:03.830

Ray Hammond: Now you you didn't just do it here. I know you've shared it with other people.

595

01:05:04.100 --> 01:05:07.810

Ray Hammond: You've allowed God to take the place

596

01:05:07.930 --> 01:05:14.960

Ray Hammond: of your pain and make it a touch point for other people to know. I'm not alone

597

01:05:17.470 --> 01:05:19.100

Ray Hammond: you become

598

01:05:19.790 --> 01:05:25.080

Ray Hammond: the hands and the feet of God. You've become the word made flesh.

599

01:05:25.580 --> 01:05:29.660

Ray Hammond: and that word has credibility because of what you've been.

600

01:05:34.160 --> 01:05:36.660

Ray Hammond: That is, that being that making sense.

601

01:05:37.130 --> 01:05:43.100

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: Oh, I use this time, Pastor. Yes.

602

01:05:43.220 --> 01:05:45.890

Hannah Brooks: very much. So beautiful. Scripture.

603

01:05:45.900 --> 01:05:47.830

Ray Hammond: Yeah.

604

01:05:48.200 --> 01:05:55.030

Ray Hammond: And it says that there's there's a part of what we do in ministry what we do for one another

605

01:05:55.630 --> 01:06:06.290

Ray Hammond: that flows out of the that we share together, and particularly the pains that we've been able to overcome, and in our overcoming

606

01:06:06.830 --> 01:06:10.980

Ray Hammond: we now carry something that can help others to overcome.

607

01:06:11.370 --> 01:06:13.300

Hannah Brooks: Hey, man, Amen.

608

01:06:14.770 --> 01:06:15.520

Ray Hammond: All right.

609

01:06:16.400 --> 01:06:31.590

Ray Hammond: The last thing last 2 things I just want to say is none of this is to say. that we should be complacent about suffering, particularly when suffering is a consequence of injustice. Nothing in the Bible says.

610

01:06:32.090 --> 01:06:42.740

Ray Hammond: because God can bring something good out of suffering, that we should just ignore it, especially when we know that that suffering is a consequence of injustice. In fact.

611

01:06:42.830 --> 01:06:44.870
Ray Hammond: we have an obligation

612
01:06:46.290 --> 01:06:46.910
Ray Hammond: right

613
01:06:46.960 --> 01:06:50.080
Ray Hammond: to try to relieve that we have an obligation

614
01:06:50.520 --> 01:06:57.340
Ray Hammond: to identify that as the profits did over and over again, they didn't simply say, well.

615
01:06:57.580 --> 01:07:10.940
Ray Hammond: all those poor people that are being exploited. and all that on righteousness that's flowing down like a mighty stream instead of righteousness. Well, that's just God's way of helping them. No, no, they said, that's wrong.

616
01:07:11.230 --> 01:07:18.510
Ray Hammond: The purpose. The motivation of those who are doing it's wrong, thank God, even in the midst of it. God can keep them and help to lift them out of it.

617
01:07:18.580 --> 01:07:22.440
Ray Hammond: But the suffering of others, and what

618
01:07:22.660 --> 01:07:29.630
Ray Hammond: good God might be bringing out of it doesn't excuse the injustice or the sin that has produced it

619
01:07:30.290 --> 01:07:32.120
Ray Hammond: is is what i'm saying, Clear.

620
01:07:33.240 --> 01:07:34.120
Sharon Whittaker: yes.

621
01:07:34.330 --> 01:07:38.440
Marcelle Thompson: and the last thing I want to share is

622

01:07:41.170 --> 01:07:42.880

Ray Hammond: in most cases

623

01:07:44.140 --> 01:07:50.110

Ray Hammond: the most important thing we can do for people who are suffering is to do what

624

01:07:54.000 --> 01:07:55.400

Hannah Brooks: love them.

625

01:07:56.000 --> 01:07:58.570

Ray Hammond: And how do we? How do we show that love?

626

01:07:58.990 --> 01:08:00.170

Sharon Whittaker: It should be there?

627

01:08:01.450 --> 01:08:07.260

Ray Hammond: Somebody should be there? Thank you. Could I? I just want to lift up the Ministry of Presence?

628

01:08:10.630 --> 01:08:13.620

Ray Hammond: People need us to come alongside

629

01:08:15.000 --> 01:08:17.279

Ray Hammond: much more than they need is to explain.

630

01:08:18.649 --> 01:08:22.890

Ray Hammond: And I want to say that because I think I've seen this over and over again

631

01:08:23.890 --> 01:08:37.609

Ray Hammond: that people come in the midst of people suffering, and want to offer them an explanation, which is, I I really believe, in many cases you can't see, and I can't tell you some of the things that I've heard saying say to people

632

01:08:37.810 --> 01:08:38.740

Ray Hammond: who is suffering.

633

01:08:39.319 --> 01:08:43.370

Ray Hammond: and I know that their hearts were right. They really wanted to help.

634

01:08:44.700 --> 01:08:46.420

Ray Hammond: but it wasn't helpful at all.

635

01:08:49.350 --> 01:08:52.790

Ray Hammond: I've just lost my baby. Don't tell me guys can bring another one.

636

01:08:56.970 --> 01:08:58.220

Ray Hammond: Just sit with me

637

01:09:02.439 --> 01:09:05.850

Ray Hammond: sit with me. What week with me feel my heart.

638

01:09:09.399 --> 01:09:15.840

Ray Hammond: because that's what God does God God doesn't when, when, when Elijah rolls up in the desert.

639

01:09:16.040 --> 01:09:17.149

Ray Hammond: it says

640

01:09:17.210 --> 01:09:25.830

Ray Hammond: I fought the pres of bail. Jezebel is trying to take my head off my shoulders. I run, i'm like i'm exhausted. I'm tired.

641

01:09:25.859 --> 01:09:28.310

Ray Hammond: God doesn't give him a book of theology

642

01:09:29.460 --> 01:09:31.870

Ray Hammond: that says, Go to sleep, Eliz. You're tired.

643

01:09:32.439 --> 01:09:35.160

Ray Hammond: Here's some food here, some water.

644

01:09:37.439 --> 01:09:41.790

Ray Hammond: and then once you've had a chance to sleep and get some food and rest.

645

01:09:41.870 --> 01:09:47.130

Ray Hammond: and just be free of the stress for a bit. Now let me go. Show you

646

01:09:47.370 --> 01:09:49.250

Ray Hammond: what what this is all about.

647

01:09:50.890 --> 01:10:01.370

Ray Hammond: So I just want to suggest in the ministry to those who are suffering. The first and most vital gift we can give is our loving present.

648

01:10:04.880 --> 01:10:07.960

Ray Hammond: I need you to sit with me. I need you to come alongside me.

649

01:10:10.020 --> 01:10:14.490

Ray Hammond: And and then, at some point, as we are praying together, it will become a little clearer. Right?

650

01:10:15.140 --> 01:10:17.720

Ray Hammond: I don't need you to explain it.

651

01:10:19.300 --> 01:10:28.390

Marcelle Thompson: Yes, one of the things we were having a discussion with during our course I was taken

652

01:10:28.460 --> 01:10:31.460

Marcelle Thompson: with my classmate is

653

01:10:31.640 --> 01:10:46.070

Marcelle Thompson: when people are going through. Also, Don't say, I understand what you're going through, because you can never walk them all in that individual issue. You don't understand, like you said, it's best to just be quiet and be still

654

01:10:46.150 --> 01:10:58.440

Marcelle Thompson: with the person, and just let the person say what they have to say. You know it's not all the time that we have to interject and give our opinion to a say. I. I know what you're going through, or I understand

655

01:10:58.520 --> 01:11:01.440

Marcelle Thompson: you can't you just can't.

656

01:11:02.010 --> 01:11:14.260

Ray Hammond: That's a that's an excellent point. You raise system, ours and let's just say, I think you know we we all got to get comfortable with more silence. Right? We don't. We just don't have to fill every moment.

657

01:11:14.400 --> 01:11:17.940

Ray Hammond: Sometimes people just need us to be there

658

01:11:19.510 --> 01:11:22.270

Ray Hammond: to know that i'm not alone in the small

659

01:11:26.260 --> 01:11:29.110

Ray Hammond: other thoughts before we close out tonight

660

01:11:29.260 --> 01:11:42.710

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: one of the greatest gifts for me, when I was at that that very dark point again when my son, the the day he he passed away was one friend who came to the house, and all she did

661

01:11:42.750 --> 01:11:46.050

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: was sit on the bed as I cried.

662

01:11:46.510 --> 01:12:01.590

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: She didn't say anything. She just sat there and was more comforting than she will ever realize. There was no philosophizing. No things will get better and all that kind of stuff, she just said.

663

01:12:02.260 --> 01:12:08.870

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and that was that was more medicine for me than I needed from a lot of chatter and words.

664

01:12:09.040 --> 01:12:09.780

Ray Hammond: And

665

01:12:11.230 --> 01:12:18.520

Sharon Whittaker: yeah, I just like to echo that also, as someone who has lost someone, Christians did more home

666

01:12:18.550 --> 01:12:21.680

Sharon Whittaker: with God will not give you more than you can bear.

667

01:12:21.770 --> 01:12:24.980

Sharon Whittaker: Let go in that God

668

01:12:26.330 --> 01:12:35.940

Sharon Whittaker: I don't know you know all of these. I it was it it's it's it's more hurtful. I mean it. It it's it's really damaging, because it minimizes your pain.

669

01:12:35.960 --> 01:12:48.600

Sharon Whittaker: Okay, and it also gives you the burden of trying to rationalize. Why, you can't let go and let God the way they would like you to, or the way they suggest that you're supposed to as a Christian.

670

01:12:48.850 --> 01:13:02.930

Sharon Whittaker: So I just want to echo that. And then the last thing I would say just for another time. I know that we don't have time now is we've had this conversation about how suffering is domain to all of us, and how, being a Christian and following crisis doesn't inoculate us.

671

01:13:02.950 --> 01:13:13.160

Sharon Whittaker: how do we respond when people say, or sometimes even we, as Christian, have moments of doubt, and we say. well, my price like that.

672

01:13:17.810 --> 01:13:28.500

Ray Hammond: You You raise a great question, and I think you're going to touch on this a little bit next week as you come to wrestle with the the the yeah.

673

01:13:33.890 --> 01:13:43.740

Ray Hammond: the the prayer, and guess, semi. where Jesus is wrestling with some of the same things, and you know we don't know all the details of it.

674

01:13:44.770 --> 01:13:48.120

Ray Hammond: But again. he's saying he's very clear.

675

01:13:48.690 --> 01:13:53.700

Ray Hammond: Do we have to do this.

676

01:13:53.830 --> 01:13:56.070

Ray Hammond: Who's a fiction thing this way.

677

01:13:57.250 --> 01:14:00.470

Ray Hammond: if it be possible. That

678

01:14:00.540 --> 01:14:03.640

Ray Hammond: is oh. as from there.

679

01:14:05.940 --> 01:14:07.160

Ray Hammond: that's the first part.

680

01:14:08.170 --> 01:14:12.040

Ray Hammond: then he says, but nevertheless not that will be done, but it doesn't end it.

681

01:14:13.160 --> 01:14:14.610

Ray Hammond: And Luke

682

01:14:15.100 --> 01:14:20.140

Ray Hammond: Matthew in particular, Luke really describes what agony he goes through.

683

01:14:20.150 --> 01:14:21.160

Ray Hammond: He says

684

01:14:21.260 --> 01:14:28.900

Ray Hammond: he's sweating. He is stressed to the point where sweats running off of them like blood.

685

01:14:32.010 --> 01:14:33.210

Ray Hammond: That's stress.

686

01:14:35.350 --> 01:14:38.100

Ray Hammond: And in some ways that argue.

687

01:14:38.850 --> 01:14:44.400

Ray Hammond: If, as a Christian, you've never been at that place where you Haven't asked. Why

688

01:14:48.420 --> 01:14:51.430

Ray Hammond: I have concerns. I really do. I mean.

689

01:14:53.490 --> 01:15:05.430

Ray Hammond: there, there just are things we don't understand. I understand why Joe asks why. and at the end of it he says it isn't that I have a better answer.

690

01:15:05.600 --> 01:15:12.870

Ray Hammond: It's just that in my wrestling God, I have come to see you in a way I've never understood before.

691

01:15:15.240 --> 01:15:18.170

Ray Hammond: and and that's what gets me through this.

692

01:15:18.180 --> 01:15:21.710

Ray Hammond: It's what we've gone through together.

693

01:15:21.830 --> 01:15:24.200

Ray Hammond: and coming on the other side of that.

694

01:15:26.920 --> 01:15:36.270

Ray Hammond: It it didn't it didn't fix everything in my head but my heart it didn't answer every question that I had. but I

695

01:15:37.450 --> 01:15:42.260

Ray Hammond: felt your presence felt your love in a way I never felt.

696

01:15:47.230 --> 01:15:51.940

Ray Hammond: So you raise a great question. I think you go to touch on this a little bit next week.

697

01:15:54.690 --> 01:16:03.010

Ray Hammond: as as you as you look at Jesus wrestling and get somebody. But you raise a great question. This I you hear me say this before

698

01:16:03.540 --> 01:16:07.290

Ray Hammond: I call an untested faith a shaky thing.

699

01:16:12.130 --> 01:16:17.260

Ray Hammond: I I think the nature of living. And if you're really out there.

700

01:16:17.500 --> 01:16:20.130

Ray Hammond: and and and

701

01:16:20.540 --> 01:16:21.330

Ray Hammond: really

702

01:16:22.030 --> 01:16:33.250

Ray Hammond: trying to walk in what that is called you to do. I guarantee you that faithfully tested, and I can't find any typical figure from. That's not true that I know where we have any kind of a narrative.

703

01:16:33.320 --> 01:16:41.880

Ray Hammond: I know it was true for the apostle Paul, and he wrote about it. He said, When I came to you brothers and sisters, I was despairing of life itself.

704

01:16:42.430 --> 01:16:43.130

Sharon Whittaker: Hmm.

705

01:16:45.960 --> 01:16:54.970

Ray Hammond: I've been run out of town one town after another. I've been in prison. I've been beaten. I'm saying to myself, Whoa.

706

01:16:56.800 --> 01:16:58.730

Ray Hammond: what's this about God?

707

01:17:02.980 --> 01:17:11.590

Ray Hammond: So that's not a that's not an unusual experience. In fact, i'd argue that it's very much a part of the Christian.

708

01:17:12.680 --> 01:17:18.680

Ray Hammond: They they had a name for it in the in the Middle Ages, in the medieval times it was called the Dark Night of the soul.

709

01:17:23.870 --> 01:17:27.950

Ray Hammond: My God, my God! Why has thou forsaken me?

710

01:17:33.010 --> 01:17:34.690

Ray Hammond: Questions, comments

711

01:17:35.730 --> 01:17:36.870

Ray Hammond: before we close out?

712

01:17:43.120 --> 01:17:45.950

Ray Hammond: All right. Prayer. Request very quickly, and then we're gonna

713

01:17:46.770 --> 01:17:54.390

Ray Hammond: They thank you again for allowing me to share this time. I hope this is set the table for for next week.

714

01:17:54.640 --> 01:18:00.220

Ray Hammond: and and I just want to encourage you to continue in this process you will be.

715

01:18:01.280 --> 01:18:13.350

Ray Hammond: I think you'll see your face strengthened to the extent that you're willing to keep wrestling with this, the understanding what the meaning of these trials that i'm going through? What am I learning about myself? What do I need to change?

716

01:18:13.810 --> 01:18:16.890

Ray Hammond: What is God teaching me? How is God strengthening

717

01:18:17.370 --> 01:18:22.200

Ray Hammond: what is what's got equipping me with that I can share and ask all of them

718

01:18:22.880 --> 01:18:25.820

Ray Hammond: pass on to other. So so again

719

01:18:25.840 --> 01:18:27.260

Ray Hammond: wrestling with that.

720

01:18:27.990 --> 01:18:31.490

Ray Hammond: I think just makes you so much stronger in the site.

721

01:18:32.430 --> 01:18:33.100

Hmm.

722

01:18:33.920 --> 01:18:37.520

Beverly Williams: I thank you. I appreciate it. Having

723

01:18:37.710 --> 01:18:46.870

Beverly Williams: my nephew, who was murdered in late October. This is a right on time message, and I was just, you know.

724

01:18:46.950 --> 01:18:52.660

Beverly Williams: See him with a friend, you know. You know I don't even know how to address my sister's

725

01:18:52.910 --> 01:18:55.160

Beverly Williams: suffering.

726

01:18:55.730 --> 01:19:02.090

Beverly Williams: And so this this help really put things into perspective for me

727

01:19:02.360 --> 01:19:05.260
Beverly Williams: in this, far as

728

01:19:05.610 --> 01:19:19.010
Beverly Williams: she is playing for the family of Kevin king, and losing her uncle. Now, King and I just found out also that we lost another great person a couple of days called Vandal Robinson.

729

01:19:22.530 --> 01:19:24.350
Beverly Williams: and so just

730

01:19:24.760 --> 01:19:27.460
Beverly Williams: hope of people and not suffering for them. But

731

01:19:30.870 --> 01:19:33.900
Beverly Williams: you know, just praying for all those who they lost somebody.

732

01:19:34.840 --> 01:19:35.700
Ray Hammond: You that

733

01:19:35.740 --> 01:19:36.860
Beverly Williams: I pray it Tonight

734

01:19:39.040 --> 01:19:43.790
Ray Hammond: you have the prayer, request. Thanks so much.

735

01:19:43.840 --> 01:19:59.580
Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: chat, Pastor. We have prayers for Travis. Continue to pray for Travis. Also we're lifting Brother Carrington's brother up in prayer one to know how he's doing.

736

01:19:59.870 --> 01:20:17.960
Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and also Sister Natalie has sciatica pain. So we're praying for her, and the loss of life and livelihood in Mississippi. That was also a prayer request. We should probably add the horrific activities in Nashville, Tennessee at this school.

737

01:20:18.290 --> 01:20:21.900

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: So that's what we have on the list in the chat, pastor.

738

01:20:23.860 --> 01:20:29.170

Marie Doubleday: Just a comment. I want to thank everyone

739

01:20:29.510 --> 01:20:35.690

Marie Doubleday: for continuing to pray for Travis. He's a close family friend.

740

01:20:36.020 --> 01:20:49.090

Marie Doubleday: and I did have a little bit of communication with him this past week. I'm not going to get into his condition. Pasta knows what it is. However, I've got to open a good news. Guess what

741

01:20:50.180 --> 01:20:52.110

Marie Doubleday: he's working a little bit.

742

01:20:52.240 --> 01:21:05.160

Marie Doubleday: all right, and i'm sorry, folks. I just want to, you know, you know, protect his. you know confidentiality to the extent. So what i'm talking about.

743

01:21:05.180 --> 01:21:11.220

Marie Doubleday: But if you noticed past a smile when I said it. it is a blessing, and he

744

01:21:11.480 --> 01:21:16.540

Marie Doubleday: oh, just continue to keep them in prayer. It's it's yeah, thank you.

745

01:21:16.770 --> 01:21:17.870

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: And then

746

01:21:18.180 --> 01:21:26.510

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: and let's have a word of prayer that that's here, Sister Marcella said. Pray for Sister Darlene and her. I

747

01:21:27.520 --> 01:21:31.330

Beverly Williams: maybe she can explain more about that.

748

01:21:31.480 --> 01:21:32.080

Okay.

749

01:21:33.050 --> 01:21:34.430

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: sister myself.

750

01:21:40.810 --> 01:21:43.000

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: You're You're on mute system or cell.

751

01:21:55.340 --> 01:21:56.730

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: I'm not sure.

752

01:21:56.790 --> 01:22:02.980

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: So. Oh, system are Well, i'm not sure if you're talking about Sister darling Alexander, perhaps.

753

01:22:03.610 --> 01:22:06.220

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: or someone else. But

754

01:22:07.090 --> 01:22:08.610

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: okay, Pastor.

755

01:22:08.860 --> 01:22:17.560

Ray Hammond: All right. Just again, as someone mentioned here in the credits, you have a prayer request Also you can send them out with a prayer ministry to keep them.

756

01:22:17.700 --> 01:22:27.110

Ray Hammond: Meantime, God, we just bow our heads and hearts together. Is your people. Thank you for this time. Your word is challenged us

757

01:22:27.380 --> 01:22:35.050

Ray Hammond: to study to show ourselves approved, because we want to rightly divide the word of truth. We don't want to pick the piece we like

758

01:22:35.240 --> 01:22:40.490

Ray Hammond: without looking at the whole story, and I want to thank you for the ways in which together

759

01:22:41.070 --> 01:22:47.590

Ray Hammond: we have wrestled through the different ways in which we wrestle with suffering

760

01:22:48.590 --> 01:22:51.110

Ray Hammond: the ways in which God we have.

761

01:22:51.400 --> 01:22:53.440

Ray Hammond: I come to terms with

762

01:22:53.470 --> 01:22:56.770

Ray Hammond: the painful, the unpleasant, the grieve

763

01:22:56.800 --> 01:22:58.620

Ray Hammond: grievous in our lives.

764

01:22:58.810 --> 01:23:08.180

Ray Hammond: Yes, and I just want to thank you for the openness of sisters and brothers tonight. Is they not only shared

765

01:23:08.910 --> 01:23:09.670

Ray Hammond: there

766

01:23:10.000 --> 01:23:15.940

Ray Hammond: wrestling through the word, but they're wrestling through the experiences of life, the pain and sorrows.

767

01:23:15.980 --> 01:23:21.010

Ray Hammond: the the losses. I want to thank you God for

768

01:23:21.130 --> 01:23:33.990

Ray Hammond: the fact that by your word we have been reminded that there are many things we will not fully understand it. The the answer won't be fully satisfying to our heads.

769

01:23:35.010 --> 01:23:38.380

Ray Hammond: But we are so grateful that you have promised

770

01:23:39.330 --> 01:23:42.760

Ray Hammond: that as we continue to trust

771

01:23:42.830 --> 01:23:49.210

Ray Hammond: and you love you. that is, we continue God to lean on

772

01:23:49.900 --> 01:23:53.030

Ray Hammond: and hold up each other.

773

01:23:54.070 --> 01:23:59.410

Ray Hammond: Even when our heads are not fully satisfied, our heart, Scott will be sustained

774

01:24:00.470 --> 01:24:04.220

Ray Hammond: through the trial, through the tribulation.

775

01:24:05.940 --> 01:24:13.830

Ray Hammond: And then, what if we can stay in it even a little longer, we can see you beginning to bring out of the very thing

776

01:24:13.960 --> 01:24:18.600

Ray Hammond: the enemy, until it to evil good that we could have never imagined.

777

01:24:18.780 --> 01:24:21.280

Ray Hammond: not just for us. but for

778

01:24:22.970 --> 01:24:33.750

Ray Hammond: and so God we we freely acknowledge we don't begin to understand fully this thing called suffering. This thing called sin, and it's impact on

779

01:24:33.890 --> 01:24:44.900

Ray Hammond: the creation as a whole on our lives on our society. the Lord in the midst of it all. By Joe, we say we see you.

780

01:24:45.750 --> 01:24:49.570

Ray Hammond: we know, and feel your presence in the midst of it.

781

01:24:51.390 --> 01:24:59.050

Ray Hammond: With that confidence, Scott, we pray for your Grace to bless and keep travel. Thank you for the good report

782

01:24:59.810 --> 01:25:02.180

Ray Hammond: improvement Already

783

01:25:02.960 --> 01:25:11.850

Ray Hammond: we're believing you got to continue what you had begun in travel. We want to thank you for the good report for Pastor Carrington's brother.

784

01:25:12.090 --> 01:25:23.510

Ray Hammond: at least of a week ago. God and and the progress that he continues to make having passed through near death experience. Thank you for your goodness and for your Grace.

785

01:25:24.030 --> 01:25:29.290

Ray Hammond: We're praying that that same grace would be poured out the system, Natalie, with healing

786

01:25:29.360 --> 01:25:35.270

Ray Hammond: from her side of pain. We are praying for that same grace and presence and comfort

787

01:25:35.960 --> 01:25:44.000

Ray Hammond: to help those who have suffered loss of life and livelihood. The loss of friends and family and Mississippi.

788

01:25:44.290 --> 01:25:54.260

Ray Hammond: that the God of all comfort would indeed come alongside them. that the people who follow that God would be present for them

789

01:25:54.780 --> 01:25:59.490

Ray Hammond: as they go through this valley. The shadow of that we pray for sister darling.

790

01:25:59.550 --> 01:26:07.110

Ray Hammond: the I troubles that she's experiencing, and we remember you as a god comes with healing in your way.

791

01:26:07.920 --> 01:26:10.730

Ray Hammond: We pray for Karen King and the family of

792

01:26:10.820 --> 01:26:23.930

Ray Hammond: Middle King, who gave so much to this community, a groundbreaker and a pioneer. and we thank you for his niece, who has been such a gift to our community. Quote, therefore.

793

01:26:24.800 --> 01:26:30.980

Ray Hammond: we pray with that our presence and your spirit. See her and this family through

794

01:26:30.990 --> 01:26:38.990

Ray Hammond: this season of green. We pray that for the family of Andell Robinson. and what we really pray that for

795

01:26:39.200 --> 01:26:42.550

Ray Hammond: parents and teachers and students

796

01:26:42.970 --> 01:26:53.910

Ray Hammond: whose hearts are broken, whose lives in some measure are shattered by this latest episode of mass, murder, madness in America

797

01:26:54.250 --> 01:26:59.830

Ray Hammond: have mercy! Oh, God. sure I will.

798

01:26:59.850 --> 01:27:02.530

Ray Hammond: Warring and violent, met.

799

01:27:02.560 --> 01:27:03.130

Yeah.

800

01:27:03.530 --> 01:27:04.510

Ray Hammond: here

801

01:27:05.800 --> 01:27:06.860
Ray Hammond: our addiction

802
01:27:07.070 --> 01:27:09.130
Weapons of destruction

803
01:27:09.430 --> 01:27:10.360
Ray Hammond: sure

804
01:27:12.020 --> 01:27:15.790
Ray Hammond: our to see

805
01:27:15.950 --> 01:27:21.110
Ray Hammond: the brokenness of people that's reality slips away little
by

806
01:27:23.410 --> 01:27:24.460
Ray Hammond: we pray God

807
01:27:24.720 --> 01:27:29.270
Ray Hammond: for your grace in the midst of it all. Thank you for
being the God

808
01:27:29.660 --> 01:27:41.320
Ray Hammond: who doesn't. Just explain our suffering, but who sits
right in it with us. and then gives us got the opportunity to do for
others the same

809
01:27:41.940 --> 01:27:44.190
Ray Hammond: for that we just want to give you praise

810
01:27:44.290 --> 01:27:50.790
Ray Hammond: as we prepare next week to see your stress, your
suffering in a place called Get semi.

811
01:27:51.120 --> 01:27:52.470
Ray Hammond: In Jesus name.

812
01:27:52.830 --> 01:27:53.660

Amen.

813

01:27:53.930 --> 01:28:06.800

Carole Copeland Thomas She/Her/Hers: Thank you. Everybody. Thank you so much. God bless you.