

PAIN AND SUFFERING AND DEATH IS THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

God is grieved when sin hurts people. God does not want people to experience pain and suffering. So when people experience pain and suffering it is not because God is inflicting punishment on them, but it is because pain and suffering and death is a natural consequence of sin. Romans 6:23a

Sin has its own punishment. Our personal sin causes personal suffering. The sin of those around us causes us personal suffering as well.

Human punishment toward wrongdoers includes retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. God's Judgment and condemnation of sinners should not be regarded in the same way as human ways of punishment. God's ways are much higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8,9). God hates sin because of how much He loves us. God will not leave people in their sin. God will remove cooperative sinners from their sin through "new birth" and glorification. God will allow all uncooperative sinners to perish (John 3:16).

Cooperative sinners are those who cooperate with "Holy Spirit conviction" and allow Him to bring them to saving faith in Jesus.

Eternal separation from God is the fate of those who refuse to cooperate with Holy Spirit conviction. The Lake of Fire is the Second Death (Revelation 20:10).

God disciplines believers and judges unbelievers. To say that God punishes sin or punishes sinners is misleading because we think of punishment in terms of retribution. God gets no joy or satisfaction out of the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23).

When we read that God punishes people for their sin, we must recognize that God's judgment for sin is different from human punishment for wrongdoers.

