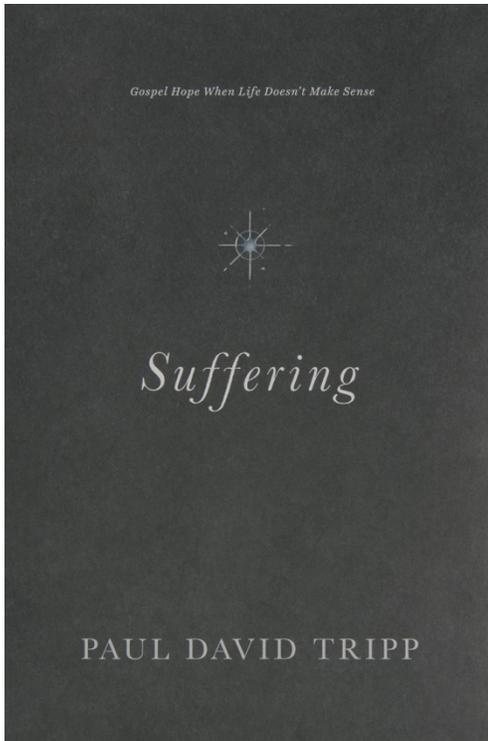


## book of the month *Suffering: Gospel Hope When Life Doesn't Make Sense* - Paul David Tripp



I read *Suffering* primarily from my hospital bed. Pain, separation from family, separation from church, weakness, and inability threatened to define me. And Tripp, through this book, served as a very helpful, empathetic, and—best of all—Biblical counselor and comforter during these trying times.

This is a book filled with theology: It is some of the sweetest most excellent theology because it talks about the practical rubber-meets-the-road of God's love, goodness, and sovereign purposes to care for His children in suffering. But it is not a theology book devoid from practical experience. Rather, Tripp wrote many of the chapters while experiencing near debilitating pain himself. It was unexpected chronic illness that led him to write this book and write it well from first-hand experience.

### Recommended Reading Plan

The book has 14 chapters and an introduction. If you read **one chapter every two days**, you will be on track to finish in a month. I recommend that you **read the chapter one day** and then **the next day answer the questions** at the end of the chapter. Each chapter includes 5 'Review and Reflect' questions and some verses to meditate on. I strongly recommend taking the time to go through these questions and verses. This will help this book not merely inform your theology of suffering but transform your experience of it.

This book is firstly written for the person undergoing suffering. For the Christian, suffering, which can feel hopeless, directs us to our true Hope. We discover that when we are made weak, we depend better on Him who is our Strength. If you are currently going through any trial—be it with health, relationships, finances, or any other thing—you will find comfort and helpful direction in this book.

Even if you are not suffering now, you will, and you do not know when that will come. I would encourage you to take advantage of this book of the month and read it in preparation for what will inevitably come in life in this fallen world. One of Tripp's most helpful points is that we can add to our suffering by the way that we suffer. To understand who God is and how He superintends and uses our suffering will guard you from the traps that make it worse. So regardless of who you are and what you are going through, I am convinced that the time you spend on this book will be worthwhile. Here are some helpful quotes to whet your appetite:

- "Weakness is not what you and I should be afraid of. We should fear our delusion of strength. Strong people tend not to reach out for help. . . when you have been proven weak, you tap into the endless resource of divine power that is yours in Christ. In my weakness I have known strength I never knew before."
- "Trials reveal your true thoughts and desires, where you have been looking for life. . . and looked for hope."
- "When you fear God, the equation is not you compared to the size of your trial, but your God compared to it."
- "Wherever your story takes you, you'll never arrive there first, because your Lord is already there in sovereign presence and power, and he rules that place in infinite wisdom and holiness."
- "God has used my travail to expose weaknesses of heart that I had no idea were there."
- "Here is comfort for every sufferer: Hope is a person, and his name is Jesus."

*Jacob Hantla, pastor-elder*