Where is God in Suffering?

This question is the cause of basic internal struggles in relation to our belief in God. The answer comes and goes, eluding deep, contemplative understanding as the state of our world changes with the tides. Where is God in a starving child or a man who has lost his family to unjust war? Where is God in the 93 million people of India struggling to survive in the slums? Where is God when a mother feels her only option is to sell her daughter into prostitution to provide for her family?

The answer is so simple. God is here. God is with us. God is teaching us to love and care for our brothers and sisters, God is helping us to reflect inward and find our path to right the injustice in this world. God is the college student who spends a summer digging wells in Africa, God is the United Nations aid worker who provides basic sustenance in a famine, God is the attorney who fights to eradicate the sale of children, God is the author, activist, or speaker who brings the tales of suffering to those who have the power to fight it. God is in each one of us calling us to be greater. God doesn’t ask us to change the entire world; God asks each of us to change the world for one person.


“Those who really do know and love [Jesus] will…see the suffering of all the people whom God puts in their life and world, and strive with great effort to grieve with them and do whatever they can to alleviate their suffering. Right here is the deepest spiritual root of the impulse to work for peace and justice. Anything less would be an unworthy motive for those who love Jesus Christ.

“Jesus’ passion brings us to embrace the world as it really is: full of violence and pain. We refuse to let religion and grace become an easy analgesic, buffering us from the real sufferings around us. Instead, we embrace whatever suffering comes into our lives as no longer senseless. Our suffering has a meaning in “the language of the cross” (1 Corinthians 1:18). We join the sufferings of the crucified Christ, the sufferings of humankind that he chose to embrace. We cling to Jesus, to ‘a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God’ (1 Corinthians 1:24). When we do less, we are using our faith in Christ as a pain pill.”