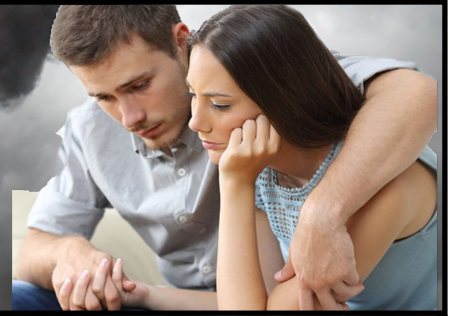


# Suffering:

The state of experiencing distress  
or trouble



Jesus said in John 16:33, that “In this world, you will face trouble.” Yet, so often, we buy into the fairytale view of marriage that we go through some troubles and struggles, get married, and live happily-ever-after. Friends, anyone who has been married for more than a week, knows that there *will* be troubles in life and in marriage. We live in a broken, sin-filled world and whether it comes from within our marriage, or from outside, there will be suffering. Carmen and I, in our 41 years of marriage have experienced suffering - that distress or trouble - from almost every imaginable place: sin of one or the other, trouble with children or grandchildren, illness, injury, financial setbacks, job loss, relationship problems, the list could go on quite a while. Jesus didn’t promise to relieve us from suffering, but He did promise to be with us *through* the suffering. We can ‘take heart because He has overcome the world’ (the end of John 16:33).

Paul wrote in Romans, chapter 5 that; “we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” Yes, we will experience suffering, but rather run from it or grit our teeth and endure it the best we can, we can be encouraged because God will use our suffering to build us up in our faith, in our walk with Him. I would wish our suffering on anyone, but we now thank the Lord for the trials and troubles we have faced because we are the man and woman we are today because of what we have endured in the past. We walk closer with the Lord and have deeper faith because we have seen how He has brought us through the troubles.

You may be suffering right now; physical, emotional, or mental problems or it may be financial, family, or relationship problems. Whatever has brought your suffering, please do not endure it alone; seek out that caring, compassionate person who can pray with you and walk with you through the trouble you face. Cling to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; when Carmen I didn’t know what else to do, we cried out to God and He was always faithful to show up - perhaps not in ways we expected, but He always showed up. Search out that Scripture that can help you through the tough times. The Psalms are filled with both laments over suffering, but also, the encouragement of God’s goodness and glory. Finally, work *together* as husband and wife through whatever trouble you may face. Pray together, seek God together, and walk together. Don’t let the evil one bring division and separation in your marriage.

## **Helpful Resources:** *Fortified Marriages Resource page: [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)*

The Fortified Marriages Manual & Workbook helps couples work together through trouble they face.

### **Articles to check out:**

***How Christ’s Suffering Speaks to Suffering In Our Marriage*** by Ryan & Selena Frederick  
- [fiercemarriage.com](http://fiercemarriage.com)

***Life’s Challenges Can Turn Your Love Into an Extraordinary Union*** - unknown author  
- [exploringyourmind.com](http://exploringyourmind.com)

***5 Major Life Challenges That We’ve Endured As A Couple*** by Charlene Maugeri  
- [enduringallthings.com](http://enduringallthings.com)

***Working Together to Meet the Challenges of Life*** by Chris Garner - [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)