



Meaning in Suffering: A Theological Reflection on the Cross and the Resurrection for Pastoral Care and Counselling (Internationale Theologie, Bd. 5)

Daniel J. Louw

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The basic assumption is that suffering, as well as its association with evil, causes an existential problem as expressed in the now classic question: Why? For what purpose? Hence the attempt to take up the challenge put forth by theodicy, and to develop a theological argument along the lines of a theology of the cross and a theology of the resurrection.

The book focuses on the following question in order to develop a theological model for pastoral care and counselling: If it is true that God-images are influenced by culture and do play a decisive role in people's reaction to severe suffering and pain, how should God be interpreted and portrayed if Christian spirituality still is an influential factor in postmodernity's quest for meaning? What God-image is appropriate for a new millennium? These questions are linked to the problem of a pastoral diagnosis.

A reinterpretation of the power of God (God's omnipotence) is proposed in terms of the following pastoral concepts: compassion/vulnerability, and transformation/empowerment.

The book has been compiled along the lines of the following basic pastoral questions posed by people who suffer due to events which befall us as a «tragedy,» afflicting the innocent and the harmless: Why God? (Cause and explanation); How God? (Mode and identification); Where God and what? (Polarization and the will of God); When God? (Transformation and overcoming); For what purpose? (Our human quest for meaning).

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