

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 1

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Introduction

Glory is an admirable and impressively beautiful thing. Any wonderful, elaborate and striking thing is glory. The earthlings always display their glories through their extravagance and splendor. However, in the Biblical context, the glory of God is pure, divine, and miraculous. The best thing that can happen to any living being is to seek the glory of God at all costs; even if it means suffering for it. The glory of God is heavenly beauty and it is spiritually marvelous; according to the Book of Psalms which says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 19:1. It can be deduced from the passage that the glory of God is precious and eternal; therefore, it is worth suffering for.

Before Jesus came to this world, the Spirit of Jesus Christ had been witnessing and testifying in advance, about the sufferings of Christ concerning the glory of God and the glory that will follow those sufferings. The prophets were prompted to investigate this matter; according to the scripture which says; "Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the suffering of Christ and the glories that would follow." 1 Peter 1:11. If Jesus Christ was destined to suffer in order to be glorified, don't you think you too should suffer for God's glory?

Inasmuch as there is far more to this life than trusting in Christ, but you must also suffer for Him. Therefore, be prepared to share in Christ's suffering by living in a way that brings honor and glory to the Good News of Messiah. Make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the Gospel of Christ, and live in a way that will make you a credit to message of Christ; according to the

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epistle of Paul to the Philippians which says, “Only let your conduct be worthy of Gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.” **Philippians 1:27**. **Make sure that your way of life is in conformity with the requirements of the Gospel of Christ.**

Hence, proclaim the Gospel of Christ by helping each other with your troubles. Live creatively; and if someone falls into sin forgivingly restore such a person. Whenever you are sharing one another’s burden; you are fulfilling the law of Christ. As it is written, “Bear one another’s burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” **Galatians 6:2**. **Enduring one another’s troublesome faults is a way of sharing in Christ’s suffering. Unless you share other people’s burden and you are faithful to the end, you cannot proclaim to share in the suffering of Jesus Christ.**

Adaptation is a necessity: It is important for you to know how to live in humble circumstances when you are poor; and learn the secret of being happy at any time and in everything that happens. Be content with whatever you have, so that you will not fall into sin. Be pleased with whatever circumstance you find yourself in, and adapt with your situation which is for a brief period; so that you will not fall into temptation, or be shaken by your affliction. Do not be unsettled by your difficulties; because Christians have been destined for it. You must realize that you have to suffer for Christ’s sake; so do not be discouraged by your troubles.

Difficulties should not come as any surprise to you; since it is part of the Christianity calling; therefore, do not be shaken by your trials or persecution; according to the Bible passage which says, “That no one should be shaken by these afflictions, for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.” **1 Thessalonians 3:3**. **Do not be disturbed, or beguiled by your hardship; because they will soon pass away. Make sure that your afflictions do not lead**

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you astray. We pray that you will be counted worthy of the glory of God, in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 2

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Jesus Christ laid the example

Jesus Christ knew that He would suffer many things in order to be glorified. He was aware that people would reject Him as the Messiah, but He forged ahead. The elders of the people of Israel, deliberately disapproved and repudiated Jesus, and they connived to put Him to death. Despite the conspiracy, Christ did not deny His heavenly Father, but died for His belief; according to the scripture which says, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." Luke 9:22. If Jesus Christ suffered terribly, don't you think you too should suffer and be glorified?

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered first, before He was glorified. Jesus was focused, despite the fact that He was rejected by that generation. You too must first suffer for the glory of God, and be focused throughout the duration of your suffering; so that you will be admitted into the Glorious Kingdom of God. The Bible confirmed this fact by saying, "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation." Luke 17:25. The scripture clearly predicted that it is inevitable for Christ to suffer before He will be glorified. Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer, and then enter His glory? Don't you think you must follow the footsteps of Christ and suffer for the glory of God? The Book of Luke attested to this fact by saying, "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter His glory?" Luke 24:26. For this reason, everyone that is heaven-bound is destined to suffer; in order to be glorified with Jesus Christ their Redeemer. Imitate Jesus Christ, by suffering for the glory of God.

Persecution will precede glorification: Every soul who desire to be glorified must first be persecuted. If people mistreated Jesus

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Christ, they will mistreat you too. Inasmuch as the Messiah was harassed; you too will be harassed, if you want to be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. So, whenever people wrong you, continue to persevere in order to be glorified. Do not see your persecution as a strange thing, but endure, because it is the fate of the Beloved; according to the Bible passage which says, “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.” **John 15:20. Are you ready to be persecuted for Christ’s sake?**

Anyone who shares in the suffering of Christ will also share in His glory. The only way to share out of Jesus’ spiritual blessing and inheritance is to suffer for His name’s sake. Sharing in the suffering of Christ will make you share in His glory; according to the Book of Romans which says, “And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” **Romans 8:17. Are you prepared to go through what Christ went through? Do you know that the conditionality to be glorified is to partake in Christ’s suffering? Do you realize that if you go through hard times with Jesus, you will also go through good times with Him?**

Hence, do not fear whatever that you are passing through for Christ’s sake; because you will be glorified at the end. Dismiss the dread of your challenges and endure your ordeals; then you will be rewarded with a glorious life. If you do not quit, but endure your trials, even if it costs you your life; you will be given a crown of life. As it is written, “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” **Revelation 2:10. It is inevitable for you to be faithful to God and endure to the point of death; in order to be glorified.**

The apostles suffered for the glory of God: The apostles were arrested and imprisoned; however the Lord sent an angel who set

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them free from imprisonment. **The apostles were later arraigned before the council of elders. They were interrogated and beaten; so the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the sake of Christ's name. The apostles were happy; because they were given the honor of suffering shame for Jesus' name.** The Bible chronicled this event by saying "So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." **Acts 5:17-41. Are you ready to suffer dishonor for the sake of Jesus' name? Do you think you are worthy to bear humiliation for Messiah's name? You must be prepared to suffer with Christ, before you can be glorified.**

Jesus told Ananias that He will make clear to Saul/Paul how much he must suffer and endure for His name's sake. The transformation of Saul to Paul meant he would be afflicted on the account of the name of the Lord that he had persecuted. Inasmuch as Paul is the Lord's chosen instrument to bear His name before the Gentiles; Paul suffered greatly, but he endures till the end; so he was glorified. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." Acts 9:13-16. Your life will be transformed in this world and you will be glorified if you can suffer for Christ's sake.

For this reason, **Paul gave up everything else, and counted them as garbage. Paul the apostle counted the worldly things as liabilities that are incomparable with the greatness of knowing and suffering for the sake of Christ Jesus. For Jesus Christ's sake, Paul discarded everything else and counted all things a waste; so that he can have Christ.** The Bible certified this fact by saying, "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ." **Philippians 3:8. Are you ready to dump everything in the trash; so that you can focus on Christ? Are you prepared to shun worldliness; in order to win Jesus? If you consider everything in the world to be useless and garbage, why not fully embrace**

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Jesus Christ and suffer for Him? Do you realize that counting everything as a loss is incomparable to progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Jesus Christ your Savior?

Therefore, do whatever it takes; so that you will be fit for the kingdom of heaven for which you are suffering. Inasmuch as God is right and judges fairly; He has designed that you will be deemed qualify of His eternal kingdom, if you are obedient. It is left to you to strive to be considered worthy of the Glorious Home for which you are suffering. Without doubt, God intends to use your suffering for His glory to make you worthy of His heavenly kingdom. If you are righteous, all your trouble is a clear sign that God has decided to make you fit for His everlasting kingdom; according to the scripture which says, "Which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer." 2 Thessalonians 1:5. We pray that your suffering will not be in vain, in Jesus name. Amen.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 3

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Be ready to suffer for Christ's sake

It is not enough for Christians to only believe in Jesus Christ, but they must be ready to suffer for Him. Inasmuch as God has generously granted the Beloved the privilege not only to trust in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake. Are you prepared to suffer on His behalf? Adhere to Jesus Christ and relying on Him is not sufficient, but make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the Gospel of Christ and you are prepared to suffer for His sake. There's far more to this life than trusting in Christ; there's also suffering for him, and the suffering is as much as gift as the trusting in Jesus; according to the Book of Philippians which says, "For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Philippians 1:29. Are you ready to utilize your privilege of suffering for Christ? It is better to accept the honor that God gave you to believe and suffer for Christ.

You must have been warned that you will suffer affliction for your faith and Christ's sake. Your teacher or pastor must have told you previously that you will be persecuted before being glorified. The troubles should not come as any surprise to the Believers; because it is part of their calling to suffer for Christ. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, "For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know." 1 Thessalonians 3:4. Therefore, do not allow your suffering for Christ sake to make you renounce your faith or lead you astray.

Whenever you suffer for Christ's sake at the hand of your fellow-countrymen, you are sharing the experience of the real Church

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of God, where the truth reigns. Your experiences of persecution are like those of the righteous people who refused to compromise. So, imitate the honest people who are prepared to suffer for Christ in order to be glorified; according to the scripture which says, “For you brethren, become imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans.” **1 Thessalonians 2:14**. Therefore, endure whatever suffering that you are passing through for Christ’s sake because it won’t last.

Hence, do not relent because of your suffering, but continue to forge forward with your propagation of the Gospel. Even if you have been outrageously treated in the past, summon the courage to proclaim boldly the Good News of God. You must not be discouraged by how people maltreated and insulted you because of your faith in Christ; instead, ask God to embolden you. Ask God to strengthen and assist you to be brave to overcome your suffering. You need to emulate Paul and others who continued to spread the Gospel despite the opposition and the abominable treatment they received at Philippi; according to the Bible passage which says, “But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the Gospel in much conflict.” **1 Thessalonians 2:2**. Do not allow your suffering, or rough treatment to slow you down; instead be defiant to any opposition of the Gospel.

Apostle Paul suffered for Christ’s sake: Paul the apostle suffered for Christ’s sake more than the rest of the apostles; but he endured till the end and he was glorified. He worked harder than the other apostles; he was beaten times without number, he was imprisoned many times and often in danger of death or at the point of death. The Book of Corinthians chronicles these events by saying, “Are they ministers of Christ? —I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in death often.....” **2 Corinthians 11:23-27**. Learn a

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lesson from the experience of the Apostle Paul who suffered hardship, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, exposure to cold weather and lack of adequate clothing for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 4

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Rejoice for sharing Christ's suffering

It is inevitable for anyone whose goal is the Paradise to be prepared to suffer for Jesus Christ's his/her Lord and Savior's sake. Inasmuch as Christ suffered and died in order to purify and consecrate the Believer through the shedding of His blood, and set them apart as holy for God; it is your duty to also suffer to win souls into the kingdom of God. If Jesus used His blood to purify people from sin; are you ready to utilize your resources, wisdom, and influence to propagate the Gospel? It is time to use whatever gift and wealth that God bestowed upon you not for exploitation of others, but to evangelize and win souls into His eternal kingdom; according to the Book of Hebrews which says, "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate." Hebrews 13:12.

The ill-treatment and patience of the prophets: People need to follow the example of the prophets who are speaking in the name of the Lord; how they patiently accept their suffering for God. Take these messengers of God as an example of patient resolve and steadfastness. Take the real prophets who are filled with the Holy Spirit as your mentors; because they put up with anything, went through everything and never once quit; instead honoring God all the time. The Bible testified to this fact by saying, "My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience." James 5:10. Are you ready to patiently endure suffering? Do you think you can suffer many hard things for Christ's sake without complaints? Do you think you can be patient when you have to suffer?

For this reason, whenever you are being persecuted because of the Gospel, or you are suffering for Christ's sake; do not curse

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but be patient; according to the scripture which says, “Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse.” **Romans 12:14.** **Do not curse the people who cause you harm or hardship; instead ask God to change them for good. You must not curse those who are mistreating you and the people who are cruel in their attitude toward you;** according to the instruction of the Lord which say, “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.” **Matthew 5:44.** **Therefore, do not curse those who are trying to make your life a misery; instead pray for them, maybe God will touch their hearts and change them. You must neither be touchy nor temperamental during your suffering for Christ’s sake, but patiently endure.**

Choose suffering for Christ’s sake: People who choose to suffer for Christ’s sake will be rewarded in this world and the world to come. Imitate Moses who preferred to share the hardships and bear the shame of the people of God rather than having the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life in the palace of Pharaoh. Are you prepared to be mistreated with God’s people; instead of having the good time that sin could bring briefly? Do you prefer sharing the burden of Christendom to enjoying the temporary advantages of alliance with sinful people? Do you consider or value the “reproach of Christ” more precious than the uncertain wealth of this world? The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.” **Hebrews 11:25.** **Are you ready to refuse the privileges of the influential people to suffer for the Beloved? Do you think you can choose a hard life for Christ’s sake; instead of an opportunistic soft life of sin with the Satanists/wicked?**

Stop. Do not be sorrowful during the period that you are suffering for Christ’s sake but rejoice. Whatever that you are passing through; rejoice because it is incomparable to the compensation that you will receive from the Lord; if you endure. As it is written, “Rejoice always.”

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1 Thessalonians 5:16. Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time and thank God no matter what happens. Whatever your circumstance rejoice in the presence of God.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 5

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Jesus was made perfect through suffering

Jesus Christ our Lord was made perfect through what He suffered, during His time on earth. Inasmuch as all things were created by God; it was appropriate for Him to bring numerous people to glory by making Jesus Christ the Author and Founder of their Salvation pass through suffering. God deemed it fit as an act worthy of His divine nature to use experiences of suffering to make Christ the Pioneer of human Salvation perfect.

The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.” **Hebrews 2:10**. **Don't you think you too should suffer; if Jesus the initiator of the deliverance of mankind was brought to the goal through suffering? You must be prepared to suffer; because Jesus Christ too was made perfect by suffering as He led the Beloved to be saved and share in His glory.**

Jesus Christ suffered (in His humanity), and He was tempted; so He can help and provide immediate assistance to those who are being tempted and exposed to suffering. Since Christ had experienced suffering when He was tempted; He is able to give succor to those who are being tempted. Do not fear your suffering and testing; because Jesus is capable and abundantly able to assist you and give you relief; according to the scripture which says, “For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” **Hebrews 2:18. **The Savior will assist you; so endure your suffering, in order to be glorified with your Maker.****

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Be obedient during suffering: You must be obedient during your persecution and realize that your suffering is not an excuse for you to misbehave. Jesus Christ has never been disobedient to His Father; instead He learned obedience by what He suffered. He proved the meaning of obedience through all He suffered and became the source of eternal salvation to all who believingly obey Him; according to the Book of Hebrews which says, “Though he was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” Hebrews 5:8. Imitate Jesus Christ and be obedient throughout the duration of your suffering.

Hence, whenever you are ill-treated and suffer in accordance with the will of God; continue to do right and commit your soul to your Maker who will never fail you. So, if you find life difficult because you are doing the commandments of God; take it in stride and continue doing what is acceptable to your Creator; according to the Bible passage which says, “Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:19,

Be dead to sin: It is inevitable for you to think of your suffering as a weaning from your old sinful habit of always expecting to get your own way. Then, you will be able to live out your days free to pursue what pleases God; instead of being dominated or victimized by what you want. Though, to be dead to sin means physical pains; however, it is better to suffer to please God and be glorified eternally. If you suffer physically for Christ, you are finished with sin; because suffering puts an end to sin.

The Book of Peter confirmed this fact by saying, “Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” 1 Peter 4:1. Fortify yourself to suffer physically in order to be glorified. Do you know that suffering shows that you have stopped sinning? If you do not want to get involved with sin, be prepared to suffer for God’s glory. Whoever suffers in the flesh

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for Christ's sake is done with intentional sin; such a person has stopped pleasing himself/herself and the world.

For this reason, all the people who delight in pursuing righteousness and are determined to live a devoted life in Christ will be hunted. Anyone who belongs to Jesus Christ and wants to live right will have trouble from others. Be prepared to be persecuted if you want to live in a godly manner. Persecution is inevitable for those who are determined to live as a true Christian. The Book of Timothy testified to this fact by saying, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12. Are you prepared to live as God desires? Do not forget, anyone who wants to live all out for Christ is in for a lot of trouble, and there is no getting around it. However, if such a person endures, he/she will be glorified.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 6

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Suffer to have a good conscience

It is something valuable when anyone endures pain in order to keep a good conscience before God, even though such a person knows he/she is suffering unjustly. Whoever endures the sorrow of suffering unjustly, because of an awareness of the will of God finds favor. It is a grace when someone, because he/she is mindful of God, bears up under the pain of undeserved punishment. It is a commendable thing and God will bless you, if others treat you unfairly for being loyal to Him.

What really counts is for you to put up with suffering for God's sake, whenever you are treated badly for a good reason. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, "For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully." 1 Peter 2:19. Do you know that you will be glorified if you suffer unfairly, because of your God-given conscience and endure the pain? You will be blessed, if you endure undeserved suffering; because you are conscious of God's glorious will.

Suffering for evil is in vain: It is important that Christians should not suffer as criminals, or mischief-makers who are meddling in the affairs of others. It is not good for the Believers to suffer as swindlers or nefarious people. If any Beloved must suffer, it must not be because of vices; or because such a person infringes on other people's rights. The shepherds must make sure that none of the members of their churches suffers as a rogue or spy.

The saints must beware; so that they will not make the name of God to be blasphemed through them, by suffering as law breakers or as people who are disturbing the peace of their community; instead they should be proud of the distinguished

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status reflected in the great name of God. The Bible confirmed this fact by saying, “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as busybody in other people’s matters.” **1 Peter 4:15.** **Whenever you suffer, it must be for doing good and your faith; else your suffering will not lead to glorification, but blaspheming the name of God and insulting Him.**

When you do wrong and you are punished for it; there is no glory in it; however, if you suffer for doing good and patiently bear undeserved suffering; it is acceptable and pleasing to God. You don’t gain anything by being punished for some wrong you have done, but God will bless you if you have to suffer for doing something good. There is no credit for enduring the punishment you deserve for doing wrong, and nobody will praise you for it; however there is virtue in being treated badly for doing good or for no good reason; according to the Book of Peter which says, “For what credit is it, if you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.” **1 Peter 2:20. **Suffering for your mistake means nothing; but suffering for doing good means blessings.****

You are blessed when you suffer: Whenever you suffer for doing what is good and right, you are blessed. Do not be afraid of the threats of the evildoers; instead be prepared to suffer for righteousness; so that you will be admired and favored by God. If you have to suffer for doing good things; God will bless you, so don’t worry about what people might do, or be terrified by your detractors. Inasmuch as suffering for doing right means blessings; do not dread the intimidation of your adversaries, or be troubled by their opposition.

Keep a clear conscience before God; so that when people throw mud at you, none of it will stick; instead they will realize that they are the ones who need a bath; according to the scripture which says, “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed ‘And do not be afraid of their threats nor be troubled’” **1 Peter**

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3:14. If you happen to suffer for doing right; do not fear, but concentrate on being completely devoted to Christ, because it is a privilege.

Hence, it is better to suffer unjustly for doing right, if that should be God's will, than to suffer justly for doing wrong. You are better off to obey God and suffer for doing right than to suffer for doing wrong. It is better to suffer unjustly, than to be punished because of your offenses; as it is written, "For it is better, if it is the will of God to suffer for doing good than for evil." 1 Peter 3:17. Whenever you suffer for doing evil, you are making people blaspheme the name of God, but whenever you suffer for doing good and right you are blessed. Remember, it is better to suffer unfairly, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong, or be punished because you deserve it.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 7

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

The glory surpass your sufferings

You need to realize that whatever that you are suffering now for Christ's sake, is nothing compared to the shining-greatness that you will be given at the end of your journey on earth. From the standpoint of faith, whatever you are passing through is incomparable to the glory that God will reveal to you and in you at the last days. Continue to endure, because the sufferings of your present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that God will confer on you in heaven; if you persist. It is necessary to note that there is no comparison between your present hard times and the coming glorious good times.

So, your challenges, or persecution, or affliction, or trials because of your faith is nothing compare with the magnificent future God has planned for you; according to the Book of Romans which says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18. Do you know that an incomparable glory awaits you in heaven, if you endure your suffering? Therefore, continue to endure your sufferings for God's sake and you will be glorified.

People need to know that their little troubles are getting them ready for an eternal glory that will make all their troubles seem like nothing. Humans must know that their momentary affliction is producing for them an everlasting glory and endless blessings. Do not forget that your temporary distress is helping you to gain glory that surpasses all comparisons. It must be noted that your suffering is working out for your benefit by achieving a transcendent splendor and ceaseless glory of God. The Bible confirmed this fact by saying, "For our light affliction, which

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is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” **2 Corinthians 4:17**. Do not worry about your passing and brief tribulations, but endure so that you will be glorified.

Christians are called to suffer and be glorified: The primary purpose that Believers are called is to suffer for their faith, and be loyal to their Creator; then they will be glorified. God chose the Beloved to suffer as they follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ, who set an example by suffering for them. Inasmuch as your suffering is inseparable from your calling, don't you think you should suffer and be glorified? If Christ suffered and He was glorified, don't you think you too should suffer and reign eternally in heaven? The Bible testified to this fact by saying, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.” **1 Peter 2:21**. Remember, God called you to do good even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you.

For this reason, rejoice as you are sharing Christ's suffering so that you will rejoice exceedingly with triumph when His glory is revealed. Be glad for the chance to suffer as Christ suffered; because it will prepare you for greater happiness when the Messiah makes His glorious return. Do not be unduly alarmed at the ordeals that come to test your faith, as though they are some abnormal experience; because your trials make you partner with Christ in His suffering. Whenever life gets really difficult, do not jump to the conclusion that God is not working on your behalf; instead be glad that you are in the very thick of what Christ experienced; because it is a spiritual refining process with glory around the corner. The scripture corroborated this fact by saying, “But rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” **1 Peter 4:13**. Are you ready to partake in Christ's suffering? Do you know that suffering for Christ leads to glorification? Therefore, endure your suffering to inherit the kingdom of

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heaven.

Do not be sorrowful during the period that you are suffering for Christ's sake but rejoice. Whatever that you are passing through, rejoice because it is incomparable to the compensation that you will receive from the Lord; if you endure. As it is written, "Rejoice always." 1 Thessalonians 5:16. Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time and thank God no matter what happens. Whatever your circumstance, rejoice in the presence of God.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 8

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

The outcome of your persecution is blessing

Whenever you are being persecuted for doing what is morally right; you will be comfortable by inner peace and God's love. If people are persecuting you for righteousness sake, you will prosper spiritually; and you will be in the state in which the born-again child of God enjoys, and finds satisfaction in God's favour together with salvation, regardless of your outward conditions. When you are being treated badly for doing right; it will prompt the Lord to authorize your admission into the kingdom of heaven.

Doing what God requires means the kingdom of heaven belongs to you. Do not forget that you are blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution; because your persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom; according to the Book of Matthew which says, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for there is the kingdom of heaven." **Matthew 5:10**. Remember, whenever you are persecuted for the cause of goodness; you will be happy and enviably fortunate at the end.

There is reward for persecution: Do not be deterred when people insult you and falsely accuse you because of your association with Jesus Christ; since you will be rewarded with moral courage and you will be spiritually alive with life-joy in God's goodness. You are blessed anytime people mock you and hurt you; because of your Christianity faith. You are blessed whenever people blame you for doing right and l'll-treat you; and say slanderous things against you for Christ's sake, you will be comforted.

Whenever people harass you on account of Jesus Christ; it

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means the truth is too close for comfort, and they are uncomfortable; however, do not worry, because you will be glad. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.” Matthew 5:11. Do you want to be persecuted because of Christ and be blessed, or be persecuted for Satan and be doomed? We pray that you will make the right choice.

Do not be deterred by persecution: Any time that people persecute you because of Christ; rejoice and be glad. Be excited whenever you are persecuted because of Christianity; since an inexhaustible reward awaits you in heaven. Inasmuch as persecution is not a strange thing to the Believers; endure your persecution and claim your rewards in heaven. People persecuted the prophets/saints who lived before you; so do not yield because of mistreatment; according to the scripture which says, “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:12. Remember, you must experience persecution, before you can have access to the great reward that is reserved for you in heaven.

Hence, when people cause you to suffer because of your belief, do not be discouraged, but flee to another city. When people in one town mistreat you and pursue you in a manner that can injure you; hurry to another town. Whenever you are experiencing so much hate because of propagating the Gospel, do not quit, but escape to the next location. Be a survivor and always look for other options to proclaim the Good News; according to the Bible passage which says, “When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.” Matthew 10:23.

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You will be comforted

Anyone who partakes in suffering for God's glory and Christ's sake will be comforted. Keep your hope alive because you will be consoled; inasmuch as you share in the suffering of Jesus Christ. Spiritual help is on the way and you will be given relief from sufferings; if you persist. Have the assurance that you will be comforted; because anytime we suffer for Jesus Christ, it works out for healing and salvation. As it is written; "And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation." 2 Corinthians 1:7.

Therefore, just as we share in the sufferings of Christ, in the same way His wonderful comfort accrues to us. No matter the level of your suffering; your consolation will surpass it, and God will shower you with His immense comfort through Jesus Christ; according to the Book of Corinthians which says, "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abound through Christ." 2 Corinthians 1:5. It is simple, suffer for Christ's sake and be comforted in every aspect of your life.

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Topic: Suffering for God's glory – Part 9

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-16

Hope in the Lord during persecution

It is good to put your hope in the Lord who is abundantly able to save those who trust in Him. Whatever your circumstance, rely on the Lord the Preserver and Maintainer of humanity to turn your life around positively. Do not allow your suffering to becloud your sense; instead, have confident hope in God who can deliver you from your sufferings and troubles. It is inevitable for you to live a godly life and hope in the Lord; because God alone can reverse every reproach that you have suffered; according to the Book of Timothy which says, "For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially for those who believe." 1 Timothy 4:10.

Therefore, do not be ashamed, if you suffer because you are a Christian; instead thank God who made it possible for you to bear Christ's name. You must acknowledge that it is a privilege for you to be a Christian; so do not be sorry whenever you are ill-treated because of your faith. Give glory to God who deemed you worthy to suffer for His name and be assured that God's Spirit of glory is resting upon you during your persecution. Anytime you are abused because of Christ, count yourself fortunate; because it is the Spirit of God and His glory in you that brought you to the notice of others. When you suffer as a Christian, don't give it a second thought; instead be proud of the distinguished status reflected in that name; according to the scripture which says, "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christians let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter." 1 Peter 4:16. It is an honor to be considered worthy to suffer for your faith; so anytime you suffer as a Christian, praise God.

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Be resolute and take pleasure in your suffering

It is important for you to take pleasure in infirmities, insults, hardships and persecutions for the sake of Jesus Christ; it is then that you will be strengthened and become powerful in divine strength. Whatever that you are passing through, know that the grace of God is enough for you; so make up your mind to accept your infirmities, reproaches and distresses; in order to be made strong. You need to allow Christ's strength to move in on your weakness to make you strong. As it is written, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Corinthians 12:10.

Hence, be resolute that nothing in this world will separate you from the love of Jesus Christ. Nobody must make you split up from the love of your Savior, and anything under the sky must not coerce you to part or move away from the love of Messiah. The Bible confirmed this fact by saying, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:35. Nothing must get between you and God's love; so make sure nobody is able to drive a wedge between you and Christ's love; instead be resolute in order to be rewarded in this world and be glorified in heaven.

Finally, I urge and appeal to the church leaders to nurture, guard and guide the flock of God. It is their responsibility and they must not perform this duty by coercion or compulsion; but willingly and voluntarily. The church leaders must not be motivated by the advantages and profits attached to the office, or out of a desire for dishonest gain; but eagerly and with enthusiasm, in order to receive the crown of glory. It is important for the leaders of the church to tend and care for the flock of God. They must prove that they are really concerned about the well-being of the flock and not just to make money or because of

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their greed, then they will be given an unfading and incorruptible crown of glory. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, “The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.” **1 Peter 5:1-4.**

The Seal: 1 Peter 5:10: “But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”