

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 1

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

Introduction

Affliction is anything that causes pain, or distress. It is a state of grief or misery. Affliction is something that causes mental or bodily pain, or great suffering that you have to deal with. Anything that grievously affects your life, or trouble you is affliction; so whatever that is causing difficulties in your journey is affliction.

Numerous people are being afflicted in the world today due to their race, color, origin, gender and political disposition, or religious belief and standing for the truth; however, they should not relent or compromise; instead, they should continue to do what is right and good; because God will comfort them when they least expect. Almighty God will visit such people and turn their affliction to gladness.

Affliction comes from humans

Do not blame fate when things go wrong for you; because trouble, or affliction does not come from nowhere, but from human beings. It is the wickedness of humans that always results in affliction. The inhumane conduct of people that usually lead to suffering and misery for others. Therefore, you need to realize that hard times do not spring up from the dust, and trouble does not grow from the ground; but from misconduct of humans like anger, jealousy, exploitation, oppression etc. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, "For affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble spring from the ground." **Job 5:6**. Inasmuch as evil does not spring from the soil; it is time for people to stop afflicting one another.

People are languishing: Today, people are dealing with one another without compassion, and cruelty is at the highest level throughout the

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world. Agony is the daily companion across the globe, with feelings that their suffering only just begins, or it will get worse. Numerous people are torn apart by worrying about how to survive, and how to overcome their pains. The hearts of countless people are troubled and cannot rest due to the affliction that is confronting them. Many people are tossing at night instead of sleeping; due to the thoughts of suffering ahead of them. Nowadays, the majority of the population of the world is living from paycheck to paycheck without any end in sight; according to the scripture which says, "My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest; days of affliction confront me." **Job 30:27**. Are you living a hard life? Is your heart troubled and restless? Are days of suffering tormenting you? Cry to the Lord, and you will be comforted.

Wealth and power cannot protect you from distress

Do not be deceived, nothing in this world can protect you from distress; so, everyone will bear his or her own cross. God alone can keep you safe and out of trouble; so, you need to do what is good, and have faith in the Lord. It should be noted that your reputation, and riches cannot protect you from distress. All your wealth is insufficient to keep you from the confinement of distress. Your affluence cannot rescue you from spiritual affliction, and your great strength will not keep you out of trouble. Humans must taste one form of affliction, or the other during their lifetime. Do not let your great riches mislead you; do not think you can bribe your way out; because you cannot bribe God, and never blame Your Maker during your afflictive period. The Bible testified to this fact by saying, "Will your riches, or all the mighty forces, keep you from distress?" **Job 36:19**. The answer to the question is no! Hence, you need to realize that your wealth and efforts cannot keep you from pains and affliction.

It must be noted that if you endure your affliction without compromise, or deny God; then He will impart blessings and favor on you. God will complete and make you what you ought to be; then you will be established and settled. The underserved kindness that God shows to everyone prompted Jesus Christ to be appointed to share His eternal glory with you;

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however, you have to suffer for a while, before God will make you complete, strong, and firm. You must be afflicted for doing good, before you can be restored and steadied. The Devil is poised to attack; so, do not nap, but keep your guard up. You are not the only one plunged into these hard times. It is the same with Christians all over the world; so, keep a firm grip on the faith; because your suffering won't last forever. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, "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." **1 Peter 5:10**. Remember that God has great eternal and glorious plans for you in Christ that will put you on your feet for good; however, you must suffer for His name's sake, and be afflicted for doing good.

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Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 2

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

God does not like to punish people

Almighty God is a merciful God; though He is a disciplinarian, yet He works tenderly; because His stockpiles of loyal Love are immense. God takes no pleasure in making life hard by throwing roadblocks in people's way. God does not enjoy afflicting humans and causing sorrow; unless it is necessary. God does not like to punish people or make them sad; but the necessity to make them better individuals compels Him to do so. It is time for mankind to realize that God does not like causing them grief, or pain; but it is inevitable to give them a brighter future.

It must be noted that God will not arbitrarily bring suffering on mankind, or torment human beings; unless there is a reason or reasons. It is important to know that God will not deliberately hurt, or afflict human beings, unless it is for their own good. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, "For He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." **Lamentation 3:33**. It is your duty to proclaim to the world that God is not predisposed to hurting humans, and He does not enjoy causing them sorrow, or making them sad; unless it is necessary.

Affliction makes people learn God's demands: Humans need to realize that anytime God afflicts them, it is for their good. Whenever God corrects you, it will do you good, by restoring you to the righteous path. Occasionally, it is good for one to suffer; because it will make you study the commandments of the Lord and mend your relationship with Your Creator. Sometimes, challenges are what will make people pay attention to the statutes of the Lord and get closer to Him. At times, your troubles may turn out all for your good, and bring the best out of you; according to the scripture which says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes." **Psalm 119:71**. Suffering for a good cause is good for you; because it will make you pay attention to God's demands.

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Affliction makes the stray return to God: Today, affliction is what brought numerous people in the world to God. Humans are seeking God not because they love their Maker, or care about His work. Whenever humans are in trouble, they will come to the Lord to seek assistance. Inasmuch as God alone has power to give mankind succor from their suffering; people always troop to the Lord to seek resolution of their situations.

Before affliction, many people have wandered off from the righteous path; however, when they are afflicted, they will closely follow the Lord. Had it been that people are not afflicted, they will not keep or honor the word of the Lord. The reason why countless people are paying attention to the scriptures is because of their predicament. Suffering is what makes people keep the commands of God with loving obedience. Is it difficulty that makes you seek God? Are you living according to the dictates of your heart before your affliction? If you are not punished, do you think you will observe the words of God? Before God showed you what is right, do you know that you made mistakes? You must begin to carefully obey the teachings of the Lord; according to the Bible passage which says, "Before, I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep Your word." **Psalms 119:67.** Inasmuch as God is good and He is the source of good; so, you must be disciplined before He will train you about His goodness.

Scriptures comfort during affliction: The word of God is what gives life and revives humans. Do not forget that the promises of God are powerful enough to keep your hope alive during your distress. When you are in trouble, the word of God will give you peace of mind, and makes you strong again. The scriptures are potent enough to comfort you during affliction. You must rely on the word of God for consolation during your suffering. The words of the Lord are the things that will hold you up, or steady you in bad times; and they will rejuvenate you, if you depend on them.

God will never forget His promises to you; because He knew that they are your hope. The promise of God will give you strength in all your troubles and refresh your life; if you depend on them. Hence, if you hang on the words of God; they will comfort you in misery and preserve your life;

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according to the Book of Psalm which says, “This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.” **Psalm 119:50**. Since God can be trusted to keep His words if you depend on them; they will comfort you, renew your hope, and refresh your life during the affliction period. The only thing that can console you in distress, or when you are hurt, is the scripture.

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Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 3

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

Affliction is the result of wickedness

We need to realize that affliction is the product of wickedness. Inasmuch as there are countless wicked people that refuse to change in the world, then suffering will continue to spread unabated. The only way for hardship to subside throughout the world is for the evil doers to repent and change. As long as the immoral people are in positions of authority across the globe distress will know no bound among mankind.

It must be noted that the sinful people are afflicting the uncompromisingly righteous people, and they are taking bribes to deprive the less privileged justice. The bad people who are in control of the States around the globe are cheating and bullying the innocent, and they are exhorting ransoms from the needy. Are you using your position to afflict the righteous? Are you hurting people who do right in any way? Are you taking bribes to do wrong? If any of the answers to these questions is yes; then you are among the wicked people who are afflicting the righteous. The Bible testified to this fact by saying, "For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: afflicting the just and taking bribes; diverting the poor from justice at the gate." **Amos 5:12**. It is time to stop the persecution of the good people throughout the world, and the right-living people should not be bullied anymore.

Pains of affliction make people seek God: The afflicted are always seething within, and their hearts are always in turmoil. The afflicted are always torn apart by worries and pains. Confusion and uncertainty make the hearts of the afflicted to be troubled and restless; because of their hardships. Invariably, the afflicted have no other choice than to seek God. When the suffering is severe, the mistreated people will have to pray to God for assistance.

The dissatisfied condition of the afflicted force them to cry God for deliverance, because they are hurting; God will then pay attention to the cry of the needy; according to the Book of Job which says, "So that they caused the cry of the poor to come to Him; for He hears the cry of the

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afflicted.” **Job 34:28**. Since the cry of the needy always catches God’s attention, cry to Him whenever you are hurt.

Cry to God during affliction: During hard times, cry to God for assistance and comfort. Whenever you are in distress, ask God to forgive your sins that might have contributed to your predicament. Tell your Maker to consider your troubles and miseries; and forgive your sins. Plead with God to look at your suffering, and pains; in order to take away your sins, and comfort you. Implore God to take a look at your life of distress and hard labor; in order to give you succor; according to the scripture which says, “Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.” **Psalms 25:18**.

You need to beg God to have pity on you, and show that He cares about you by coming to your aid. Entreat God to turn to you, and be gracious to you; because you are lonely and afflicted. Pray to God to be merciful to you; because you are weak and hurting; according to the Bible passage which says, “Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me, for I am desolate and afflicted.” **Psalms 25:16**. You need to beseech God to show you mercy; because you are helpless, overwhelmed, and in deep distress.

During your affliction, it is inevitable for you to plead with your Maker to look upon you, and rectify your situation. Tell God to remember you with good things that will turn your reproaches to glories. Pray to God to expel sorrow, misery, and humiliation from your journey and quickly transform your life. You need to beg God to answer your supplications, and you can make a vow that you know that you can easily redeem.

You can emulate Hanna who prayed to God at Shiloh, and her prayer was answered. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, “Then she made a vow and said, ‘O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.’” **1 Samuel 1:11**. We pray that God will quit neglecting you. You will be remembered with good things that will transform your life, and make secret weeping cease in your journey.

Today, God will recompense you for whatever wrong people have done to you. Good things and blessings will replace the curses placed upon you. Your source of affliction will turn to a source of joy. God will do new things

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in your life that will make you forget your pains and hardships. God will erase all forms of distress from your journey, and you will have every cause to celebrate before this month passes away. Whether Satan likes or not, God will put a smile on your face this year, in Jesus' name.

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Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 4

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

Suffering is rampant in the world

Nowadays, people are suffering throughout the world, and the pains of humanity know no bounds. The majority of the populace of the world are going through hardships; because they failed to repent and seek God, who can comfort them. The economic downturn is hurting people across the globe, because mankind has forsaken the Almighty God, who has the power to make them buoyant. Do not be deceived, God is the only Being who can sustain you during your existence. So, why not repent, and turn to God who can give you succor?

Today, the situation of the world is dire, and affliction is spreading unchecked throughout the 'nook and corner of the world.' Though, the majority of these hardships are man-made problems; which means it is the inhumane conduct of humans towards one another that causes these pains and sufferings. Even before any natural disaster happens, God will send a presage (a sign, or warning that something bad will happen); because He will not willingly hurt humans; however, people always remain adamant until it is too late.

People and animals are suffering on earth; the beasts groan, the herds of cattle are perplexed, and they are wandering aimlessly; because they have no pasture; the flock of sheep too suffer punishment. Meals are scarce in many households, and food is just a memory at the tables of many families; because of what is happening in the world. The Book of Joel chronicled the gloomy situation of the world by saying, "How the animals groan! The herds of cattle are restless, because they have no pasture; even the flocks of sheep suffer punishment." **Joel 1:18**

Do not turn to evil to escape affliction: It is a common occurrence in the world today to turn to wicked conduct, in order to escape affliction. Even countless of the so-called Christians prefer the vice of complaining against God, rather than learning from affliction. Therefore, be on guard! Do not turn to evil as a way to escape your suffering. Numerous people are obsessed with putting blame on God whenever things go wrong for them; instead of submission in affliction.

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Inasmuch as you cannot sleep off your troubles, or buy your way out of your affliction; do not make things worse by turning to iniquity to escape your pains, or hardships. Sometimes, God makes humans suffer; in order to keep them from a life of evil, and prepare them for the future. Therefore, beware of turning to iniquity; instead turn to God, who can give you relief. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, "Take heed, do not turn to iniquity, for you have chosen this rather than affliction." **Job 36:21.**

You need to emulate Moses who preferred to endure the hardships of the people of God rather than enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. If you are a true Christian; you will choose to share the suffering and bearing the shame of Brethren; instead of having the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life. Are you ready to be mistreated with the Believers rather than having the good time that sin can bring briefly? Do you value suffering in the Messiah's camp more than earthly wealth? Are you prepared to refuse privileges of a royal house; because of God's commands? Are you ready to choose a hard life with God's people instead of an opportunistic soft life of sin with the oppressors? The Bible affirmed this fact by saying, ".....choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin." **Hebrews 11:24-25.**

Do not afflict anyone: People should stop mistreating one another because their Maker is not pleased with this vice. It is an offence before the Lord to cheat, or exploit anyone; however, people are oppressing one another across the globe at an alarming rate. The Bible stated that "You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child." **Exodus 22:22.** It is not limited to the widows and orphans; so, you must never abuse anyone, if you do not want God to be displeased with you. Whoever that is hurting or oppressing others; cannot claim to be a child of God.

Anytime you harm innocent people, and they cry to God for help; God will avenge them, and such a person will be punished. God will surely come to the rescue of the oppressed, and their oppressors will face the consequences. God will never fail to act on the cry of the afflicted, and He will pour His fury on the people who are afflicting them; according to the Bible passages which says, "If you afflict them in any way, and they cry to Me, I will surely hear their cry;....." **Exodus 22:23-24.** For this reason, do not exploit or afflict anyone; if you do not want to be punished.

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Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 5

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

Affliction is to improve and perfect you

The purpose of affliction is to develop your mental capacity through your challenges. Your experiences through your affliction will make you achieve a better relationship with Your Creator. Affliction usually strengthens humans, and gives them the needed boldness to confront the future. It is important to note that if you do not deny God, or betray His covenant during your affliction; then your life will be upgraded. God will boost your confidence to overcome your challenges, if you endure your difficulties without complaints.

Humans need to realize that affliction will make them have the required qualities that pleases God. Affliction and temptation are the ways to prove your loyalty to your Maker. So, you need to admit that affliction is capable of making you possess the characteristics of a born-again Christian, and bring you closer to God through your supplications. Therefore, the aim of affliction is to make you correct your faults, and be blameless before Almighty God.

During affliction, numerous people usually think that God has ‘washed His hands off them’; however, this is not true; because the Lord is only testing them in the spiritual furnace of suffering. God always purifies mankind not by fire as silver is made pure, but by giving them troubles and affliction. It is a common occurrence for God to test the Believers in hard times just as silver is refined in a heated furnace. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, “Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.” **Isaiah 48:10**. Though the Lord may give you troubles, and make you go through hard times; however, He will teach you how to escape your misery, and you will be rescued.

The righteous will not be afflicted, if

If Jesus Christ is not afflicted, then no Believer will be afflicted; had it been the Redeemer is not afflicted then all Christians will live an affliction-free lives.

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However, our Lord Jesus Christ was oppressed and treated harshly during His time on earth. Christ was mistreated and afflicted; however, He did not complain during His ordeal. Jesus endured great pain because of humanity; so, if the Messiah was afflicted, do you think the Beloved will not be afflicted? Don't you think that if Christ suffered His followers who are the Christians should also suffer?

For this reason, do not use foolishness to query God during your affliction. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth." **Isaiah 53:7**. You need to imitate Jesus Christ by not complaining, or querying God during your affliction.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous

Anyone who is righteous will have not one but many problems. Many hardships and perplexing circumstances will confront the righteous during their lifetime; but the Lord will rescue them from all the adversities. You need to realize that God will only deliver you from many evils that are confronting you, if and only if you are righteous. So, people who do what is right will have many troubles; but God will solve them all. When people are suffering, it does not signify that they are bad; they may be a part of the righteous who are being afflicted.

If you are facing many troubles; it may be because of your righteousness, and God will save you from them; according to the Book of Psalms which says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all." **Psalms 34:19**. The conditionality that will make God rescue you from your suffering is to be righteous. If you want to be delivered from your dangerous situation, you must be godly. Inasmuch as no human can escape troubles or distresses, you must do what is good and right before God can assist or give you aid.

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Topic: The affliction of the righteous – Part 6

Bible Reading: Psalm 34:15-20

Proclaim the year of grace and favor

Time has come for you to proclaim globally to the afflicted that God will be favorable to them, and He will pour His wrath on their oppressors. This year, God will deliver those who are afflicted, and He will alleviate their sufferings. 2024 is the Year that God will show kindness to the distressed people, and He will punish their enemies. Laughter will replace weeping in your journey, and you will be comforted in every aspect of your life, in Jesus name. Amen.

Vengeance of God will be visible in the lives of those who are troubling you; whereas grace and favor will be your portion; according to the scripture which says, “To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.” **Isaiah 61:2**. You need to announce to the afflicted throughout the world that God will be gracious and favorable to them. Whatever the circumstance, God will make them receive messages of joy instead of news of doom, and He will give them a praising heart instead of a languid spirit.

Inasmuch as God will not forget to comfort the afflicted; it is your duty to encourage the downhearted. You need to refresh and cheer up people in need, or those who feel miserable. The Bible attested to this fact by saying, “Comfort, yes, comfort My people!’ says your God.” **Isaiah 40:1**. Therefore, comfort the dejected and the people who are downcast; in order to be reassured that the situation will improve; so that they will go from worrying to tranquility in no time.

You are comforted for a purpose

God comforts and encourages the troubled people; so that they will be able to comfort others who are in any kind of trouble. The reason why the Lord comforts the afflicted is for them to console the distressed people with the comfort that they are comforted by God. You are comforted in your trials; so that you in turn can give the same sort of strong sympathy to others during their challenges.

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Do not forget that God assisted you during your hard times; so that you will assist others using the same assistance that you received from Him during your ordeal; according to the Bible passage which says, "Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." **2 Corinthians 1:4**. If you fail, or refuse to share the comfort that you received from God during your difficulties with others; then you are a disobedient person.

Therefore, it is your duty to give strong sympathy and encouragement to others during their misery; so that God will approve you, in a manner that will make your enemies feel like fools, due to the comfort you received. The Lord will show you a sign of goodwill and favor that will make those who despise you to be disgraced. The help and comfort that God will grant you will signify a sign of favor that will make your foes lose face.

God will make a show of how much He loves you; if and only if you act as instructed, and the bullies who are troubling or afflicting you to be slack-jawed. The Bible corroborated this fact by saying, "Show me a sign for good, that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, because You, Lord, have helped and comforted me." **Psalm 86:17**. God will prove His goodness to you; by showing you a sign that benefits you; that is potent enough to disappoint and disgrace your adversaries.