

Don't Waste Your Sorrows

OBJECTIVE: To Develop A Proper Attitude Toward Suffering.

I Peter 4:1

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

REMEMBER:

- *You are destined for the throne
- *God has and is Sanctifying you to himself
- *All things work together for good to those that love God. . .

ERRONEOUS CONCEPTS ABOUT CHRISTIANS AND SUFFERING

1. Christians should never suffer.
2. If we are suffering it is because we have sinned.
3. The devil causes God's people to be afflicted.

GREAT SUFFERS IN THE CHURCH'S HISTORY

*** Consider the Prophets of Old.**

Hebrews 11:35-37

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

James 5:10, 11

10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.

11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

*** Consider the Lord Jesus**

Hebrews 12:2-4

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

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*Consider the Early Church.

Hebrews 10:32-34

32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings:

33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated;

34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

OUR CALLING:

We are called to take inevitable suffering, endure it, overcome it and allow it to work on our behalf to accomplish a great degree of glory.

I Peter 2:18-21

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what credit is it if, when 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.

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

Don't Waste Your Sorrows # 2

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Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

REMEMBER:

1. You are destined to reign with Christ. You are Royalty and must be prepared in all wisdom and righteousness.

II Timothy. 2:12

12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

2. You are equipped to be an overcomer.

Romans 8:35-37

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Isaiah 43:1,2

1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.

3. Christ utilized His sufferings.

Hebrews 5:7,8

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Don't Waste Your Sorrows # 2

GOD IS AT WORK IN YOU!

1. A purging process is going on.

Matthew 3:11,12

11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

12 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

2. A perfecting work is also going on.

Hebrews 13:20,21

20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

AREAS OF DIVINE SCRUTINY:

1. Self-opinion
2. Affections
3. Religious ideas
4. Friendships
5. Willingness

God Uses Our Troubles To Address These Issues.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST! WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Crucifixion was a slow death that often took days. Spiritual crucifixion may be accomplished in a moment of crises or over a period of many years. Death is the result of the cross. For us it is a death among other things too:

- * Self-will
- * Troubles and Sorrows
- * Comfort or Annoyances
- * Praise or Blame

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2

APOSTLES' REACTION TO TROUBLE

1. They rejoiced.

Acts 5:40-42

40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them,

they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Romans 5:3-5

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

2. They appreciated the consequences.

Romans 8:18

18 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.

II Corinthians 4:17,18

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

WRONG REACTION:

1. Self pity
2. Depression
3. Rebellion

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3

1. SUFFERING AND REGENERATION
2. TRUE CHRISTIAN SUFFERING

I Peter 4:12-16

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;
13 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.
14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.
15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.
16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

3. THINGS TO LEARN BY SUFFERING
 - A. Obedience
 - B. Dependence upon God
 - C. Patience
 - D. Hope
 - E. Love
4. THINGS BY WHICH WE LEARN
 - A. Sickness
 - B. Unpleasant work
 - C. Money problems
 - D. Relationship problems
 - E. Inactivity

ACCIDENTS OR DESIGN?

I walked a mile with pleasure;
She chattered all the way,
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow;
And never a word said she;
But, O, the things I learned from her
When sorrow walked with me.

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4

"Suffering is not an accident but a gift to be cherished for when properly received it works to enhance one's eternal rank, fame and honor."

DON'T WASTE YOUR SORROWS by Paul Billheimer

INTRODUCING GOD'S HEAVENLY PEOPLE

Revelation 7:9-17

9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

12 saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

*14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.***

15 "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

16 "They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;

17 "for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

THE APOSTLES TOLD CHRISTIANS TO EXPECT TRIBULATION AS THEY ENTERED THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Acts 14:22

22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

FOUR ATTITUDES TO TRIBULATION

1. The unrealistic positive mental attitude.
2. The fatalistic negative attitude.
3. The militant attitude.
4. The overcoming attitude.

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4

PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH

II Corinthians 12:7-10

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 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.

1. We still don't know what it was.
2. We do know the reason it was sent. It was to prevent spiritual pride in Paul.
3. How did Paul pray concerning his thorn?
4. What was the Lord's reply?
5. What was Paul's new perspective concerning the thorny situation?

PAUL'S LESSON WELL LEARNED

Philippians 4:11-13 NKJV

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

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5

LEARNING LOVE THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

Why did God ordain marriage?

It is the most exact prototype of Christ and the Church.

Marriage is a high ideal that is worked out through years of self-sacrifice.

The home is a miniature world. When the home is right the world is better.

God sets us in families for a purpose; to learn true Christianity.

Psalms 68:6

6 God sets the solitary in families; He brings out those who are bound into prosperity; But the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

Mutual submission and respect are the major elements to healthy relationships.

Ephesians 5:21-23

21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

I Peter 5:5,6

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

An unhealthy marriage or relationship gives an opportunity to yet learn a greater degree of Christian grace. Unconditional love is not easily learned. Long suffering is only developed by suffering long. Egos and unreal expectations don't die easily.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM . . .

1. An unbelieving mate?
2. A negative mate?
3. An abusive mate?
4. An unfaithful mate?

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5

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM . . .

1. A sacrificial mate?
2. A faithful mate?
3. A positive mate?

Father, I offer the sacrifice of praise for my mate just as he (she) is because You have permitted him (her) to be this way and have brought us together in a marriage relationship. I know that You are able and therefore I know that You are working through him (her) as he (she) is, to bring Your purposes to pass, overruling his (her) spiritual, character, and personality limitations for Your glory. Amen

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6

“The only real calamity in life is to lose one’s faith in God.” (Maclaren)

“The distressing situation will pass but one’s reaction toward it will leave a moral and spiritual deposit in his character that is eternal.” (Billheimer)

Behind my life the Weaver stands,
And works His wondrous will.
I leave it in His all-wise hands,
And trust His perfect skill;
Should mystery enshroud His plan,
And my short sight be dim,
I will not try the whole to scan,
But leave each thread with Him.

Nor till the loom is silent,
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God unfold the pattern,
And explain the reason why
The dark threads were as needful
In the Master’s skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern which He planned. ---Unknown

FALLING IN SECONDARY ENDEAVORS TO SUCCEED IN THE MOST IMPORTANT ENDEAVOR OF ALL

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT: THE WORK OR THE WORKER?

THREE ENEMIES TO A WORK OF LOVE.

1. Vain ambition
2. Human energy
3. Un-crucified flesh