

FATHER'S HEART MINISTRIES  
SHAUN BLIGNAUT

JOY IN SUFFERING

Isa.53:10

***"Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer..."***

The Father caused Jesus to suffer.

It was the Lord's **will**

This word, "**will**" here describes the Father's delight, or His pleasure in the suffering of His Son! It also means, "*To have a strong positive attraction for something or someone*" This sounds strange and even unacceptable to believers with un-renewed minds!

The sufferings of our Saviour were not without purpose: This ultimate purpose in the sufferings of Jesus Christ activated a strong positive attraction in the Father for His Son.

The sufferings of Jesus were directed toward the goal in mind of the Father – our Redemption – our deliverance!

Heb.5:8

***"Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered..."***

***"Obedience"*** refers to the faith which obeys God's will!

So, the suffering of Jesus was connected to the will of the Father.

In a sense, it also speaks of coming into compliance to divine requirements!

***"Learned"*** speaks of the enabling of yourself to know so that you can become responsible.

So Jesus could come into compliance to divine requirements because He had to educate himself concerning the will of the Father and execute it in the earth!

Suffering was the means by which He stepped into compliance with the requirements of the Father!

Certain requirements of God for the executing of His divine will can only be activated in human life when a certain degree of suffering is embraced!

The apostolic lifestyle is inseparable from suffering!

1Pet.2:20-21

***"...But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps"***

Jesus left us an "**example**" in suffering.

He modelled it! He set the pattern for the Church!

The word example means "*an example for imitation*"

Christ suffered to execute the will of the Father!

The pattern was set by Christ: suffering is connected to the will of the Father, nothing else! Suffering must never be self-inflicted, it must be because we have set ourselves in agreement with God and His will.

### **1 Pet.4:12-16**

***“Dear friends do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange has happened to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.”***

Note the following:

- We are participants in the sufferings of Christ
- Suffering and glory are connected
- No suffering, no glory
- We should never suffer for reasons other than the name of Christ

**“Suffering”** is the Greek word, ***Pathema*** which carries the idea of :

- Deep internal conflict
- A passion and deep longing
- A contest
- An internal battle

So, suffering is not just, outward, external and physical, but a deep internal conflict to subdue desires within that war against the will of God!

But more than the internal conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, ***Pathema*** refers to the internal battle and warfare we experience because of the apostasy we see in the church; the moral decay in society; the humanistic philosophies that has invaded the Church; and the intense onslaught of anti-Christ dimensions against the Cross!

### **Embracing Christ**

The day you exercised your will to choose Christ, you also made a choice to embrace suffering, rejection, persecution, trials, shakings and siftings.

Christianity is not observing a set of rules, but embracing, in totality, the Person of Christ.

Christ does not elevate us above the problems and difficulties of everyday living!

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not a vaccination that makes us immune to the distresses and difficulties of life.

I believe Jesus is a pathway through the troubles of life!

People say that if you just commit yourself to Christ, everything will be rosy and that you will be healthy and wealthy, but in spite of our true commitment to Jesus, we find ourselves utterly defeated in some occasions!

When we embrace Christ, we embrace everything He is!

Embracing Christ, is embracing His:

- Person
- Mission
- Purposes
- Ministry

### **1Jn.2:6**

***“He that says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked”***

God wants us to fully identify with Christ's life, death and costly sufferings!  
He suffered, we will suffer!

### **Job 5:7**

***“Man is born unto trouble as surely as sparks fly upward”***

Christ suffered, you will suffer – the servant is not greater than the master. There are pressures of want, need, sorrow, persecution, unpopularity and loneliness.

Some suffer for what they have done; others suffer because of what people do to them; others suffer simply because of who they are. Many suffer because of circumstances they cannot control.

Pain is distressing. There can be nights of agony when it seems God is so unfair and it seems that there is no possible help or answer!

### **Isa.53:3**

**(Read)**

### **1 Pet.4:12**

***“Do not be surprised; do not think it strange when an occasion of suffering befalls you”***

Do not be alarmed! Peter is saying: *You ought to know – to embrace Christ is also to embrace suffering”*

Are you alarmed? And disheartened? Take courage: Consider it pure joy!

Peter is saying: "It is not a matter of revelation by the Spirit – He says that if you are in Christ, it should be common sense and even expectant to be confronted by suffering and trials!

**Suffering will happen to you, if you bear the Name of Jesus Christ!**

**Acts 5:41**

***"The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name"***

**Some Conclusions**

***(Read 1 Pet.4:19 with 1 Pet.4:14-16)***

- Those that suffer because of Christ's Name, suffer according to God's will  
If you suffer the scars of ridicule, insults and persecution for the sake of His Name, you suffer for a worthy cause!

If the source of your suffering, rejection is founded upon you standing for Jesus, may it be against family, friends, fellow brothers and sisters – count yourself worthy! You are in the centre of God's will. Count it pure joy!

- Suffering for the sake of Christ is:
  1. God – driven
  2. God – initiated
  3. God – inspired

**Phil.2:13**

***"For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His Good purpose"***

Sometimes God will for us to be crushed and He causes us to suffer!

Why?

Because we are so precious in His sight. Therefore, as the goldsmith and Silversmith refines the silver or gold again and again in the furnace, so does God test, purify and try us: He sets a high value upon us, and therefore He tests us.

He chastens us because He loves us! With every trial and affliction and shaking in our lives, God works in you the perfections of His Son.

**Mal.3:2-4**

***"But who can endure the day of His coming? Who can stand when He appears? For He will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer soap He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; He will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness..."***

God wants to make you like Jesus Christ, not just historically in what Christ accomplished in you by His sacrificial death – but He wants you to work out that inward perfections of Christ, experientially.

Will you allow Him to work in you so that you can will and act according to His good purpose?

**“Levites”** means, **“enjoined”** Levites are those who have joined themselves unto God.

**1 Cor.6:17**

**“He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit with Him”**

Levites were taken from among the Israelites according to **Num.8**

They were separated, or consecrated unto God for His special purposes.

They are those that are sold out to His:

1. Lordship
2. Government
3. Rule and authority

Are you sold out? If yes, then He will test you and refine you!

Why? – purpose

God wants offerings in righteousness!

Only when you are willing to be subjected to His process of cleansing, Sifting, sorting and shaking will your offerings become acceptable!

- Suffering produces obedience and Christ's perfections in us

**Heb.5:8-9**

**“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered and once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him”**

God wants the perfections of His Son to be outworked in us – and His perfections came by suffering – ours too!

God will increase pressure, trials, sufferings in order for us to embrace obedience:- putting God's Word in action in our lives.

***Obedience demonstrates love!***

**Jn.14:15**

**“If you love me, you will obey what I command”**

Love is connected to obedience!

**2 Cor.4:11**

**“For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that His life may be revealed in our mortal body”**

The perfections of Christ are a manifestation of God's image that reflects His character! The image of God is the character of God!

In **Gal.4:19**, Paul desires Christ to be formed in us and in **Rom.13:14** he says, *"Clothe yourself with Christ"*

When Christ is formed in us, His character is being perfected in us! Character produces conduct. The outworking of God's character in us bring forth His conduct in our live then we can proclaim:

**1 Jn.4:17**

***"For as He is, so are we in this world"***

Some reasons for suffering

1. We may bring suffering upon ourselves  
Abuse of our bodies, not looking after it, lack of discipline, over indulging can bring sickness.
2. Sometimes God is taking corrective action because of sin and disobedience – Heb.12:5-11  
God will correct and discipline His own.
3. God may permit suffering so we learn to respond to problems in a Biblical way – Heb.5:8
4. Sometimes God permit suffering to teach us that pain is a part of life Phil.2:9  
*"For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not to only believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him"*
5. God may permit suffering for our wellbeing Rom.8:28  
*"In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose"*
6. Sometimes God permits suffering to speak though our life and testimony to comfort others Jn.9:3  
*"Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Jesus, 'But this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life'"*

With all this in mind, Peter exhorts us to consider it pure **joy** when you suffer – rejoice!

The perfect antidote or remedy for suffering is joy!

In joy, God's strength is perfected in us – Neh.8:10.

**"Joy"** in the Greek is **Chara** which means, *"Exceeding gladness"* It is separated from the soul which is influenced by its feelings and emotions!

Joy is not a product of the soul and can never originate there!

Joy is not dependent upon outward circumstances, it works by faith!  
Human joy looks at things upon the earth and is affected by the conditions on earth!

Joy has no relationship to the environment.

Joy depends on Jesus, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

### **Ps.16:11**

***"In thy presence is fullness of joy; and at thy right hand there are pleasure for evermore"***

If we begin to live in the consciousness of His presence by faith, and relate to Him in everything that happens, we find that joy is there all the time!

Human happiness fluctuates as outward circumstances changes.

Happiness is rooted in our souls.

If we live in relation to things around us, they will tell us all sorts of lies. Our emotions will fluctuate as conditions around us changes!

Our joy constantly comes to us from our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ!

### **Jn.15:11**

This verse states that our joy is complete, or kept full as we abide in Christ.

### **Jn.16:22**

***"...And your joy no man takes from you"***

Do not blame others for your lack of joy, because outward circumstances cannot influence joy!

### **Isa.12:3**

***"With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation"***

You draw your spiritual provision with joy.

Joy opens up the supply lines of heaven!

Joy is the bucket with which you get the water (Spiritual sustenance) out of the resource of God!

When you begin to praise the Lord in adverse circumstances, you are letting down the bucket to replenish depleted resource!

### **Why Rejoice?**

#### **1 Pet.4:13**

***"But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed"***

We rejoice because we participate in the sufferings of Christ!

The only remedy for suffering is joy and rejoicing; it is not a joy that comes by human intellect!

### **Acts.5: 40-41**

***“They called the apostles in and had them flogged. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name”***

Even physical beatings could not stop the apostles rejoicing!

They rejoiced because suffering for Christ was a very worthy cause!

We also should count ourselves privileged suffering for Christ and His cause, for when we suffer, Christ suffers in us, and he feels our infirmities.

### **Heb.12:2**

***“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”***

Jesus looked beyond the present suffering and saw us saved. He saw His resurrection and Satan, sin and death's demise!

He had His gaze fixed upon His future glory – the victory of His exalted state.

In your suffering, focus on the higher purpose being worked out in your life!

### **Acts 16:22-26**

***“The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.”***

### **Some observations:**

- The word of the apostles brought them into sharp dispute and conflict with the religious fraternity of their day.
- This dispute eventually led to them being severely flogged
- They were thrown into prison and put into stocks
- At the darkest hour of their ordeal, they started to pray and praise God
- Their praise activated the power of God on their behalf
- Their faith in God and their expression of joy in the midst of severe trouble, brought deliverance to everyone who was in bondage!
- These apostles did not sink into a self-pity-party. They did not allow their circumstances, severe as it was, to dictate to their belief in God's ability to deliver them.

- What activated their release from prison? **Their joy and rejoicing while being under tremendous stress!**

Conclusion:

- As Christians, we are not immune against life's difficulties!
- Understand that to live for Christ includes suffering for Him!
- The antidote for suffering is joy!
- Joy is not dependent on outward circumstances of life
- Joy is a fruit of the Spirit and is produced by our union with the Him
- Joy cannot be manufactured, but is produced by our deep interaction and communion with the Holy Spirit.
- Happiness is not joy, but a reaction to positive circumstances of life

**2 Cor.4:8-9**

***"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned, struck down, but not destroyed."***

We are:

- Hard pressed
- Perplexed
- Persecuted
- Struck down

Yet not:

- Crushed
- In despair
- Abandoned
- Destroyed

Keep your focus on Christ!

Cast your cares and burdens on Him

Remember, SMILE, JESUS LOVES YOU!

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