

Christians Are Partners With Christ in His Sufferings

TEXT: I Peter 4:16 (KJV)

Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

Context: I Peter 4:1-19 (NLT)

¹ So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. ² You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. ³ You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. ⁴ Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. ⁵ But remember that they will have to face God, who will judge everyone, both the living and the dead. ⁶ That is why the Good News was preached to those who are now dead—so although they were destined to die like all people, they now live forever with God in the Spirit. ⁷ The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. ⁸ Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. ¹⁰ God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. ¹¹ Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen. ¹² Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. ¹⁴ So be happy when you are insulted for being a Christian, for then the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs. ¹⁶ But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name! ¹⁷ For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God's household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Good News? ¹⁸ And also, "If the righteous are barely saved, what will happen to godless sinners?" ¹⁹ So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you.

Three Points:

Point #1: We Must Suffer for Christ's Church

Point #2: We Must Suffer to Teach the Lost the Gospel

Point #3: We Must Suffer to Stop Sinning

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Point #1: We Must Suffer for Christ's Church:

- Colossians 1:24 (AMP)
- Ephesians 5:25 (KJV)

Colossians 1:24 (AMP)

[Even] now I rejoice in the midst of my sufferings on your behalf. And in my own person I am making up whatever is still lacking *and* remains to be completed [on our part] of Christ's afflictions, for the sake of His body, which is the church.

Ephesians 5:25 (KJV)

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Point #2: We Must Suffer to Teach the Lost the Gospel

- Acts 20:24 (LNT)
- Acts 8:1-4 (KJV)

Acts 20:24 (LNT)

But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love.

Acts 8:1-4 (KJV)

¹ And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. ³ As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. ⁴ Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

Point #3: We Must Suffer to Stop Sinning

- I Peter 4:2-5 (KJV)
- I Corinthians 6:9-11 (NLT)

I Peter 4:2-5 (KJV)

² That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. ³ For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: ⁴ Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*: ⁵ Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

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I Corinthians 6:9-11 (NLT)

⁹ Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. ¹¹ Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

RESPONSE TO THE INVITATION OF FAITH:

- 1. HEAR the GOSPEL ~ Romans 10:17**
So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.
- 2. BELIEVE ~ Hebrews 11:6**
But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.
- 3. REPENT ~ Luke 13:3**
I tell you nay; but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.
- 4. CONFESS ~ Matthew 10:32-33**
Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.
- 5. BE BAPTIZED ~ Acts 22:16**
And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
- 6. BE FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH ~ Revelation 2:10**
Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.