

**Philippians 1:27-29:**

Just as your salvation was a gift of God, Christian, your sufferings in this life are also a gift from God... they are GIVEN UNTO YOU on the behalf of Christ.

WHY? To conform you to His image! To sanctify you and to humble you, and to drive you unceasingly to the throne of grace for His help!

Do you remember what Christ said to His apostles before He sent them out to preach the message of the Kingdom of Christ? Matthew 10:24-28

If you are a disciple/follower of Christ, you OUGHT TO EXPECT sufferings in this world... and when we do suffer as Christians, we ought to behave like citizens of Christ's Kingdom, like humans that are NOT of this world, but honored to suffer and be treated as was our Lord! 1 Peter 4:12-16

"And in nothing terrified of your adversaries, which is to them an evident token (proof) of their coming perdition, but unto you, (it is proof) of (your) salvation, and that (you are) of God"

Paul suffered many things as an apostle of Christ and preacher of the gospel, his troubles were like the raging waves of the sea continually crashing upon a rocky shoreline, they came with uninterrupted fury in the days of His ministry. 2 Corinthians 4:8-18, 1:3-4, 8-10

None of us are exposed to troubles and dangers like Paul was for the sake of the gospel, that being said, ANYONE who forsakes the world and turns from their sins to Christ will suffer and have troubles in the world.

Every one of the apostles of Christ suffered greatly in their gospel ministries, just as the Lord told them that they would: John 15:18-25, Acts 9:15-16, 1 John 3:13

None of us are apostles, but if you're in Christ, a faithful, lively, devoted, verbal servant and witness for Christ in the world, you WILL BE subjected to similar troubles, and you will be exposed to the same hatred as was our Lord and His apostles, and many other saints of old. 2 Timothy 3:10-12

**But we so often view our sufferings from one side; our reading of (2C4:8-9) would go something like this; I am surrounded by troubles, I am perplexed, persecuted, and cast down:**

But THAT'S only part of what Paul wrote, in fact, in reading this, we probably (and wrongly) focus our attention on all of Paul's troubles... In our minds we are often fixed on our earthly troubles, rather than looking heavenward BY FAITH, trusting in our Lord! Let's read that again!

Troubled YET NOT distressed! Perplexed BUT NOT in despair! Persecuted BUT NOT forsaken! Cast down BUT NOT destroyed!

What Paul wrote to the Corinthians here was not a cry of defeat, but that of victory... Yes, his troubles/difficulties

were terrible and unrelenting... but they were not worthy to be compared with what awaited them in heaven...

Romans 8:18: "For the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"

**2 Corinthians 4:10: What is happening to us (in the world), saith Paul, in our troubles and distresses and persecutions, ...these are the same things that happened to our Lord! We are to expect these things...as He told us...**

But these things ought not to shame us and cast us down... what an honor to be so closely associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in your earthly life, and to be treated as He was, and as a faithful disciple of Christ:

"Always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus"

We are "ALWAYS" exposed to danger/death in our sufferings, and that's ok, it's so worth it...for we wait for the promise of eternal life in that otherworld and in the presence of our Lord!

Romans 8:36, 1 Corinthians 15:30-32

In all of Paul's troubles and sufferings and persecutions, he gladly associated/identified with the sufferings and death of Christ, don't forget...

The servant is not greater than his Lord...

But now back to (V10): We are ALWAYS bearing about (or carrying about) in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, in the things which we suffer; and the PRODUCE of our sufferings??

"THAT...the life ALSO of Jesus might be made manifest in our body"

THE MORE we are exposed to death and dangers for Christ's sake and the gospel, ALL THE MORE is the gospel of Christ manifested and revealed to sinners in the world! Did not the sufferings and death of Christ bring forth eternal life for a world of unworthy sinners? It did!

John 12:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth MUCH fruit"

Don't forget, the servant is not above his master... as servants of Christ, Paul wrote, WE are ALWAYS delivered unto death, that the life also of Jesus might come forth from our lives to you. "That ALL of you would see and believe this gospel treasure, which comes forth from these earthen vessels". 2 Corinthians 4:11-12, Philippians 3:10

(V12): Death has worked in us to bring forth life in you!

**2 Corinthians 4:13: "We having the same spirit of faith, (as who?) according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore we speak"**

Where is this written? Who wrote it? David did: Psalm 116:10

"I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted".

David spoke of THAT which he believed of Christ in all of his sufferings and afflictions, and so shall we speak, saith Paul...We have the same spirit as David, and of the saints of old, we cannot but speak of the gospel truths which we have believed of Christ!

If you're in Christ, YOU have "the same spirit of faith" as David and Paul, and if that be true of you, you cannot but speak of those things that you believe of Christ, if that brings sufferings and shame in this world.. so be it.

A true gospel voice can only be spoken from a believing soul, and that voice will not be silenced by anything/anyone in the world.

**"Therefore, we speak; 2 Corinthians 4:14: "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you"**

Yes, we are always delivered unto death in this world as the apostles of Christ, saith Paul, for speaking that which we believe of Christ...and this will also be your lot, Christian in the world.. this begs the question...WHY would anyone continue to do this? Because of what WE KNOW to be true of Christ, that He was raised from the dead, THEREFORE, we will continue to live and believe and suffer and die in hope of the resurrection of the dead..

"That He which raised up the Lord Jesus SHALL RAISE UP US ALSO by Jesus, and shall present us with you"

LIFE IN THIS WORLD is NOT the life for which we yearn and thirst, child of God, but that life which is to come in that otherworld.. in heaven!

And then, (V15) is a culmination of all of what Paul had suffered in his troubles and persecutions as an Apostle of Christ; he tells the Corinthian believers...

"For all things (or...ALL of our sufferings are for Christ's sake...and all of our sufferings) are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God"

All THESE THINGS happened to us so that gospel would be preached in Corinth... that God's ABUNDANT GRACE might increase and spread among you, and... in all the world... It through our sufferings that God poured out His abundant and overflowing grace... Remember what Paul said when he was imprisoned for preaching the gospel of Christ:

Philippians 1:12: "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel"

**2 Corinthians 4:16: For which cause we faint not... What cause? KNOWING that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you"**

This is what will keep you from fainting, losing heart, or becoming discouraged and cast down as suffering Christians in

the world...YOUR lively HOPE that you will be raised up by Jesus in the resurrection!

As you continue to outwardly perish in this fallen and sinful world... you must feed upon Christ and His Word and strengthen yourself be renewed in your inner man.

THIS RENEWING is accomplished in your life Christian, by making good use of the means of grace that God has provided for you...in your private devotions in Word, in prayer, in the preaching of the Word, and in the church gathering.

But if you neglect these things, you will be apt to faint and be discouraged; you should know that these things are designed for the strengthening of your inner man, the renovating of your living and better part...that which is NOT perishing...your soul! 2 Corinthians 4:17: Explain...

**It all comes down to this...2 Corinthians 4:18:**

What is in your crosshairs? In your scope? Things which are seen and experienced in your sufferings in this world? Or is your heart and mind fixed by faith on things which are NOT seen, eternal things...