

20 May 2018

The children of God are to Suffer: Pt 1 – when we suffer wrongfully we follow in the steps of Christ.

This is a new topic on suffering. In this study we establish – (1) the meaning of “suffering” in the scriptures, (2) that Christ suffered in the flesh for us, and (3) Christ is an example for us to follow.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. To “suffer” in the scriptures implies “suffering wrongfully” – enduring grief.

“For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully” (1Pet.2: 19).

2. Christ suffered in the flesh for us.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh” (1Pet.4: 1). See also 1Pet.3: 18.

Christ was crucified for our sin, He “borne our griefs” (Is.53: 3), He was “made...sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2Cor.5: 21).

3. Christ suffered leaving an example for us to follow.

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1Pet.2: 21).

Christians are to suffer, we are to endure grief –

a) in the flesh.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind” (1Pet 4:1 & 2).

b) for doing well and taking it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

“For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God” (1Pet.2: 20).

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

“Asaia Bibi was a farm worker in Pakistan when she became subject of a dangerous accusation: ‘You insulted the Prophet!’ In no time, the mother of five had been shepherded to the district court in the town of Nankana Sahib in Punjab province. The judges found Bibi, a Christian, guilty of blasphemy and imposed the death sentence.”

Question to think about.

What is the fruit that is born out of doing well and being persecuted, when a Christian follows in the steps of His Saviour?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

a) We “no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men” (1Pet.4: 2),

b) but rather we live “to the will of God” (1Pet.4: 2).

We all suffer for evil doing, and most of us will murmur to the Lord about our grief – even when we deserve it, but when we suffer wrongfully with patience – “this is acceptable with God” (1Pet.2: 20). Because when we “take wrong” and “suffer yourselves to be defrauded” (1Cor.6: 7) we follow in the steps of our Saviour the Lord Jesus – “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (1Pet 3: 17 & 18). Christ suffered in the flesh for us, He “bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1Pet.2: 24), yet He committed no sin, hence he suffered wrongfully, and He did so in patient obedience to the Father.

Let us remember to follow Christ’s example and be prepared to suffer wrongfully in doing well – in doing so we no longer live to our own lusts, but rather live to the will of God, and this is acceptable to the Lord. Amen!