

Why Christians Suffer - Part 2: Don't Waste Your Suffering

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[0 : 00] Welcome. Thank you for choosing to listen to another word-filled message by David Entry. Preaching is the means by which God manifests His word and nourishes our spirits. May the life of God enter into you and you as you listen to this message. Be blessed.

In our previous session, we spoke about how Apostle Peter, who the Lord has given the revelation about the importance of suffering in Christian work, and joins us to have a setting or to be armed in order to be able to make good use or not waste our suffering or make good use of our suffering. And I spoke about why Christians suffer. I gave two points out of the eight, and I said I'll continue today.

So, well, let's look at the text. As I explained, Peter starts by talking about how we should, if there need be, it is better to suffer for doing the will of God than, if there need be, it's better if it's the will of God to suffer doing good than doing evil.

And he says that, For Christ has also suffered for us, and after He suffered and died, He was resurrected. And after the resurrection, He was ascended and seated, or He was exalted and seated at the right hand of majesty.

[1 : 38] And so, by so doing, He paints the picture. He gives us the picture of the fact that once we also follow Him, where He ended or where He has ended is where we will end.

So, we are called to follow Jesus. So, in 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 1, it says, I'm reading from the New King James this time, Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves.

Arm yourself. Get the ammunition. We need the ammunition to fight the good fight of faith. Arm yourself with the same mind. And then I spoke about how in other not to waste our suffering, we have to be armed with a mindset, not armed with an assault rifle, an assault rifle or a sword or a shield or a gun, a pistol or something like that, but we should be armed with a mindset.

So, your mind, the way you think is what determines the outcome of your life. In Romans chapter 12 verse 2, it said, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

So, that stands to imply the quality of your transformation is a function of the renewal of your mind. The mind plays a major role in this battle, in the Christian life, in the Christian warfare.

[3 : 30] The mind. In Proverbs chapter 23 verse 7, it says, As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. You are not different.

I am not different from the way I think. My mindset. And when the Bible says that we should arm ourselves with this mindset, we should arm ourselves with this mind, Philippians chapter 2, chapter 2 verse 5, it says that, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count its robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and became a servant, and humbled himself unto death, even the death on the cross. Therefore, death of the cross, wherefore God has also highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above all names, that are the name of Jesus.

Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, that Jesus Christ, or Jesus is Lord.

Now, Jesus was able to do that because of a mindset he had. What was the mindset? In spiritual warfare, your mind is the determining factor, so long as victory is concerned.

[5 : 02] In our lives with God, in our lives in God, yes, we are born again in our spirits, but our minds play a role, a major role when it comes to victory, victory on earth, in our lives on earth, our minds, your mindset, your mindset, and he says that, arm yourself with this mindset.

So the mindset is an ammunition. Hallelujah. My mindset is an ammunition that will determine the nature of my victory.

nature of our victories in Christ, in our warfare, and in our sacrifices, our ability to utilize our pain, to make full use of our suffering, to use, allow our suffering to be a blessing, to allow our tribulation, our afflictions, and troubles, and difficulties to turn out for our good.

It is necessary to have a certain mindset, and that mindset is, your pain has a purpose. Your pain has a purpose.

That you, I need that pain for the glory ahead, who for the joy that was set before him, endearth the cross, despising the shame.

[6 : 21] And so it's a mindset, our mindset, that allows us, or enables us, to be able to endure, and despise, endure the cross, Hebrews chapter 12, verse 2, endure the cross, despising the shame, and therefore, is seated at the right hand of the Father.

So, to be able to win this battle, he says that, therefore, arm yourself also, with the same, the same, that was the same. He was thinking, watch this, this is very important.

What was the mindset Jesus had? It was the mindset of, the Father's will, the Father's pleasure, the Father's purpose, and the mindset of the glory ahead.

So, the Bible said, who for the joy that was set before him, he was able to endure the cross, because of the joy that was set before him. He was able to go to the cross, because he was obedient to the Father.

He said, not as I will, nevertheless, your will be done. Nevertheless, he said, if, Father, Father, if it be possible, Matthew chapter 26, Father, if it be possible, let this from verse 36, 37, 38, 39, if it be possible, let this cup come past, nevertheless, not as I will, but your will be done.

[7 : 49] When he said, it is time for the Son of Man to go to Jerusalem and to suffer, Peter took him aside. It was Satan at work through Peter. To begin to rebuke him, don't talk suffering.

You can't talk suffering. You are not supposed to suffer. I bought it. I bought the mission. I bought the mission. He said, get behind me, Satan. He had the mindset that whatever it costs to please God, I'm ready to do it.

And for us to be able to utilize our suffering, we must have this mindset that doesn't matter what it costs. I'm in it. I'm in this. I'm in this throughout my life.

I'm in this to the end. Bible talks about Matthew chapter 10, verse 21, 22. It says that, he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. In Hebrews chapter 10, it says that you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you, verse 36, that you obtain the promise.

And Hebrews chapter 10, verse 35, talks about how, don't cast away your confidence, for it has a great recompense of reward. Don't cast away your confidence. It has a great recompense of reward.

[8 : 57] So that means that you must, oh, thank you, Jesus. You must think reward. You must think obedience. We must think the will of God. We must think pleasing God.

We must think taking our obedience to God, to the highest extent, or the wildest extent.

That's why Bible talks about how he had this mind in him, who, even though he was God, he did not count equality with God, something to grasp or to hold on to, but he became, he was found in a fashion as a man, and he became, as a servant, and he became obedient.

And Bible said, even to the death on the cross, if obedient, as far as dying, if you die, that he should have died, as some honorable death. But he died the most vile, most shameful death, any human being can die.

Crucifixion by the cross, by the cross, is the, the, most cruel means of execution, human beings have ever devised. And Jesus died by the cross, and it was a very shameful death.

[10 : 06] But Bible says, that's how far he was willing to be obedient. He was willing to be obedient, and he wasn't suffering for himself, he was suffering for others. That's the kind of mindset. He said, no problem, as long as it's the will of God, as long as God is honored, as long as God is glorified.

In my marriage, no problem. As long as God's will is done, as long as I'm obeying the word of God, as long as I know I'm doing what God has asked me to do, as long as I'm following God, it's fine.

Bring on. Let the suffering flow. It doesn't matter. I'm not saying we should go look for suffering.

Suffering will come anyway. 2 Timothy 3, verse 12 said, yeah, all those who live godly shall suffer persecution.

So suffering, as I said in the previous teaching, is a necessary aspect of our work with God, our obedience to God, or our journey to glory.

No, I'm not talking about life after here. I'm talking about our journey to the glory of God. Because glory always follows sufferings.

[11:10] Or sufferings always precede glory. As I said the other time, it was necessary that Jesus should go through this. And after that, after he had been through the suffering, he glorified.

Now, going back to why, so why should we suffer as Christians? If the suffering is so important, why should we suffer? In our previous session, I spoke about number one, purpose of suffering. It brings, or it purifies our faith.

Number two, purpose of suffering. It produces patience. Number three, the third purpose for suffering, is it brings closeness to Christ, or fellowship, it intensifies and strengthens our fellowship with Christ.

Can you imagine, when you are suffering, and you know it's because of your obedience to Christ, there's a way, it brings a closer walk with God. It helps for a closer fellowship.

Bible calls it the fellowship of a suffering. As you are suffering for him, it helps you to focus more on him, and it helps you to get closer to him, because the more he becomes your focus, the closer you get to him.

[12:20] And so, we need, the sufferings come, we don't look for it, but when the sufferings come, we don't waste the suffering. We look up to him more, we look up to him more, and we get closer to him, in the time of difficulties, in the time of sacrifices, in the time of challenges, as we are obeying him.

I'm talking about the challenges and the trouble that come to us, simply because of a righteous step we take, not because of humanity. Human beings have sorrows, and problems, and troubles. In fact, there has always been an age-old discourse about if God is sovereign, why must there be suffering?

If God is sovereign, why suffering on earth? If God is sovereign. Now, there's a branch of theology, or theological studies, which is called theodicy.

Theodicy is, theodicy is the, when we explain why suffering is part of humanity, and God is still sovereign.

[13:29] And I'm telling you, suffering is not anything that eliminates God, or makes God less powerful. We Christians understand that our suffering for Christ enhances our closeness, and our relationship with God, the fellowship of his suffering.

The fellowship of his suffering. There are people across the ages who have come up with all kinds of ideologies. There's this, I think, there are people who believe that, you know, I think it's called progress theology.

Progress theology. Progress theology is the ideology that purports that God is not fully now deity. He's still developing. So he's managing to learn how to handle sufferings, sufferings on earth to help people. So some of the sufferings on earth is new to him.

Very bizarre thinking, way of thinking. God is in charge, God is in control, and he is governing. As a believer, when you go through a difficult time, because, remember I keep putting, because of your challenge, your walk with Christ, when you go through a difficult time, God, it's said, I heard someone put it this way, we take care how we go through, God controls the heat in the oven.

[14:59] God controls, he will never allow the heat to be higher than you can take. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13, he says that, for no temptation has come to you, but that which is common to man.

All right. So temptation, or the challenges, that come, come up against us, are human challenges, that God, once God is with us, we are able to handle it, and guess what?

We are able to use those issues, situations, to build our muscles, and to build closeness with God, and it's very important. So number four is, number three is closeness to Christ, we get closer to Christ, we build closeness to God.

Number four is very, very important, is it trains us to be useful, to other believers, or other Christians, who are going through the same suffering. So when we go through something, whatever we go through, God uses that radar to train us.

So God might not bring the trouble, but our work with God will bring certain troubles, and then the troubles come, when the affliction comes, when the suffering comes, God will use that suffering, to train us, so we will become useful to other believers, who go through the same trouble.

[16:18] So I think in Thessalonians, or 2 Corinthians, or 2 Thessalonians, it talks about, God comforted us. We went through problems, and God comforts us, and so that we will comfort you, with the comfort with which God comforts us.

Yeah, I think in 2 Corinthians chapter 1, I believe. So we go through certain situations. Yeah, verse 4 says that, who comforted us, who comforts us, in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them, which are in any trouble, by their comfort, wherein we ourselves, are comforted of God.

So when others are going through tribulation, and God wants to use us, to be a blessing to us, He uses the comfort, He directed towards us, the comfort that God gave us, when we went through our tribulation, is what we use, to also minister to others, who are going through same tribulation. 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 4. So God comforts us, for us, the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abound by Christ.

Once we are increasing in suffering, consolation, comfort, is also increasing. Heaven will never leave you by yourself. Heaven will never leave us alone. God is with us.

[17:50] In times of pain, in times of joy, in times of laughter, in times of sorrow, God is with us. And I'm announcing to my brother, I'm announcing to my sister, that God, I don't know what you might be going through, at this moment, but God is with you.

God is with you. And the higher the challenge, the greater the comfort, that God releases to us. So I see that happening for you, in Jesus mighty name.

Amen. So, in Philippians chapter 1, verse 8, Philemon chapter 1, Philemon 123, it talks about my fellow prisoners.

You know, you are not alone. Sometimes, when you are going through some challenges, when you are going through persecution, when you are going through suffering, it actually, when believers are going through something together, it binds them together.

Like a husband and a wife, when they have a challenge, let's say a court case, or a health problem with a child or something, it has a way to bind them together.

[18:55] Challenges bind us together. Common challenges bind us together. So when we go through affliction, as believers, it binds us, it builds alliance, it builds stronger unity amongst us.

And so, our challenges, God uses that, to make us useful to other believers. So Paul, no, John, the one who, the revelator, Revelation chapter 1, verse 9, says, I, John, who also am your brother, and a companion in tribulation.

Hallelujah. I'm your companion. I'm suffering. But I know you are also suffering. You guys are suffering. And I'm also suffering. I'm your companion in tribulations. I'm your companion in tribulation.

In 1 Peter chapter 5, verse 1, see how Peter puts it. Peter said, The elders which are amongst you, I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the suffering of Christ.

I'm an elder and a witness. So this, what I'm ministering to you is not foreign to me. It's not strange to me. I am a, I'm a practitioner.

[20:07] I, I, when you go to the chapter 4 again, you see something. I'm a partaker. I'm a partaker of the sufferings of Christ. I'm actually taking part.

I am going through the suffering, but actually, it's Christ's suffering I'm partaking of. Hallelujah. And so, arm yourself with this mindset that if the suffering is Christ's suffering which I'm partaking of, then that means I'm also going to partake of His glory.

Partake of His, the blessings that are ahead in Jesus' mighty name. And so, it's, trains has to be useful to other believers who are going through similar challenges.

Number five, it's suffering for the believer, the Christian. Why, why do Christians suffer? Number five, Christians suffer because suffering keeps the believer humble.

You know, especially when you are, when God is raising you and God is doing a lot with your life, it's interesting how sometimes, if you are not careful, you can be very, very, you can focus on how important you are.

[21:15] When, especially when certain things, blessings or promotions are manifesting your life potentially from God as a believer. It's very easy because of the human nature. It's very easy to become so important and there is a way, Bible said, Paul said, because so, I will not be exalted above measure, beyond measure.

2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 7, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh. That will prick me so that, why was it given to me? So I don't get, pride doesn't take hold of me because that is what made Lucifer lose his place, pride.

Bible says, pride goes before a fall. So, so that pride doesn't take hold of us and so to keep us humble, there are times God will allow certain sufferings, certain challenges to come towards us, to keep us humble, to keep us humble because, as I said the other time, the great, the giftings of God are on shelf one under the other, not one on top of the other so that the more you are becoming big and tall in the spirit, the more gifts you can get.

No, it's the shelf one under the other. So the more you are, you are willing to go down, the more gifts you can collect. When you collect the next one, the next one is below that. You have to go further low.

So humility is the pathway for elevation. Humility is the pathway for elevation in God. And so when God wants to keep you humble, can you imagine Paul?

[22 : 45] He said because, let me read it, 2 Corinthians again, chapter 12, verse 5. It says, because of the abundance of the revelation, let me read it, he said, unless I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation, there was given to me a thorn in my flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

What? Tony, and he said, for this, I ask God, God, please take this thing away from me. Three times, I prayed, I prayed three times, God, take this thing away, but God said, don't worry boy, my grace is sufficient for you, and my strength is made perfect in your weakness.

Don't worry about the suffering, I'm with you, it will never pull you down. There's enough grace for you, even though you are feeling weak in this area, stay strong, keep your eye on me. So that even leads me to the next point, that the purpose of suffering for Christians, it's, Christians suffer because suffering will help us to depend on God the more.

Suffering, so here, the scripture I just refers to, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, when, 2 Corinthians chapter 12, when you look again at the verse 9 and verse 10, and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly, therefore, I will rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in, this is interesting, think about it, he said, I take pleasure in infirmities, in troubles, in problems, I take pleasure.

[24 : 32] He said, therefore, I take, this is very interesting, you have to know Christ to be able to talk like that. You have to, you have to be armed with a certain mindset to be able to talk like that.

Look at that. He said, I take pleasure in infirmities. Why? Because God said, his grace is sufficient for me, and his strength is made perfect in my weakness. He said, because God's strength is made perfect in my weakness, I, therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities.

I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake.

Did you see that? For Christ's sake, not for gossip's sake or for bad behavior's sake. For Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then I am strong.

So then the strength that I would exhibit in my life is a clear function of my dependence on God because where I am weak, that's where I'm experiencing God more.

[25 : 34] Where I am weak, where this thing is hurting, where it hurts most, where it is painful most, that is where I see the most manifestation of God's strength.

So we need, sometimes, these sufferings come, these challenges come, these afflictions come, these troubles come to help us to depend on God.

2 Corinthians 1, verse 8, verse 9, I still haven't read verse 9 and 10 instead. 2 Corinthians 1, verse 9 and verse 10, it says that, but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raises the dead.

It says that, we don't want you to be ignorant about the problems that came to us at Asia, verse 8, that we were pressed beyond measure, above strength, so much that we even despaired in life.

We were tired of living. But verse 9 says that, but we had the sentence, the sentence of death in ourselves. Why? That we should not trust in ourselves. Oh, but in God, who raises the dead?

[26 : 41] So, the problems they went through trained them how to depend more on God. Depend more on God, not just their gifts, not their abilities, not their contacts, not who they know, not who is with them, not their friends.

Sometimes it's good your friends to let you down. Sometimes it's good the people you trusted to let you down. Let you down. Sometimes it's good for your bank account to let you down.

Sometimes it's good for some things to let you down. As long as you are walking with God in a certain way, it's good. Don't be afraid when things go wrong when you are walking with God.

Don't be afraid when you walk with God and things seem to go wrong. No, don't be afraid because they are actually working for you. Your dependence on God is a necessary aspect of your next level or for your next level.

Dependence on God. And so, number five, number six is, it helps us to depend more on God or generate greater dependence on God.

[27 : 46] Number seven, I like number seven. Why do Christians go through suffering? Because sufferings are our employees.

suffering is working for us. It's working for us. Suffering, your suffering, your pain is working for you. Don't waste it. Use it. How do you use it? Arm yourself with your mindset. Arm yourself with your certain thinking that this thing shall turn for my good.

This thing is working for my good. All things are working for my good and keep trusting God and keep loving God and keep pushing and pushing.

In 2 Corinthians, I'm already here, 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 17, he said, for our light afflictions, which, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

[28 : 56] Our affliction is actually working for us glory. It's producing glorious outcome for us. How? That is the beauty of working with God.

He said, for our afflictions, our affliction is working for us. What is it working? Eternal weight of glory. He said, let me read it again. For our affliction, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more, far more exceeding eternal weight of glory.

Their glory is heavy. What we are going through. When you read that same text in the NIV, it said, our afflictions, they are achieving for us.

When you read the New Living Translation or New American Standard Bible, it says that they produce for us. So, afflictions work for us.

Afflictions achieve for us. Afflictions produce for us. And when you read the English Standard Version, it says, afflictions prepare for us. So, however you look at it, your afflictions, your challenges, your trials, your tribulations, the persecutions, the difficulties, those infirmities, because of the name of Christ, they are working for you.

[30 : 15] They are working for you a far more eternal weight of glory. Hallelujah. Bible says in 1 Peter 1, verse 11, that when they spoke about the sufferings of Christ and the glory that you follow.

Glory always follow our suffering. Luke 24, verse 26, Jesus said, foolish, oh foolish, slow of heart to believe what all the prophets and Moses have said.

Ought not the Christ to have suffered all these things and then enter into his glory? There's glory ahead and the sufferings just work for our glory. The sufferings work for our glory.

I see your challenges. I see your difficulties. I see what you are going through working for your glory. In the book of Romans chapter 8, verse 17, it says that if children then, hey, if, let me read it for verse 18.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worth to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

[31 : 22] The suffering of this, so that means that suffering is just, my brother and sister, if you are going to do this thing real for Christ, genuinely for Christ, suffering comes with it.

In your marriage, the sacrifices you have to make for God's name to be glorified in your marriage, in your relationship, in your family, in your career, in your ministry, in your assignment.

Listen, if you really want God's name to be glorified, then get ready. You will go through certain seasons of suffering, seasons for his name, and that is going to produce a far more eternal weight of glory in your life.

I see you walking into glory, and you are going to move from glory to glory to glory to glory. Arm yourself with this mindset. Arm yourself. When the Bible talks about mindset, it's talking about a system of thinking, a system of reasoning.

We use our minds to understand and to reason, and so we have to start engaging your mind in this suffering to advantage you.

[32 : 32] Don't waste your suffering. There is a purpose for your pain. There is a purpose for your pain. If you are walking in Christ, if you are keeping your way, yourself in God's word, there is a purpose for your pain.

Don't waste your suffering. Don't waste your suffering. Don't waste your suffering. God is with you. He said, my grace is sufficient for you, and my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Therefore, he says that, therefore, I glory in my weakness. Don't be afraid, for God is with you, and you are going to move from glory to glory to glory.

In Jesus' mighty name, amen. All right, so quickly, the point number eight. In fact, before I go to point number eight, picking on the point number seven again with regards to the glory, glory, glory for, it says that it's working for us.

Second Corinthians chapter four, verse 17, for our light afflictions, working for us, eternal weight, which is bad for a moment, working for us, an eternal weight of glory.

[33 : 46] Glory. Eternal. This thing is, it's in eternity. We don't live just for this life. We are living for eternity. And guess what? When we meet the Lord, there are going to be rewards.

Your suffering will determine your reward. How much we suffer for him will also have an impact on our, it'll have an impact on the kind of reward we receive.

Listen, your inheritance in heaven, your inheritance in God is determined by your faithfulness in this lifetime.

Your inheritance in God, my inheritance in God, our inheritance in God is determined by our faithfulness in this lifetime, whether through suffering or through peaceful, peace times, times of suffering, hard times, good times, rough times, great times.

Our faithfulness in our lifetime is what determines our inheritance in God. And when we meet God, there are crowns.

[34 : 57] Permit me to mention five crowns the Bible talk about. People are going to receive five different types of crowns. I pray that you will work so much that you'll receive all five.

Number one of the crown, the Bible said we will receive, is the crown of life. The crown of life.

James chapter one, verse 12, it says that, blessed is the man who endures temptation.

For when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

The crown of life goes to people who suffer for his name's sake, because they love him. That's what you're going to get.

Your, your suffering is working for you. Your suffering, don't waste your suffering. Don't waste, have a mindset and go through it.

[35 : 59] Because he says that there is a crown of life, which Christ, God will give to those who love him. And those who have persevered and paid the price for his name's sake.

Revelations, Revelation chapter two, verse 10. It says, Revelation chapter two, verse 10, it says that, fear, fear none of those things which thou will suffer.

Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and, and ye shall have tribulation 10 days.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you the, a crown of life. Those who persevere to the end. Be faithful to the end.

He said, Jesus said, I will give you a crown of the crown, a crown of life. So the crown of life goes to those who persevere and persevere through suffering.

[36 : 59] All right. To the end. Number two, we talk, that book talks about the crown of righteousness, the crown of righteousness. So we have the crown of life. We have the crown of righteousness.

Who are those who receive the crown of righteousness? According to second Timothy chapter four, verse eight, it says, and God, and the right, the righteous judge, he will give me the crown of righteousness at his appearing.

And not only me, but also to all those who love his appearing, those who love his coming. You always look forward to his coming. Bible says that you shall receive a crown of righteousness, righteousness, a crown because first John chapter three, verse two, he talks about, um, we know that when we see him, we shall be like him.

And then verse three talks about anyone who has this hope in himself. What is the hope? The hope of come. It is coming. You look forward to seeing Jesus. You look forward to meeting Jesus. He

said, anyone who has this hope in himself, purifies himself and the evil one shall not touch him. Crown of righteousness. You purify, when you have the hope for his coming, it doesn't matter what you go through in life. It doesn't matter how much Satan tries to attack you. You continue. You continue.

[38 : 10] I see you receiving the crown of righteousness in the mighty name of Jesus. I pray that may we all receive grace. May we all receive grace to look forward to his appearing.

So we'll receive the crown of righteousness. In the early church in first, first, first Corinthians chapter 16, verse 22, it says that come Lord Jesus. It says that Maranatha, people who have Maranatha, a Maranatha mindset, come Jesus, come whatever I'm going through, everything I'm doing.

I don't live like life is all about now. Come Maranatha. We look forward to your coming in the Bible, in Revelation chapter 22, verse 17, it said the spirit and the bride say, come the spirit and the bride say, come the spirit and the bride say, come.

So those who love his appearing will receive the crown of righteousness. Number three, the crown incorruptible, crown incorruptible.

First Corinthians chapter five, verse 25. It says that those, when you, you run the race to obtain, but who does it belong to?

[39 : 16] For those who press on steadfastly, you are pressing on towards the mark of the price, of the mark of the, towards the mark of the price of the high calling of Christ, of God in Christ Jesus.

You press on. He said, I beat my body and I bring it under subjection. First Corinthians chapter nine, the verse 25 of verse 24 and 25 said that, I do not run aimlessly.

For he said, run in such a way that you obtain, you obtain that crown, the crown of the crown that does not perish. It's incorruptible because people who compete for in athletics, they compete to receive a crown, but that one will not take them anyway.

When a great person who has many medals die, someone who has medals, when they die, they don't take it. You have to leave it. It doesn't follow you to the next, the afterlife, the life after here. But guess what? But guess what? That one is perishable. But the one we have is an imperishable crown. It's an imperishable, ever fresh, ever thriving, and ever, ever enviable.

[40 : 23] You, may you receive grace to work hard. May you receive grace to press on in perseverance to receive that crown. And then the fourth one is the crown of rejoicing.

The crown of rejoicing goes to those who win souls. The crown of rejoicing. In first Thessalonians chapter two, verse nine, it said, you are our hope. It said, you are our rejoicing. You are our, let me read it.

First Thessalonians chapter two, verse 19. It says that, for what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing, are you, are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

When he's coming, those we have won, the souls you have won, the souls you have won and established, never be part of talking to somebody outside, out of church, never be part of it.

It takes a lot for a soul to be won. Never, even when you are backsliding, or when you are upset, you are not happy with people. Be careful people don't leave church because of your comments, your behavior, your contribution.

[41 : 27] Be careful, because God will judge you for that. God, I'm telling you, never contribute to people leaving church, or leaving, moving away, but work hard to get people in.

Work hard to win more, so hard to win souls, and grow souls, and disciple souls, because you will receive the crown of rejoicing, at the coming of Jesus Christ.

And then finally, so we have the crown of life, the crown of righteousness, the crown incorruptible, the crown of rejoicing, and then finally, the crown of glory, the crown of glory, the crown of glory.

Hallelujah. Who are those who qualify to receive the crown of glory? Those who feed the sheep. They feed God's people. Like what I'm doing, I'm looking forward to this crown.

So, I'm believing God that I will get the crown of life. I'll wear the crown of many crowns. I'll wear the crown of life. I'll wear the crown of righteousness. I'll wear the crown incorruptible.

[42 : 27] I'll wear the crown of rejoicing. And I shall wear the crown of glory. 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 4. It talks about the crown of glory. Permit me to read it please. 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 4.

It said, And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away. It belongs to the people, those who are feeding God's flock, the crown of glory.

And so, when, and all these things to obtain the crown, it will entail some, some level of work, perseverance, and suffering. And so, ask anything you want to do for God. It will put a demand on you. It's called sacrifice. It's called what? Sacrifice. Sacrifice. Sacrifice. Sacrifice to help build the church. Sacrifice. Sacrifice. Sacrifice to help strengthen believers. Sacrifice to support, and sacrifice to serve faithfully in that church, in that department. Sacrifice. Sacrifice. [43 : 24] Sacrifice. It's, it's, sacrifice entails suffering, but it is worth it. That suffering will crown, will give you the crown. Sacrifice, my brother.

Sacrifice. Most of us will only sacrifice for our interests. Sacrifice for the things that we want, that will embellish our lives on earth. It might not be bad in itself. Look at the way you sacrifice for your education. You sacrifice for your children. You sacrifice for your business. You sacrifice for your job. You will sacrifice for everything. But when it comes to God, there are people who claim they love God, but your level of sacrifice is zero. It's wanting. It's questionable. Your level of sacrifice, your level of sacrifice for God's people, for God's work, and for the church. Make so much noise and complaining about the little offering you have given.

The little service you have, you want, you want money, you do things in church for monetary considerations. Everything you are doing, even when it's for God, you attach heavy monetary consideration to it.

[44 : 33] If you are not getting monetary gain, you won't do it. Repent, my brother believer, my sister believer. Don't do it on monetary considerations. Sacrifice. Suffer for him.

Point number eight, and then I'll end. Eight. Why believers suffer? Oh, it is loaded, but why believers suffer?

To preserve us from sinful manner of life. First, it brings us back to 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 1. 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 1.

For as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourself likewise with the same mind. For he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, has suffered in the flesh, has ceased from sin.

He that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. He that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. The remedy, the only remedy for sin is the cross.

[45 : 45] The only remedy for sin is the cross. The cross gives us forgiveness, and we on the cross gives us an authority over sin.

He said, has seized. The Greek word translated, seized, means sin has lost the dominion. Like God told Cain that Genesis chapter 4, I think verse 7 and 8, he said, Cain, if you do good, will you not be accepted?

But if you do evil, sin lies at your door, and its desire is to have you and to master you. He said, you have to master it. Sin wants to have you.

Sin wants to have you. But when you live the life under the cross, sin cannot have you. Sin wants to have you. Sin wants to have you. Troubles, suffering. Suffering has a way. You see, a lot of people sin because there's no problems.

You remember, when you are going through those problems and crisis, you were very careful. You will be the first to be in church. Every morning, you take your Bible, reading. When you were told that you are sick and it's likely in your next test and scan, they want to verify whether this thing is terminal or not.

[47 : 02] Did you see? Did you see? Temptation was not a problem. Temptation was, in fact, temptation lost its power over you because the challenges you are going through, the problem on your head, you don't have time to sin.

Troubles. Troubles have a way of helping us to cease sinning. Troubles. Precious. Precious. You know what? Pleasures. P-L. Pleasures.

Pleasures heat up the lust of the flesh. Eternity. Eternity. Pleasures. When everything is going well. Everything is going well. But you know, when you are sick, even your favorite food, you are not interested in it.

You are not interested in it. Your favorite hairstyle, you can't be bothered. You hold your wig and you flap it. There are times that after long days of activities, many sisters who were wig, maybe especially it's a hot day in your time.

But they don't even get one. As soon as they enter the house, they remove their wig and flap it. They are tired. They are tired. You don't have time for this. Pleasures. Watch this. Pleasures heat up the lust of the flesh.

[48 : 05] Pressure. Pressure. Pressure. Cool down the lust of the flesh. So, you see, when God loves you and he sees you are going off, he will allow some challenges to blow your way.

So, it will help you sit up. God doesn't punish believers. Yeah. He purifies believers. Unbelievers, the same heat that a believer faces, the same fire an unbeliever will face is the same fire. The fire that melts gold or that purifies gold is the same fire that burns straw. When you are a believer, you are good. The fire is meant to purify you.

When you are an unbeliever, you are straw. The fire is punishing and burning you. So, there's a difference between the fire of punishment and fire of purification. Because I think I'll leave that. When I get to some later, I'll explain more on that. So, when the Bible says that he who has suffered, let me read it again. He says that, For he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

[49 : 10] Has ceased from sin. Seize means to, the ruling power of sin has been disengaged. In Romans chapter 6 verse 14, it says, Sin shall no longer have dominion over you.

We sometimes entertain sin because there's so much peace with us. Things are going so well. That's why you can get the time to gossip about that choirista, to gossip about the pastor, to lambast church people.

Because things look good. That you've got your job. Your health is fine. Everything is working. So, sin is rife. When there is pleasure, the lust of the flesh is heated up.

It comes more. When there is pressure. When you didn't, some people, when they didn't have a job, when they didn't have a job, they were not doing some things.

All right. So, there is a way where sin becomes common and active in us when there is, in the absence of pressures.

[50 : 26] But pressure cools down the lust of the flesh. Pleasures heat up the lust of the flesh. That is one of the reasons why the Bible says that when we go through, in fact, chapter 4, 1 Peter 4, verse 14, it said, when you go through trials or when you go through sufferings or through difficulties or when you, it said, blessed are you.

Blessed. Huh? Going through troubles and it said, blessed am I? How? Let me read it. I think, let me read it there. I like, you know, I like to read it myself. Let me read it. Verse 14, it says that if you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed, happy are you.

That's the King James. New King James said, blessed are you. Blessed are you. How? Because it actually prepares you and puts you in a favorable condition. There is a reason why God allows suffering in a Christian's life for his name's sake.

I pray that your pain will not be wasted. Your suffering will not be wasted. But rather, that pain has a purpose. That suffering that has a purpose.

That challenge that has a purpose will be turned to the glory of God for your advantage in the mighty name of Jesus. So in conclusion, Peter wrote to us that we should have this, arm ourselves with this mindset.

[51 : 50] The way Jesus suffered for us, we should arm ourselves. How? He suffered knowing that the end is going to be better. He suffered knowing that he will pay any price to obey God.

He suffered with the will to do God's will. He suffered knowing that he's going to be elevated and he'll sit on the right hand of majesty. He suffered knowing that God is good.

Anytime you are tempted to sin, remember what sin can do against you. It can damage so much in your life. And remember, even if not you, look at what sin did to your Savior.

Look at what sin did to your Savior. What sin did to Jesus on the cross. We can look at that and help us have a mindset to walk in righteousness, even if it causes pain to the glory of God.

In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you for listening to this message by David Entry. To hear more from David Entry, follow him on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

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