



The Privilege of Suffering

Colossians 1:24

Suffering – the earthly perspective

- ◆ being forced to endure
- ◆ laboring under the burden of
- ◆ putting up with as unavoidable
- ◆ allowing out of indifference
- ◆ enduring death, pain, or distress
- ◆ sustaining loss or damage

(adapted from Merriam-Webster's Dictionary)

Suffering – Paul’s perspective

Not for the faint-of-heart...

- ◆ II Corinthians 1:5 – an abundance of suffering
- ◆ Philippians 2:17a – suffering upon suffering
- ◆ II Corinthians 11:23-33 – a sufferer’s diary

And yet, through it all...

- ◆ Colossians 1:24 – “I rejoice in my sufferings”

The secret of this perspective...

- ◆ Philippians 3:10 – a true “Christ-ian” is found wherever Christ is

The true “Christ-ian” realizes that his suffering is actually Christ’s suffering, and joyfully walks with Him through it!

Christian Growth – The First Step

Romans 8:15-16

Being adopted into God's family:

- ◆ John 19:30 – Christ's finished work on Calvary
- ◆ Acts 2:38 – repentance
- ◆ Acts 16:31 – faith

The proof:

- ◆ the Holy Spirit gives testimony of the fact

Christian Growth – The Next Step

Romans 8:17

Becoming heirs in God's family:

- ◆ inheriting everything that the Father wills
- ◆ being fellow-heirs with Christ

The proof:

- ◆ we choose to joyfully suffer with Christ

The Life of an Heir

- ◆ partaking in responsibility in the family
- ◆ having the
“how-can-Dad-use-me” mentality
rather than the
“what-can-Dad-give-me” mentality

***Suffering is the privileged means by which
the Father proves who are His heirs***

“Your Best Life Now”

Paul’s keys to happiness:

- ◆ Ephesians 5:18 – continually filled with the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Philippians 4:11-13 – content in all situations
- ◆ II Corinthians 12:10 – when I’m weak, I’m strong
- ◆ Colossians 1:24 – joyful in my suffering

God’s reassurance:

- ◆ II Timothy 3:11 – He will always deliver you
- ◆ Romans 8:17 – you will be glorified with Christ