

The Fellowship Of His Sufferings

We all want to go to Heaven. We all want to know Christ. But are we willing to share in the fellowship of His sufferings? How much are we willing to die to ourselves that Christ might live in us?

Philippians 3:4-14

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, [of] the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul had many things according to the flesh to be proud of:

1. A good heritage.
2. A good education.
3. A good reputation.

But Paul had a goal that far surpassed “the praise of men.”

1. Paul wanted to know Christ.

2. Paul considered his achievements to be worthless.
3. Paul was seeking something that to him would be “a prize.”
4. Although he was a great Christian success, Paul wanted more.

Hebrews 2:9-18

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. (Psalm 8:5)

10 For it became him, for whom [are] all things, and by whom [are] all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified [are] all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (Psalm 22:22)

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (Isaiah 8:17 and 18)

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels; but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Christ did not become an angel to save the angels.

Many theories why - They knew God - Not made in image of God.

Christ became a man to save mankind.

He was made to suffer death - He was [matured] by sufferings.

He became one of us so He could redeem us as one of His.

Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death - the devil.

The devil was disarmed when Christ “gave” His life willingly.

We can also disarm the devil when we give our lives willingly.

Can repentance be so powerful? Can it be that simple?

Read Luke chapter 4 - the temptation of Christ.

The devil attempted to get Jesus to doubt His Sonship.

The devil offered immediate satisfaction of the goals of Jesus.

The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

(He will rule earth) (fleshly satisfaction) (He will be worshipped)

The devil's solutions are temporary, fleeting and disarming.

The devil knows there is power in refusal (full of...in the power).

What are the benefits of repentance and self-mortification?

Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time [are] not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Yes, our flesh is deprived, but by so little compared to the reward!

Repentance, rejection, prejudice, persecution, even martyrdom!

If Jesus is worth dying for, how much more is he worth living holy?

2 Corinthians 1:5 **For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.** The church is the body of Christ, He takes His body very seriously!

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and [that] the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are.

We use these verses to prove smoking and drug-taking are wrong.

But they can also be used to show God's protective care for us.

When we suffer, Christ is stirred to come to our comfort!

Acts 9:1-5

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: [it is] hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

Saul was zealous to threaten and slaughter the Church people.

But Christ came to Him and said he was persecuting Him.

Saul discovered with great fear that he was severely mistaken.

Read Acts 7:55-56 - Christ stood at the stoning of Stephen.

Read Acts 18:9-10 - Paul received a vision in a violent city.

Read Acts 27:21-25 - An angel encouraged Paul after a long storm.

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We may not have a life filled with angelic visitation.

We may not suffer persecution nor martyrdom.

But we may experience the presence of God, and His compassion.

True repentance will keep us from missing our old pleasures.

1 Peter 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Jesus said if we confess Him on earth, He'll confess us in heaven.

If we are faithful with little on earth, we shall rule much in heaven.

Now we know in part, then shall we know as we are also known.

What is whispered in secret shall be shouted from the hilltops.

The Lord knows who are His, and He shall display them proudly.

BUT WE MUST DIE TO OURSELVES

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Submission to God comes before resisting the devil (no power).

Resisting the devil comes before causing him to flee (refusal).

But SUBMISSION means a whole lot more than joining the team!

WE MUST DIE TO OURSELVES TO DISARM THE DEVIL!!!

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

1 Corinthians 11:27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink [this] cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup.

We remember the Lord's death - the great sacrifice we imitate.
We remember the Lord's return - something to prepare for.
Like the Apostles, we should examine ourselves, not others.

After everyone has received the elements

Matthew 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed [it], and brake [it], and gave [it] to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

(Eat the bread)

Matthew 26:27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

Matthew 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Drink the wine)