

The Art of Suffering

Written by: Martha P. Davis

"Blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (II Cor.1:3-5)

Long-suffering is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and is a great necessity in the life of the born-again believer, and it is the way that God has chosen for us to be purified; therefore to suffer is righteousness with God or it is a righteous thing to suffer.(Read I Peter 3:14 and I Peter 4:16).

Listed here are some of the things one must suffer for the name's sake of Christ: persecutions, afflictions, distresses, heartbreak, hunger, loneliness, being forsaken, betrayal of the brethren, to be counted as an evildoer for His name's sake, to name a few; but if Jesus has suffered for us in the (His) flesh, arm (prepare) yourselves likewise with the same mind. (I Peter 4:1).

Never grumble, complain or argue because of the things you do not understand, but rather wait with silence until the Lord enlightens your understanding. "With all thy getting, get understanding"(Prov. 4:7). "Wait on the Lord" (Ps. 62:5). Wait! What a mighty word. It takes grace to wait upon the Lord. It requires faith, patience, and trust. Above all else it takes LOVE, love for God, and love for his great name.

While waiting, God is purging the imperfections out of the heart of the sufferer. Pure gold is tried by fire. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. Jesus himself learned obedience by suffering. By suffering you are gaining the fruits of the Spirit: you put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly, the way of the flesh is not the way of God. God takes the things of the flesh (the old man) despises and allows them to come against us to perfect the inner man and purify our hearts. Self will not suffer, or chooses not to suffer any affliction; this is why we must deny self and choose, in our own wills, to suffer for Christ, bringing all things in the body and the body itself into complete subjection unto God. This power we have within us. God has put it there. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.

"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

We indeed need the grace of God to endure suffering in the attitude that God desires and requires of us, and His grace is sufficient (II Cor.12); therefore, dear ones, as the great apostle Paul said, let us take pleasure, yes, pleasure in the things that we suffer for Christ, keeping in mind that he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved. Praise his Holy name. Colossians 1:10 and 11 says, "That ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

Let us learn to rejoice and be exceedingly glad as Christ has commanded us.

We must humble ourselves as Christ did and seek the meekness of Jesus to bear the reproaches that are sure to come our way. "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). Long-suffering is the fruit of the Spirit that so many of God's people actually abhor.

If Jesus had not endured His sufferings, where would that leave you and me today? If we do not endure our crosses, others will miss the gift of salvation as well. We must bear our crosses, too.

Many times there are instances where God is actually displaying His marvelous power through one that is suffering to demonstrate to the enemy of our soul, the devil, and to others His almighty power; and there are times, in such cases, that the sufferer himself is not altogether aware of this. Such was the case of Moses and the Israelites in Egypt when God spoke unto the Pharaoh through Moses saying, "Let my people go". (Please take time to read Exodus chapters 3-12: also Romans 9:17-24).

In conclusion, let us, dear children of God, endure with patience, in His mighty name, any and all opposing forces that will come against us, and let us be aware that it is the long-suffering of God that is being cultivated in us by His Blessed Holy Spirit. The results are the rendering of the

peaceable fruits of righteousness and quietness (rest) in the innermost being. Let us suffer with joy in the fullness of God (John 15:11). Let us know and understand what the perfect will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17). With knowledge there is power, Holy Ghost power. Remember this: It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. We are not comfortless, we have the Holy Spirit.

From my heart to your heart's by the Holy Ghost, The Glory of the Lord rest upon you and be revealed in you through Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

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