

COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER

Acts 5:17-18; 26-41

Introduction: The apostles were called into the court of the Sanhedrin, which was the highest court the Jews were allowed to have because they were preaching and teaching in the Temple. These Jewish leaders would have killed the apostles immediately, but were afraid of stirring up more trouble among the people, so they had the apostles beaten. Although in much pain, the apostles rejoiced that they had been able to suffer for the cause of the Lord Jesus.

I. WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF OUR SUFFERING?

Sooner or later everyone suffers. Some more, some less, but everyone suffers. The suffering of Christians in the world today may be traced to these causes:

1. Common Suffering:
 - Some things are suffered simply because of life in this world.
 - Satan and sin bring much pain to both believers and unbelievers.
 - People bring some evil upon themselves and others.
2. Circumstantial Suffering:
 - Times of disease, disaster, war, etc., bring suffering to everyone.
3. Conscientious Suffering:
 - Sometimes Christians choose to suffer of Jesus Christ in acts of obedience and faithfulness.
 - Christians often make great personal sacrifices, deliberately, to honor Jesus Christ.
4. Corrective Suffering:
 - Sometimes God has to chasten His Children for their own eternal good.
 - When God corrects us, it is not to punish, but to correct - there is a difference.

II. WHEN CAN IT BE SAID THAT A PERSON IS SUFFERING FOR JESUS CHRIST?

1. One is NOT suffering for Jesus Christ when the suffering is the result of one's own evilness.
2. To suffer for Jesus Christ is to patiently trust God's providence and believe His promises, enduring whatever happens because of that trust and faith.
3. Those who willing expose themselves to pain, affliction, and heartache for the honor of Jesus Christ.
4. Some have suffered, even being buried alive, simply because they refused to say that the wine and bread actually turned into the Lord's blood and body.
5. Some have suffered because they refused to stop preaching or witnessing.

CONCLUSION:

1. To suffer for Jesus Christ is one way to prove one's profession of faith is real.
2. To suffer for Jesus Christ is to obey Him, follow Him, submit to Him, trust Him, regardless of the cost or consequence.
3. Every believer will, sooner or later, be called to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.
 - When it is your turn, will you suffer or will you weaken and turn aside from the Lord Jesus?
4. Every believer needs to remember that the Lord Jesus Christ will not forsake him/her and one's suffering will never be more than he/she is capable of handling with the Lord's help.
5. God honors those who suffer for the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.