

“The Ministry of Suffering”

Outlined by Ralph Arnold, Pastor

TEXT: Rev. 21:1-4 The ultimate reality is that all suffering on planet earth will be abolished when God creates a new heaven and a new earth, but until then, all believers must understand the ministry of suffering in this present life. This is crucial to the development of the Christian life.

1. Christ’s suffering / death on the cross completely paid for all sin for all people for all time. This is what makes the ultimate reality in the new heavens & the new earth possible. (Hebrews 2:9, 10:10-14,; 1 Peter 3:18)

2. Human suffering may be due to: (Before you blame it all on God, look at the other possibilities)

- A. Adam’s sin (the curse)
- B. individual sin (the consequences)
- C. Satanic attack (1Peter 5:8-9)
- D. the hatred of the world toward Christ (John 15:18-16:6)
- E. God’s known, or unexplained purposes (Romans 8:28-29, Book of Job)

3. Suffering for Christ can be expected in a Godly life (Phil. 1:29, 2 Tim. 3:12; Heb. 10:32; 1 Peter 4:1-16)

4. Human affliction can cause believers:

- A. to learn God’s Word (Psa. 119:67)
- B. to learn to trust and obey the Lord (Psa. 119:71)
- C. to learn patience (Romans 5:3-4)
- D. to prevent spiritual pride (2 Cor. 12:7-11)
- E. to give us a true scale of values (James 1:2-12; 1 Peter 1:6-9)

5. Trusting the Lord through suffering, prepares you to help others find the comfort of God in their own suffering. (2 Cor. 1:3-10)

6. Enduring suffering for Christ can bring believers future rewards in heaven (2 Cor. 4:17; James 1:12)

7. Suffering for Christ is worth it NOW

- A. due to the Glory of God (1 Peter 4:16)
- B. due to the salvation of others (2 Tim. 2:8-10)
- C. due to the ministry to believers (Col. 1:24)
- D. due to your own spiritual growth (Phil 3:10)
- E. and **LATER** (Matthew 5:11-12; Rev. 2:10)

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