

When asked what sources "influence your decision to use or not use a particular company, brand or product," 71% claim reviews from family members or friends exert a "great deal" or "fair amount" of influence. (Harris Interactive, June 2010).

53% of people on Twitter recommend companies and/or products in their Tweets, with 48% of them delivering on their intention to buy the product. (ROI Research for Performance, June 2010).

81% of respondents said they'd received advice from friends and followers relating to a product purchase through a social site; 74% of those who received such advice found it to be influential in their decision. (Click Z, January 2010).

Statistics can be fun can't they? The reason I love statistics is they measure how ideas, products, giftings, and other things travel. If you watch stats go up, it tells you something doesn't it? It tells you about the demand, it tells you about what people want, what people need, and what they're looking for. Right? Statistics can be very helpful, and so is marketing.

With this rise of social media, blogging, news feeds, bill boards, add agencies, commercials etc. we find ourselves just bombarded with "what people want" right? And I'll be honest I get sucked in. It's very easy to be a consumer and to get caught up in this game. It's easy to start viewing life through marketing and consuming eyes, and it's just a hop-skip and a jump away before those lenses become our worldview. But you know what intrigues me about God? You know what intrigues me about the Bible, and especially about I Peter?

It's marketing campaign.

Most of the stories in the Bible read like the America's most wanted list. We have an angry and lunatic King Saul throwing javelins at a Shepherd boy playing a harp. We have incest, polygamy, worshipping gold statues etc. And in the case of Abraham, we have a Holy Christian God coming to a pagan MOON worshipper, and calling him to be the founding Patriarch of the Christian faith. Crazy, huh? We have a prophet who weeps—Jeremiah. A prophet who does dramas, even to the point of lying down and roasting his food over a pile of human excrement—Ezekiel. We have a prophet who throws tantrums when God is good to people—Jonah, and we have other prophets who are bold and stupid enough to falsify the claims of God at risk of being consumed by His fire.

Not only this, we have a man, who claims to be Savior, who tells us to love our enemies. We have a God who dines with the poor and sinner. We have a leader who looks for the midgets in stature like Zaccheus—the small and seemingly useless things in our eyes—and he uses them for the greatest feats known to man. We have a King who will ride on a donkey and a white stallion. We have a King who comes with fire shooting from His eyes and a voice like a raging waterfall, but weeps at the death of a friend.

The Bible is so real it just seems ludicrous. The Bible is so authentic you wonder why it doesn't cover things up. Isn't that what religion strives to do? Cover things up and make everything and everyone look like they have it all together?

Well, if this is what religion is all about, then why do the disciples—after Jesus goes to heaven—willingly record all the mistakes they made? If they wanted to market Christianity they sure did a horrible job. Stephen stood up and got stoned for his faith—seems like his marketing would have been ineffective right? Disciples were crucified upside down, cut in half, boiled in oil, lit on fire at garden parties...

Why in the world did Christianity flourish—why does it still flourish. I mean it's a mess. Its followers are a mess. Christ's mission was to "seek and save the lost." While we were still sinners Christ died for us. From the very onset this whole thing has been ugly. Remember the bloody cross, the spit on Jesus' face, the humiliating nakedness, the torture, the sponge!

Oh, some of you don't remember the sponge. Or at least maybe some of you misunderstood the sponge. Remember the moment on the cross when bruised and battered Jesus requested a drink because he was thirsty. Many of you may be thinking, "yes what a kind moment in the midst of such a tragedy when the guards gave Jesus a drink to relieve his suffering." Well history tells us that that sponge was used in the local baths and community facilities. People from all around would have used that sponge to clean themselves. They would have used that sponge to clean themselves after they relieved themselves.

We see on this sponge the bitterness of sin. Jesus tasted it for us. This is the picture of the cross. This is the stupidity of Christianity. This is the marketing ploy of Jesus. This is the Christian social network!

Across the top of the "His Space" page, the "Christ Book" profile, or the Martyr instead of the Twitter, would be written in the words of Paul "come and follow us, we've been beaten and torn, shipwrecked and slandered. We're ambassadors in chains and slaves to righteousness."

None of this sounds like good marketing. Peter in I Peter 4:1-2 must have taken a class in the Biblical view of marketing as well for he writes "Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God."

I don't know about you, but it seems to me that Peter is asking us not to shy away from the cause of Christ simply because it's a life of suffering, he's actually holding a marketing campaign that is doing the opposite. He wants us to join. He wants us to arm ourselves with the same way of thinking that Jesus did. Well what did Jesus do?

He took up His cross...he laid down his life willingly...he chose to suffer and he did it with pleasure.

That same attitude translated to you and I is we are to understand the same thing that Jesus did. "You will suffer." But maybe the question still needs to be answered; "are our sufferings redeemable?" "Are they for good, or for waste?" "Are they intended or by accident?"

I mean, I don't know about you, but if I'm going to join this disaster of a company—so it would seem—I want to at least want to know that my sufferings would be invested well. "For the joy set before Him Christ endured the cross." Am I going to get the same kind of reward for mine? Joy?!?! Hebrews 11:6 sure seems to think so; "to please God, you have to believe He exists and that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

So it seems that written right into the policy manual is a clause that promises my reward. It seems that the CEO, the founder, and the visioneer of the company actually desires for me and us to seek to join in a dangerous cause, but at the same time, he doesn't want us to do it with expecting a joyous reward.

But what reward could be good enough to undergo all this? I mean it's going to have to be quite the pay off right? Well what does Peter say: "for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God." So what is the reward, at least initially? This passage implies that there is a way in which suffering is an antithesis to sin. This verse seems to be saying that when we are sinning we are not suffering—at least so we think, and when we are suffering we are not sinning. But Christ says to pray for deliverance from evil and a path that leads away from temptation. Is this suggesting we become sadists who get sick pleasure out of pursuing suffering?

Well let's back up and see if we can't step into this a bit. These are questions that plague men and women today. Everyone is looking to explain the suffering of life. Everyone. And in this passage we have a clue. Peter tells us to no longer live for our human passions, but for the will of God. Here we can observe that a "lack" of suffering is equated with human passions. Let me say it this way...

The human bent and natural instinct is to avoid suffering. Isn't it? Isn't that why all of you cringed at the marketing plan? We lean towards the apathetic don't we? And apathy, procrastination, complacency, neglect is simply avoiding things that are hard, correct? The hard thing may be a test, it may be the right thing to do, confrontation, being bold, working hard etc. Notice how all these human desires ignore attributes that God desires for us? We'll get to that in a minute. But we humans gather toys, materials, wealth, retirement and even theologies. We build into ourselves a belief system that allows us to retire and relax and I'm not just talking about after 60+. We are creatures of comfort and escape.

The whole theology of retirement that some people try and make biblical, even though it's heresy, is that they have worked hard, they've suffered, and they deserve 20 more years of quiet. Again, the opposite option would be to continue to work hard, leave a legacy of finance and modeling for those behind you, finish the race well, keep training. But what makes people a winner in races seems to be the thing that repulses us most when we think about being winners in life. Training. Working out. The strain to win and fight until the end is hard. Paul said "he beat his body into submission." He wanted to finish well. He realized that his natural desires to seek comfort were going to disable his ability to finish well if he let them.

So Paul beat himself up not intentionally, but by doing what? Seeking righteousness. You see the world is like Vs 3: "seeking sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry." And vs. 4 tells us "that they are surprised when YOU don't join in the flood of debauchery—indulgence—excessivity." Why not join in—that's foolish right? By the way, debauchery here means what can't be saved, or what's wasteful. The world wonders why their waste doesn't appeal to you. It's comfortable, and exciting. RIGHT?

Now back to the sinning and doing God's will idea. If you were to join in with them you would be "joining in sin." By seeking your own natural comfort, which is your nature, you'd be falling into sin. Well the will of God is to do the opposite. It's not be apathetic, it's to be motivated. It's not avoid, it's to confront. It's not to be timid, it's to be bold. It's not to shy away from the truth like some coward, it's to stand up and fight for truth in the midst of adversity. So we see that standing for what is right is countercultural, counterintuitive, and it blows marketing campaigns out the door.

In standing up for what is right and going against the grain in the way of Jesus, we are welcoming suffering. We are arming ourselves with the attitude of Christ. He took on the cross. But remember the reward? He ceased from sin. This means that in the moment Jesus chose that cross, he embodied sinlessness. In the cross He was choosing against the comforts of the world and He was embracing their ridicule instead. To turn away from that cross would have been sheer hatred toward the things of God. Our lives and destinies were riding on that cross. We were doomed if not for Jesus' cross. If he had turned away, he would have committed the most grievous sin of all. He would have violated love and destroyed the essence of his very nature.

And love is opposite of sin. By loving us through even that, he simultaneously held all of sin at bay. This is the reward. Let me explain.

Sin is destructive. Did you know that sin causes suffering in the world? It's your fallenness, your sin, and your passions that bring this world under so much hell. And those who continue to live in sin, think they are happy in their instant gratification. They think they are "suffering free" when in all reality they experience drug dependency, stress, worry, strife, anxiety, breakdowns, broken marriages, wayward children, debt, insecurity, you name it—and they do it in the name of comfort and they actually kid themselves that they are free and void of suffering.

So really sin leads to suffering, but it promises no rewards. Sounds foolish huh? Yet all of us do it. Yet there's a better way with rewards. Jesus says swim the other way. Be like Daniel. Daniel being a Christian was willing to accept Nebuchadnezzar's renaming of him after a pagan God, Daniel was even O.K. sitting in a school that taught Satanism, witchcraft and godlessness, and he was even willing to serve along side of them. Yet there were two things Daniel refused to do—eat their food and worship their god. He knew that their indulgence was a slippery slope into every other indulgence in comfort and the desires of the flesh, and he knew that to worship another god would lead him into sin. So he chose against these things, and because of it he enduring harsh suffering.

But the rewards of his suffering were as follows; peace, deliverance, hope, faith, self-control, joy etc. Because Daniel knew to obey the Lord and his conscience, he experienced an inner confidence with God. God affirmed his righteous behavior. He didn't necessarily reward Daniel with material rewards, but Daniel experienced ones that were far greater. In living righteously he lived guilt free, shame free, and secret free. He didn't have the weight of sin to carry that some willingly take on. He didn't have anything to hide from God. He was open and He sought to be close to God, and in this he experienced rest. Therefore there was peace that came to him because of his unity of conscience in what he believed and what he acted out, where most people's un-disclosure and conscience denial of their own "Jimminy Cricket" brings them stress, worry, shame etc.

James 4 tells us again of the opposing "dewards" the flesh brings:

"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

The same word here for "passions" is used in regard to Christ's passion in Acts 1, when Christ speaks of his passion being his death and resurrection. This is interesting because yours and my fleshly passions wage war against the one thing we're supposed to be in love with. Our passions fight for comfort and rewardless suffering. This passage says that we desire this so much we actually murder for it. Thus our lust is an act of murder. Maybe not physical, but we'll slander, gossip, malign, belittle if we don't, or until we get what we want.

Christ's passions however, fight for rewarded suffering and therefore endures suffering for righteousness sake. A person of righteousness knows that everything was won for us in the cross. All our comfort, all our wealth, all our hope, and our restored ecstasy with God. This is why suffering can be welcomed. We don't need the comforts of the world. We have more. We see through them. And we'll willingly dive into the fire to rescue

someone else out because we know what they're being saved from. Sure they may hate us, but that doesn't matter. The rewards at stake are to great. We have to see past what they say and do into their deeper hurt and need for a Savior.

This is Christ's passion. He doesn't desire suffering as an end in itself like some sadist or masochistic God. But He wills it in the other regard because it's what makes us like Him. God, before time began, willed the cross—the most horrific suffering that has ever or will ever be known. But the Father didn't desire the suffering, He willed it for the end. It's like spanking a child. I don't love or desire to spank my child, but I decree it, or will it in another sense because I love the fruit that ensues as a result. I know my child will grow to respect authority, they will flee from sin and pursue evil, and they will ultimately be saved from reward less pain; whereas in me spanking them, they are receiving rewarding pain. Their rewards are in the righteousness that follows and will come about in their life.

This is Jesus' passion; or you and I to become like Christ. It is for you and I to know Him, and to see His glory. But we must first receive the training. We need to be retrained to see Him, for our sin has made us so obese spiritually, that we can't run let alone see. So he trains us, purifies us and leads us.

If you see a doctrine or theology that's trying to undercut the value of suffering for Jesus' sake, run!!! It's heresy. It's the lie of the devil. The devil is once again trying to undercut honor, sacrifice, courage, boldness, valor, strength—all those things that invoke controversy and struggle—and he's trying to promote human passions that ultimately debilitate us into rewardless pleasure.

Remember the time of suffering they were going through in the context of I Peter; Nero's reign, the absolute violent attack on Christians? Peter didn't comfort them by telling them to find a way out. He comforted them by telling them to keep welcoming it. "Arm yourselves with the same attitude of Christ."

Vs. 12 -19 "Beloved, **do not be surprised** at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as **though something strange were happening** to you. **But rejoice...**" Worship. He exhorted them to remember the death of Christ. When Christ had died and undergone his suffering, it meant salvation for the world. His pungent death was like fertilizer on the ground, but yet His death brought about a beautiful array of wild flowers and harvestable crops. **Next verse:** "insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed."

Christ's joy was not in the suffering itself, but in the love that the world would know because of it. When you suffer like Christ, you've got something to WAIT FOR, because you have something to WAIT THROUGH. **Vs. 14** "If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

You hear that. You've got something to WAIT FOR...his glory rests on you. Because you have something to WAIT THROUGH. The sweetest and most savory victories come

at the greatest cost and sacrifice. Isn't this why we love the Super Bowl, the Olympics... God wired us this way. He wired us to stand up and do the noble thing, and the noble thing often ignites the most controversy.

I'll tell you when you drop an ice cube in hell it is going to produce the most sizzle. When you drop righteousness into a fallen world full of wickedness you're going to get a chemical reaction. However, let it be noted once again, that there is Stupid and Smart suffering—don't go looking for suffering. Go looking to love and do right. As vs. 14 says, don't go out murdering, stealing, and meddling, and bring down on yourself rewardless suffering. Go out looking to do the noble thing; the pleasurable thing. The thing that makes God most pleased. In pleasing Him, you're going to bring the most reward on yourself.

So when suffering ensues vs. 16; "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18And,

"If the righteous is scarcely saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

When suffering ensues, check yourself to indeed make sure you're still walking righteously, and if you are, count yourself blessed. Take it as a high five from God. Here his affirmation over your life. God will affirm you when your suffering brings him glory.

In another regard, the word "judgment" here (κρίμα krima) seems to mean "the severe trial which would determine character." It refers to such calamities as would settle the question whether there was any religion, or would test the value of that which was professed.

Did you get that? Right here, the trials that Peter has in his mind are understood by him to be sovereignty designed by God to test the character of his church. And Peter is no slouch on this subject. Remember Satan wanted to sift him like wheat. Satan asked God for the opportunity to bring a severe trial of faith toward Peter, and if you remember, Jesus didn't stop it. He prayed for Peter, that he would be preserved. Jesus didn't stop it because he determined it good for Peter, because Christ's motivation in it was to test and prove Peter's character. Satan's intention was to destroy Peter and God knew that, but Satan, thinking he could even beat out God in Peter's life, thought he was rebelling against God in tempting Peter, but all the while the hand of God made sure that Satan served God's purposes.

Satan was trying to stomp on Peter, and God was trying to give Peter a high five. God not only wanted Peter to trust in him in the good times, he wanted him to trust through and following the hard times. Jesus was glorified in the beginning with Peter, and in

allowing the temptation and suffering, Jesus was glorified through the means with Peter—he revealed Himself to Peter as a preserving, faithful and praying God over Peter—and Jesus was glorified in the ends with Peter—Peter is now passing his lessons and character on to those after Him.

Now, if you don't embrace this marketing scheme...If you think that Christ is just some add on lucky charm...If you think Christ is the sugar that makes your coffee better, or that He's somehow the wise investor who is just there to help the rich get richer and the positive to get more positive you have lost your mind!! That's human passions. Comfort. You think that Christ is there to make your life what...EASIER!! That's foolishness. If He let you believe that with some tricky marketing campaign, He would be dooming you for failure. He would be signing you up for a smoke screen and mirror show of false security, success, wealth, and comfort. And instead of making you feel more secure, it would just bring all the pain of the world back. You'd enter right back into the competitive game and "keeping up with the Jones's" that everyone else is involved in. And you know what, you'd probably still lose.

But by embracing suffering, it will actually bring about the attitude of a worshipper in you. You will lead people to see Jesus, you will love people like Jesus and you sweetly lift Jesus up.

"The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Let's close by looking through these verses to see how suffering outlets itself into worshipful acts:

Prayer as an act of suffering and worship:

Peter exhorts believers to be Self-Controlled and Sober-minded for the sake of their prayers. Prayer is an act of dependence on God, and there's no greater way in which He stirs and ignites dependence in us than through suffering. When the people of Babylon built the tower of Babel reaching up to the sky, they thought they were displaying their strength to the nations by showing everyone how great and "Self-sufficient" they were. In all actuality, we'd think God would have viewed this as a positive thing—I mean, his kids were independent, right? Wrong.

God saw this as a horrible thing because all of a sudden his children thought they could do things without Him, and He knew—being their Creator—that if they tried this, they would short circuit and burn their gears. He knew the destruction



that humans bring when they seek to depend on themselves, so God ignited a type of suffering. He stirred up their language.

For you and I, we might think, well that was dumb. He had a great thing going; one world language, everyone working together, huge successful infrastructure, architectural brilliance etc. But for God, stirring up their language was a step in the right direction. He confused their “self-dependence devices” so that they would again have to seek Him out for help.

You can image that many of them flipped out when their self-dependence didn’t work. They probably stressed out and became disillusioned. “God Why?” But through their suffering, God reminded them about who He was, and their need for Him. Through these types of things, God brings us back to prayer all the time.

During this time of suffering in Peter’s day, Peter was reminding them to be self-controlled and sober-minded. He knew the ability for suffering to get a hold of a person’s reasoning and decision-making ability. The last thing he wanted was for people to fall away and get caught in something that would fill them with shame when it came to talking to God, or would make them forget God all together. He ushered this warning to them because He didn’t want them to lose God in all of this. He wanted their love to grow.

Once again, this suffering could cause them to get complacent and drive them into regardless suffering or it could embolden them to take up love through pray and join the cause of rewarding suffering. You see, prayer is a type of worship and suffering. In prayer, we are committing our frailty to God and leaning on Him. But we are also joining the army of God’s angels against the attack of the enemy. We are not only leaning on Him, but He is helping us to wield His spear. Our prayers are fighting for righteousness in people’s lives. They are waging war against the attack.

Now, in a war, we can retreat and be comfortable, for awhile, but soon the enemy will overtake us—rewardless suffering. But if we fight suffering we righteousness—prayer—we may suffer on the battlefield and even suffer wounds are death, but we will gain the reward of fighting with and for our King and seeing Satan and His armies lose their grip.

Compassion as an act of suffering and worship:

“Keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.” This verse is talking about intense compassion. Compassion by definition means to join in someone else’s pain. You and I can only imagine the potential downfall that sufferings like these could have brought on the early church—and on you and I. But in loving each other, Peter knew they would stay the effects of the suffering. They would keep people from falling away, getting discouraged, and leaving God’s side. In this way, he knew by loving each other they would be

keeping a whole slew of other sins from ensuing...love covers over a multitude of sins.

In essence Peter was and is asking us to suffer with people as an act of warfare on the enemy. The enemy uses weapons to wound, disable and destroy people. But in stepping down into each other's pain we provide the bandage that reverses the wound's deadly blow. In applying love to a wounded heart, we cure it from Satan's kill shot, and thus we keep them alive and in the fight.

But this is hard for us. You know why we have a hard time joining in each other's pain? It's because we have too much already. We think we can't handle anymore, so we keep to ourselves and we let others wallow in theirs. Meanwhile, we deprive each other of the very thing we need...each other. I may not have the remedy for my own wound, but John Doe across the pew might. I may not know the way out of the foxhole I'm in, but general/pastor "what's his name" might because he's fought battles like this before.

Join in suffering. We need each other. And not only is our joining in with each other a righteous and rewarding pain, but it is also worship to God. Nothing blesses God's heart more than when we love His kids through tough times. If my daughter were experiencing a belittling disease and I couldn't make it to her, I would want someone to be my hands and feet and to stay with her. That person would be loving me through loving my daughter. And this is how it is with God. We love Him most, when we love his hurting kids.

One way Scripture says we can do this is through hospitality. This verse in Peter implores Christians to keep showing hospitality to one another without grumbling. Now, hospitality is not fellowship. Fellowship is between believers. Hospitality is when a believer invites an unbeliever in to share life and their home with them.

And can you imagine how hard this must have been in Peter's time? The people that Peter was exhorting them to invite into their homes were probably Nero's followers—the very ones who were persecuting them in the first place. So, do you think that their hospitality offering was a righteous action that invited more suffering...you bet'cha'. Not only were they inviting more problems into their homes, but in that act they also loved their enemies—an act of extreme worship to their God.

Peter was imploring them to join in with Christ in carrying His cross and ministering to those that didn't believe, in order that they may show His love to those that didn't yet know it. In this way, they worshipped their God.

Serving as an act of suffering and worship:

“ If you've received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's grace.”

You'd have to bet in this time that people didn't have a lot to give. In our day, we have so much and yet we won't sacrifice, we won't work hard to bless others, we won't invest in anything except for what directly benefits us etc. But these people heeded Peter's call even amidst their dire straights. They served with the strength that God supplies.

In doing so, they brought more suffering on themselves.

You bet...they could have took the hermit approach and sequestered themselves in some hut somewhere. This may have been easier...at least temporarily. But they stepped up and acted righteously instead of allowing Satan to win. In this they worshipped.

And lastly...

Witnessing as an act of suffering and worship:

Peter exhorts them to "speak as if speaking the oracles of God." Again, in the midst of a Christian hating, truth defying, God slaughtering culture, Peter tells the church to speak the truth. What do you think happened?

Persecution...adversity...greater bloodshed...you bet!!

But these believers couldn't stand down and not defend truth just because adversity could be a threat. They had to make their words count. They had to share, and in it, they were inviting suffering through their righteousness, but they were a fragrant offering to God in worship as He observed their love for Him and His children.

**For in this last statement, Peter concludes with the reason for our worship as shown through suffering:** "In order that everything may be done to His glory. **AGAIN:** To Him belongs glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

God leaves it to the place where He can supply the strength. That gets Him the most glory. He doesn't want you to get it for yourself, because it would only seek to be a poison to your soul.

So is suffering the will of God...you better believe it—Rewarding suffering. This brings Him glory, for it is the acceptable living sacrifice upon His altar of love. Our devotion to Him reveals His love in us and through us, and though it brings suffering for righteousness sake, it leaves in us the sweet fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control—It's Christ-likeness. This is the purpose for which we were born.

So is suffering not God's will...you better believe it—Rewardless suffering. He has no pleasure or desire in those that seek to live complacently, apathetically, purposelessly etc. for in it they bring on themselves anxiety, stress, worry, fear, lovelessness and depression.

These rewardless sufferings are fruitless and the smell remaining in them, is only the stench of death.

Christ hates death. He died to defeat it.

Christ hates sin. He died to defeat it.

Let this be Peter's and my marketing campaign to you about Jesus. Come and die, so you might live!!!



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