

Steadfast in Suffering

1. Suffering is to be expected. Even more, for the child of God, it is our calling.

- James 1:2 - Count it all joy, my brothers, **when** you meet trials of various kinds,
- I Peter 4:1a - Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, **arm yourselves with the same way of thinking,**
- I Peter 4:12 - Beloved, **do not be surprised** at the fiery trial when it comes to test you, **as though something strange were happening to you.**
- Matthew 10:38-39 - And **whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.** Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- Luke 9:23 - And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, **let him deny himself and take up his cross daily** and follow me."
- Philippians 1:29 - For **it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should** not only believe in him but **also suffer** for his sake,
- I Peter 2:21-22 - For **to this you have been called,** because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

2. Suffering is a test of our faith.

- James 1:3 - for you know that **the testing of your faith** produces steadfastness.
- I Peter 4:12 - Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial **when it comes to test you,** as though something strange were happening to you.
- I Peter 1:6b-7 - ...you have been **grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith** - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

3. Christians need other Christians, especially in times of suffering.

- I Peter 4:9b - the **same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood** throughout the world.
- I Peter 5:1-5 - Elders are to shepherd; the younger are to be subject to the elders; all are to serve the church humbly.

- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, **so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction**, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
- 2 Corinthians 1:11 - **You also must help us by prayer**, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us **through the prayers of many**.

4. God is trustworthy in your suffering. He is sovereign, loving, and faithful to deliver.

- I Peter 4:19 - Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will **entrust their souls to a faithful Creator** while doing good.
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4a - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us** in all our affliction...
- 2 Corinthians 1:9-10 - Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us **rely not on ourselves but on God** who raises the dead. **He delivered us** from such a deadly peril, and **he will deliver us**. On him we have set our hope that **he will deliver us again**.
- Psalm 34:19 - Many are the afflictions of the righteous, **but the Lord delivers him out of them all**.
- 2 Samuel 22 - David's Song of Deliverance

5. Steadfast, patient obedience in suffering produces mature, God-exalting, gospel-advancing Christians.

- James 1:4 - And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect and complete, lacking in nothing**.
- Romans 5:1-5 - Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that **suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame**, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 - So **to keep me from becoming conceited** because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities**. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- James 5:7a, 10 - **Be patient**, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord... As an example of **suffering and patience**, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
- Philippians 1:20b - ...**Christ will be honored in my body**, whether by life or by death.

- Philippians 1:12-14 - I want you to know, brothers, that **what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel**, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, **having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment**, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

6. Christians are commanded to respond to suffering with joy.

- James 1:2 - **Count it all joy**, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,
- I Peter 4:13a - But **rejoice** insofar as you share Christ's sufferings...
- I Peter 1:6 - **In this** (your living hope: an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you - v.3-4) **you rejoice**, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,
- Philippians 1:18-20a - Yes, and **I will rejoice**, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my **eager expectation and hope** that I will not be at all ashamed...
- Romans 5:2b-3a - ...and **we rejoice in hope of the glory of God**. Not only that, but **we rejoice in our sufferings**...

7. Future glory eclipses our present pain.

- Romans 8:18 - For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are **not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us**.
- I Peter 5:10 - And after you have **suffered a little while**, the God of all grace, who has called you to his **eternal glory in Christ**, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-18a - So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. **For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison**, as we look to the things that are unseen...

8. The crown of life awaits those who remain steadfast under trial.

- James 1:12 - Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for **when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life**, which God has promised to those who love him.

- James 5:11 - Behold, **we consider those blessed who remained steadfast**. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.
- Revelation 2:10 - Do not fear what you are about to suffer... **Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.**

Final Thoughts:

Deuteronomy 8 - The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ²And you shall remember the whole way that **the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.** ³**And he humbled you** and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. ⁶So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷**For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land,** a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, ⁹a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

¹¹“Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹²lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ ¹⁸You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. ¹⁹And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. ²⁰Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

John 6:66-68 - After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,

Suggested Resources:

Suffering is Never for Nothing, Elisabeth Elliot

Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts, Jerry Bridges

Suffering: Gospel Hope When Life Doesn't Make Sense, Paul David Tripp