

**OPEN WITH:** “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.” - 1 Peter 4:1-2

- ◆ “Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking...”

Every believer should live with an expectation that they will experience some measure of suffering during their lifetimes. We cannot be surprised when trouble finds us. Scripture is explicitly clear that all believers will encounter trouble as they live by faith, carry their assigned cross and follow Jesus.

- ◆ “...for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin...”

- **Suffering is intended to destroy the longings of the flesh and cause us to rely more completely on the Spirit:**

Galatians 5:16-17 - “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.”

- ◆ “...so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.”

- **Suffering clarifies for us what is of God and what is not:**

2 Timothy 2:20-22 - “Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. 22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”

- ◆ **Our brave confession:** “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word... It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes.” - Psalm 119:67, 71

**God uses suffering for our correction**

**God uses suffering for our redirection**

**God uses suffering for our protection**