

Intro: *VOM Letter.*

Thesis: "We Prepare to suffer as we Believe the Gospel & Jesus's Mercy."

I. Believe the Gospel (8-10)

- A. **Sound words.** Faith and Love "in Christ."
- B. **The Gospel: Life** (manifested/appearing). Incarnate God appeared. Already there. **Death** (abolished). **Resurrection** (Life/Immortality).
- C. **The Power of God. The gospel is the power for salvation.** "Not ashamed of the Gospel. It is POWER of God for salvation to anyone." **Rom1:16.** '

ILLUSTRATION: My Cousin's Wedding. Went to leave, and somebody had removed the battery. He was embarrassed, nervous and worried. Didn't know what to do. Groomsman show up with the battery. It had no power. All the bells and whistles, but no power. Gospel is power/church.

- D. **The Holy Spirit in you.** "Who". This is a person. Not just a force or power.
- E. **Salvation is a trinitarian work.** God the Father planned. God the Son accomplished/purchase it. God the Spirit applies it.

APPLICATION: A. Christ-centered, Gospel-preaching Church. Because that's what the whole Bible is about. Jesus. Jesus is the Gospel. The Gospel is Jesus. And it's Power.

II. Prepare to Suffer (8, 11-14)

- A. **Jesus promised us that we would suffer.** "Consider it all joy" **James.** "If world hates me it will hate you." **Jesus.** "Rejoiced to be considered worthy to suffer" **Acts.** "After you have suffered a little while, you receive eternal life." **Peter.** (He was ready to fight!)
- B. **Don't be ashamed.** "I know who I have believed in." "I hope you're right." **God/Jesus!**
- C. **Preach it. Proclaim it. Teach it.** (This isn't just any dude. Trustworthy/Confidence.)

ILLUSTRATION: What kind of suffering? USPS. 2012-2019. 2017 Amazon. **Gerald Groff.**

APPLICATION: A. What will suffering look like for us? At times it might look like Nashville. At times it might look unbalanced or unfair news reporting. So what? What did you expect? Something different than what Jesus promised? It's not retribution, it's what was promised.

B. Just Like Jesus. He's making us more like Him. We will have more and more opportunities to be patient and persevere in suffering. We share in His suffering. Every time we suffer, we're either rejecting an opportunity to be like Jesus or leaning into Him and growing.

III. Respond with Mercy (15-18)

- A. Not annoyance. Disgust. Surprise. Self-righteousness. Disappointment. Bitterness.
- B. **Betrayal within family.** Believers. Supporters. Friends. Attenders. Members. **It Hurts.**
- C. **Remembers and thankful** for the blessing they were while they were here. They were.
- D. **Prays for the Lord to have mercy on their soul.** Not a southern "bless their heart."
He's praying for their soul. They seem to have turned away from Jesus altogether. Sad.

APPLICATION: A. We can only show mercy as much as we have received and experienced mercy. Do you know the mercy of Jesus? Experientially do you know how much you need it? How many times you have betrayed Him? Your most faithful friend and Savior?

B. Just Like Jesus. He's making us more like Him. Which means we will have more and more opportunities to show mercy to those who persecute and betray us.

C. Passion Week. Jesus suffered willingly. With mercy. "Father forgive them. They don't know what they're doing." **Served Judas dinner/Washed his feet. Forgave Peter and set him over church. Stephen.** "Lord do not hold this sin against them." He didn't! **Paul** was watching. Talk about irony. Think about the family members. Friends. Now he's facing prison and death. This is beautiful. I want that kind of mercy and forgiveness too.