

Like a Rose, Trampled on the Ground

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-5 Baptism Class. Neighbors in Need. Men's Brkfst. Israel.
 - B. Slide6 Calvary Kids Christmas play: Looking for 1st-5th grade students to tryout tomorrow at 6:30pm in rm.133. See Jasmine after church for more info.
 - C. Slide7 Stat: Around the world, more than **340 million Christians** live in places where they experience high levels of persecution, just for following Jesus. That's 1 in 8 believers, worldwide. Behind each number & statistic, there is a human story!¹
1. Prayer:

II. Intro: Like a Rose, Trampled on the Ground Michael W Smith

- A. **A Rose** crushed under foot, is *fragrance released*.
Sycamore Fruit must be cut or punctured, for it to be *ripen w/sweetness*. Amos
Gold must be placed into the furnace, to reach full *value & purity*.
An Old Log must be laid on the fire, before its *imprisoned music is set free*.
We as Saints must be *laid low*, before we will *look high*.
We must know His **Smiting**, before we know His *smiling*.
Our Hearts must be broken, b4 their richest contents can leak out to bless others.
- B. **Outline: Suffering For His Glory. Serving For His Glory. Sharing In His Glory.**

III. Slide8a **SUFFERING FOR HIS GLORY (1-6)** *don't be controlled by the past*

- A. Slide8b We are engaged in a fierce conflict on foreign soil!
 - 1. In **good** times the church seems to become *stagnant & complacent*.
In **hard** times, the church seems to *grow & be strengthened*. Why is that?
 - 2. Peter doesn't share **mushy words** of condolences, **not even sympathy**,
instead powerful promises from **God's word**.

¹ Open Doors Website.

a) This world isn't all there is CM believers. This world isn't your home. There is a guaranteed future, too wonderful for words. And you have a unique opportunity to introduce others to the Savior.

3. Peter gives *encouragement for endurance*. Practical instruction based on *Christ's example* in dealing w/suffering.

B. Slide8c 4 REMINDERS OF OUR NEW CONDITION:

C. [1] Sin Is No Longer Our Master (1)

1. **Arm yourselves** (w/weapons) **with the same way of thinking** - the mental state involving: **beliefs, feelings, values, and dispositions** *to act in certain ways*.
2. **Ceased from sin** – this refers to *a break w/a sinful life* (listed in vs.3).
3. Rom.6:6,7 *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should **no longer be slaves of sin**. For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

D. [2] Passions *desires/lusts* Are No Longer Our Master (2a)

1. Do you realize **your lusts** are the exact opposite of *the will of God*.

E. [3] We Can Now Live For The Will Of God (2b)

1. **Note:** It's either *the will of God* or the will of the Gentiles (unbel). **Choose this day whom you'll serve**.

F. [4] We No Longer Have To Live For The Will Of The Gentiles (3)

G. Peter says there **MUST** be a break from our old ways.

1. You should not allow *the old life* to control you.
2. Life is too short to waste it on *godless living*.
3. Slide9 Eph.5:13-18(NLT) ***So be careful how you live, not as fools but as those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, let the Holy Spirit fill and control you.***

4. Has your break from your old ways been noticeable?

5. If you could break off 1 more thing what would that be?

a) What must you do to accomplish it? What holds you back?

H. 4 reminders of our new condition: *Sin is no longer your master. Passions/lusts/ desires are no longer your master. We can now live for the will of God. We no longer have to live for the will of the unbel Gentiles.*

IV. Slide10a **SERVING FOR HIS GLORY (7-11)** *be serious about the present*

A. Slide10b 4 MARCHING ORDERS FOR SPIRITUAL SOLDIERS:

B. [1] Be Self-controlled & Sober-minded in your Prayers (7)

1. **Self-controlled** – sound in mind. *Keeping a cool head & having a balanced mind to exercise self-control or moderation.* (LKGNT)

2. **Sober-minded** – to keep a clear head.

a) **So** to be *self-controlled & sober-minded* is to have a **cool head & a clear head.**

b) **Attach these to prayer you get** *clear, reasonable, & sober communication w/God*

C. [2] Keep Loving Earnestly (8)

1. **Earnest love** – Love each other *deeply.*

a) **Earnest** = stretched or strained. *Like the taut muscles of an athlete who strains to win a race.* (BKC)

b) Love that seeks the good of others first & w/o concern for cost.

2. **Love covers** = will hide.

a) We say **Love is blind** ... *Is it? Nope*, this *strenuous love* is not blind **but sees & accepts the faults of others.**

b) Prov.10:12 *Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.* **Covers** or *overwhelms, love overwhelms all sins.*

c) The idea is to practice *forgiveness & overlook insults and unkindness.*

D. [3] Show Hospitality (9)

1. Show hospitable to one another w/o grumbling – lack of *Air bnb's* caused people to be ready to provide *board & lodging* for friends/strangers at any time. This was a very highly esteemed ministry in that day.

- a) If Hospitality means friendly & welcoming ... What would biblical hospitality look like in **your** life? **Who** do you know that is a *good example* of this?
What **1 step** in that direction can you take today? [see Tony nu minstry emphasis]

E. [4] *Serve One Another* (10,11)

1. Each **gift** is to be used to *serve or minister to others*.

- a) Every believer has something to contribute.
b) *We did not determine our gift, deserve it, or earn it.* [cuz it's a gift]
c) This isn't a gifting to make you feel better about yourself, to boost your ego, or to serve your own interests. **Rather**, these are **investments** God has made in each of the members of His body, & He expects *a return on His investments*.

F. **Good stewards** – those who served as *house managers*, who had no wealth of their own but distributed his master's wealth, according to his Master's will & direction.

1. Thus, these gifts are on loan from God. **Are you using the gifts God has given you to serve/build up the body of Christ?**

G. **God's varied grace** – many colored, variegated, rich in variety (*aka* spotted, pied, toppled, tattooed).

1. **The Grace of God is like a diamond**, multifaceted, rich in color, shining forth w/many prisms of light, throwing radiance on all those in His presence.

H. (11) Peter divides Christian service into **2 categories**: those who **speak**, those who **serve**.

1. This distinction is also found in Acts 6:2&4. *It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables ... but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.*

I. I love at the mention of Christ's name, Peter busts forth w/a doxology here.

1. **Does hearing His precious name** ever have that impact on you?

J. So, the 4 marching orders for spiritual Soldiers are: Be self-controlled & sober-minded in your **prayers**. Keep loving earnestly. Show Hospitality & Serve 1 another.

V. Slide11a **SHARING IN HIS GLORY (12-19)** *be prepared for the future*

A. Slide11b *THREE TRIAL TRUTHS:*

B. [1] Expect Trials (12)

C. For most of the last 2000 yrs, Christians have had to endure suffering & persecution as a way of life. It has been a recent phenomenon (generally only in Christian cultures) that suffering for the faith has become *the exception rather than the rule*.

D. **Happening** – to fall by chance. [Persecution **isn't** an accident. God *allows it* & even *designs it* for the believers *testing, purging, & cleansing*]

1. What form of Christian persecution are you experiencing? At home/work?
2. How can you provide **encouragement** this week to a Christian brother or sister who is *suffering because of his or her faith*?

E. [2] Use Trials (13,14)

F. Anything that we suffer for the sake of Christ is a **privilege**, **not a penalty**.

1. Persecution quickly burns away *chaff in the church*.
2. *Those who have made only a superficial profession of Christ have *no new nature to motivate them* to suffer for Christ, & *no divine power to enable them* to endure it, if they wanted to.
3. Nothing is more *spiritually purifying & strengthening* than **persecution**.
4. Successful Christians & Churches *will make waves*, & inevitably provoke a hostile reaction from either *the world or the satanic realm, or both*.

G. [3] Glorify God with Trials (16-19)

H. **Christian** – only used 3 x's in NT. Originally a term of scorn.

I. (17) This verse should be the most **sobering** for us saints.

1. **He will purge us for 2 reasons:** So we will be a good witness & a good warning to the lost.

2. If He judges His own kids, how much more will He judge lost sinners?

J. (18) Peter quotes the LXX's rendering of Prov.11:31 here. Peter's not teaching salvation is earned, **but** simply that *those who are saved are not exempt from temporal disciplinary judgments, which are the natural consequences of sin.*

K. (19) **Entrust their souls to Him** – a banking term meaning, to deposit for safe keeping.

1. Remember, you have been deposited into the FCB (Faithful Creator Bank) for safe keeping. **Therefore**, know you're not only "**Federally Insured**" **but also**, **Eternally Secured!**

L. **Slide11c Suffer according to God's will** –

1. ***Choosing to suffer** means that *there must be something wrong with you*, **but Choosing God's will** even if it means you'll suffer, is something very different.

a) It's exactly what **Jesus** did. **He didn't sadistically look forward to the agony of the cross**, **but** choose **the Fathers will** though it meant suffering.

M. **Expect Trials. Use Trials. Glorify God with Trials.**

N. **Slide12** C.S.Lewis said, *I'm not sure God wants us to be **happy**. I think he wants us to **love, and be loved**. But we are like children, thinking our **toys** will make us happy and the whole world is our nursery. Something must **drive us out of** that nursery **and into the lives of others, and that something is suffering.***

O. Keywords: gifts, glory, suffering,