

## The Privilege of Suffering

### Goals of the Sermon

- To encourage the body of Christ to not only embrace the grace of God but also to embrace the suffering that sometimes comes with it.
- To remind believers that suffering is not always physical death—it often means dying to ourselves.
- Many say they would die for Christ, but most of the time, He simply asks us to be faithful in small things—like waking up early for church or committing to serve joyfully.
- Let's be faithful in the little, serving with a good attitude and remembering that even small sacrifices are part of following Jesus.

### I. The Meaning of the Privilege of Suffering

Philippians 1:29–30

#### Definition of “Privilege”

- Greek: Charizomai — “to grant, give freely, or show favor/grace.”
- Derived from charis (grace).
- Paul's meaning: “It has been graciously granted to you... to believe in Christ and also to suffer for Him.”

#### Definition of “Suffering”

- Greek: Paschō — “to suffer, endure, experience pain, hardship, or misfortune.”
- Includes mental, emotional, and spiritual distress.
- The same root used when describing Christ's passion (His suffering and death).

#### Key Thought:

It truly means struggle, difficulty, or hardship. Yet, what a privilege it is to know God's truth and to suffer for a cause so great that it brings light into darkness, restoration to the broken, and salvation to the lost.

### II. The Cause Worth Suffering For

This cause is the Cause of Christ, the blessing of the Gospel—that Jesus gave His life for our sins so we don't have to pay the price ourselves.

We often take this message for granted when we become self-centered, forget our purpose, or complain about responsibility.

To know Jesus is to know peace, truth, and life. It is a blessing to know Him—and an even

greater blessing to suffer for Him, because to suffer for Him means to know Him more deeply.

### **III. Suffering Is a Privilege**

Philippians 1:29–30

Paul understood that we have a mission to fulfill, and all of us are called to it. Many trust in God but are not willing to suffer for Him. We want to partake in the blessings of Christ's sacrifice but forget that we are also called to take up our cross and follow Him.

Example: The Apostles' Suffering

Church history shows that nearly all the apostles were martyred for their faith, proving their faith was not based on myth but on the risen Savior they truly saw.

Apostles' Suffering Summary:

Peter – Crucified upside down (Rome)

Andrew – Crucified on X-shaped cross (Greece)

James (Zebedee) – Beheaded by Herod (Jerusalem)

Philip – Stoned or crucified (Hierapolis, Turkey)

Bartholomew – Flayed alive (Armenia)

Thomas – Speared to death (India)

Matthew – Killed by sword (Ethiopia)

James (Lesser) – Thrown from temple, stoned, beaten (Jerusalem)

Jude (Thaddaeus) – Killed with arrows (Armenia or Lebanon)

Simon the Zealot – Sawed in half (Persia)

Paul – Beheaded (Rome, under Nero)

John – Died of old age (Ephesus)

The very fact that we can suffer for Christ is a privilege—because the only reason we can suffer for Him is that we know Him.

### **IV. Living and Dying for Christ**

Philippians 1:20–22

Paul's mindset: whether by life or by death, his goal was to honor Christ.

Suffering becomes meaningful when our purpose is to bring Him glory, not to preserve our comfort.

## V. The Infinite Value of Knowing Christ

Philippians 3:8

Everything else is worthless compared to the value of knowing Christ.

Suffering strips away what's temporary so that we cling more tightly to Jesus.

When we endure hardship for His sake, we experience His presence and power more personally.

## VI. The Example of the Apostles' Courage

Acts 5:17–41

The apostles were imprisoned for preaching the Gospel but miraculously freed by an angel. They faced a choice: fear man or fear God. Despite the danger, they returned to the Temple and continued teaching.

Like the apostles, we too have witnessed God's power in our lives and are called to share the Gospel regardless of opposition.

Jewish Flogging Context:

Based on Deuteronomy 25:1–3, limited to 39 lashes ("forty minus one").

Administered across the chest and back—humiliating but not fatal.

Yet the apostles rejoiced afterward!

Acts 5:41–42 – They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus and continued teaching daily that Jesus is the Messiah.

## Conclusion

Suffering for Christ is not punishment—it's partnership.

It brings honor to His name, confirms our belonging to Him, and deepens our knowledge of Him.

To suffer for Christ is the greatest privilege because it proves we truly know and love Him.

Filename: The Privilege of Suffering .docx  
Directory: /Users/hopchurch/Library/Containers/com.microsoft.Word/Data/  
Documents  
Template: /Users/hopchurch/Library/Group  
Containers/UBF8T346G9.Office/User  
Content.localized/Templates.localized/Normal.dotm  
Title:  
Subject:  
Author: python-docx  
Keywords:  
Comments: generated by python-docx  
Creation Date: 10/9/25 11:06:00 AM  
Change Number: 2  
Last Saved On: 10/9/25 11:06:00 AM  
Last Saved By: Microsoft Office User  
Total Editing Time: 0 Minutes  
Last Printed On: 10/9/25 11:06:00 AM  
As of Last Complete Printing  
Number of Pages: 3  
Number of Words: 771  
Number of Characters: 3,817 (approx.)