

Suffering for the right reasons

1 Peter 2:19-20; 19 For this finds God's favor, if because of conscience toward God someone endures hardships in suffering unjustly. 2:20 For what credit is it if you sin and are mistreated and endure it? But if you do good and suffer and so endure, this finds favor with God.

As we have read 1 Peter 2:19-20, we see that to suffer or to be treated wrongly for the cause of the LORD is a rewarding thing, and is favorable in the sight of the LORD. God is pleased, when we do not compromise our beliefs or convictions, even if it means harsh treatment or persecution that will come from others. Our Father is honored when we are willing to suffer wrong for His name! In Acts the 5th Chapter we see that Peter and the Apostles rejoiced greatly because they were counted worthy to be reproached and to suffer wrongfully for preaching in the Name of Jesus!

But some would say, "why would God allow His children to suffer, aren't we the head and not the tail"? Well, brothers and sisters, I am afraid that many have misrepresented the ways and purposes of God in the life of the believer; and have misquoted scriptures to the point that their doctrines have become flawed! You see, the problem is, is that no one wants to, or is willing to suffer any amount of persecution for the LORD Jesus! Not many or willing to endure anything at all, because personal comfort and luxurious living are too important. Yes, the LORD can and does bless His children, and many have been fortunate to live a very lavish lifestyle; but when the LORD blesses you with much, He expects you to be a blessing to others and not to hoard it all upon yourself (read Luke 12:13-21).

God does not save us so that our sole purpose in life is to live high on the hog!! He did not save us so that we could live in ease, comfort and pleasure either. We were saved so that we would become witnesses for Him, so that others could partake of the true riches that is found only in Jesus Christ! But what we are mainly talking about here is when we suffer or when we are rebuked for doing something that was wrong, and we feel as though we have been treated unfairly and we want to rebuke the devil, bind evil spirits and start calling things forth....how foolish can we be? How religious can we be?

When we have done that which is worthy of chastisement, we ought to be willing to suffer the reward. If you run a red light, stop sign or assault someone without cause....you should not expect the officer or the judge to be so understanding; and you get off scott-free!

Listen to what verse 20 says; For what credit is it if you sin and are mistreated and endure it? But if you do good and suffer and so endure, this finds favor with God.

Some would say, "yea I ran that light, and I have a big fine to pay, but the devil is a lie...God is going to get me out of this"! What?? You did something wrong!! Don't bring God or the devil into it, that was completely your doing! So just suck it up and take your punishment. Or some would step out in faith as we say, and purchase a home, car, boat or what have you and knowing full well that they cannot afford it. And before the repo man comes to take it....we will get some oil and sling it all over the thing and start marching around it and making proclamations....Hey... wait a minute! You know that you didn't have the extra funds for this thing, so why involve the Father in your foolishness? What did Jesus say in Luke 14:28-32; *For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't sit down first and compute the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? 14:29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish the tower, all who see it will begin to make fun of him. 14:30 They will say, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish!' 14:31 Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 14:32 If he cannot succeed, he will send a representative while the other is still a long way off and ask for terms of peace.*

So what is the bottom line here...well simply this. Take full responsibility for your actions and decisions. Don't obligate God to rescue you from something that was completely your own doing; although He is plenteous in mercy. Just understand that when we do wrong and are punished for the wrong, remember to praise the LORD, ask for forgiveness and try earnestly not to repeat the same error. And when you are punished for the cause of Christ and for preaching the Gospel... rejoice and be exceedingly glad! Endure it patiently because there is a reward that soon will follow!

Blessed my brothers and sisters in Christ;
Michael