

SESSION 9: THE SUFFERING SAINT

◆ **Welcome and Program Overview (Facilitator): 10 minutes**
Session #9 Teaching: The Suffering Saint: 10 minutes

James the brother of Jesus lived during a time of great Christian persecution. To his brothers and sisters in Christ this is what he said in **James 1:2-4** "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Have you lived a life of trials and hardships? Do you sometimes wonder, why me? I too have suffered through many trials. As a teenager I saw my father's health decline rapidly as he succumbed to the terrible disease of ALS. He died when I was only sixteen. As a young mother my first husband left me, and our two young children to live his life with another woman. In my mid- thirties my eldest son at the age of 16 left home to live a life with the swine, very far from a life with God. I have majored in the pain of rejection, and abandonment was all this for my good? The thought that penetrates my mind is.... the sufferings of Christ. What are they; rejection and betrayal by the very people he came to save? And what was his answer to that rejection, death on a cross. He became the sacrificial lamb for all of mankind including those who had betrayed him.

As I share in the sufferings of Christ, what is the outcome for me...Glory?

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8:17

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

I have read these verses so many times but this time verse 5 hit me fresh and new. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. What a thing to ponder we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ. What are the sufferings of Christ? Rejection, betrayal, death on a cross. Yes, I have shared abundantly in these sufferings. I am certain you have too.

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, Philippians 3:10

To have fellowship with God is to be united with him to share in his sufferings is to be entwined. This is a calling, a unique place of true empathy with The One who died for your sins and mine. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 1 Peter 4:13

Being willing to share in the sufferings of Christ requires brokenness, a forgiving heart and a willingness to be that sacrificial lamb to those we love and serve. It requires a death to our agenda and ourselves. The result in all this is the glory of God revealed in our lives. To share in the sufferings of Christ is truly a place of honor. To be so acquainted with the life of Christ, as to share in his sufferings a privilege. This is the life of a victorious Christian!

◆ ***Small Group Discussion: 25 minutes***

Each participant share your thoughts and experiences from your week with the kids. How did your week go as it relates to discipline? This is the time to share helpful tips and ask for help! You all are fellow so-journers on this trip, time to be real with each other.

- Discuss how you really see yourself and if it's different than the teaching from today's session.
- How would believing the truth about suffering change the way you handle the trials of losing your spouse?
- Do you want to change your perspective?

Talk about what it really means to you about sharing in the sufferings of Christ? When we accept Christ into our hearts, the person we were before dies, and we are reborn as a "new creation." As a child of God, we have the privilege to share in life with Christ. As trials and struggles come our way, he is creating a beautiful tapestry of our lives. The question now is what's next?

Pray for each other to grow in wisdom and revelation as you all dig deeper into the word of God.

◆ ***Final Group Discussion: How can this study be improved?: 15 minutes***

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◆ ***Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes***

The Apostle Paul encourages us to continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in us that causes us to act according to His good purpose. Use the LIFE Starter journaling method that this study ignited, to continue to move ahead in Christ!

SESSION #9

WK. 9 DEVO 1

Read Romans 5:2-4

Read these verses, What does suffering produce? What does hope do for believers?

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

F=Focus to the text to make it applicable for your own life. What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read?

E = Engage God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

SESSION #9

WK. 9 DEVO 2

Read Exodus 3:6-8

Expound on these verses.

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SESSION #9

WK. 9 DEVO 3

Read & Study 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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SESSION #9

WK. 9 DEVO 4

Read & Study 1 Peter 1: 1-9

This a rich chapter. Pick which section means the most to you and expound on this section below.

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I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

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