SUFFER WELL: Key Verse

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

KJV – And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I **strong.**

NIV – But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

What is Suffering?

Suffering: Its Meaning for Spirit-Filled Life – Craig Keener

Jesus is Worth Everything!

Scripture is clear that suffering is a fundamental part of the Spirit-filled Chirstian life.

Jesus is upfront about being His disciples: Matthew 16:24-27

NKJV – 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

AMP - 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to follow Me [as My disciple], he must deny himself [set aside selfish interests], and take up his cross [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me]. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life [in this world] will [eventually] lose it [through death], but whoever loses his life [in this world] for My sake will find it [that is, life with Me for all eternity]. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world [wealth, fame, success], but forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory and majesty of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each one in accordance with what he has done.

2 Tim 3:12, 1 Peter 2:21, John 12:25

I. Jesus is Worth Everything – What does that mean? Is He? Do I behave as if He does?

1. Jesus Comes Before Everything Else

   a. Job Security: Jesus called them – they left whatever they were doing & followed
   Matt 4:18-22

   Matt 9:9

   Mark 1:16-20, Mar 2:14

   b. Residential Security: Where they would live/stay
   Matt 8:19-20, Luke 9:57-58

   c. Financial Security: Where we think our safety/security comes from
   Matt 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22

   d. Family Ties: Who do I love more? What comes first?
   Matt 10:37, Luke 14:26

   e. Social obligations: Failing to bury your family – permanent outcast
   Matt 8:22, Luke 9:60

f. Life itself: Take up their cross & follow Me
Matt 10:38, Luke 14:27, Matt 16:24, Mark 8:34

2. The Cost of Discipleship

3. How Much is Jesus Worth?
Matt 26:16

Matt 22:36-37

4. Baptism in the Spirit & Suffering
Matt 10:19-20, Mark 13:10-11, Luke 12:11-12, John 16:2

It isn't if… it's WHEN!

5. Our Model for the Spirit-Empowered Life
Mark 1:12-13

6. Revivals Among the Broken
Ps. 138:6; Prov. 3:34; Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5

Ps 34:18 – The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

7. Revival May Prepare Us for Hardship

SUFFER WELL SKILL: Right Theology – Leads to – Right Thinking

- Jesus is worth EVERYTHING
- He more than rewards us eternally for any sacrifice we make to follow Him
- God's Spirit empowers us for HIS mission in the world
- His mission is not always easy – neither is life
- Holy Spirit:
  - Enables us
  - Empowers us
  - Comforts us

What does that mean for my day to day living???

Elisabeth Elliot's – Suffering is NEVER for Nothing

II. Offering –

- **Rom 12:1**
  - NIV – Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
  - AMP – Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies** [dedicating **all** of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship.

- If we are to present ourselves – our bodies – to God as a living sacrifice – What are we presenting?
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- If we do that – then we can start to see:
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  - **Everything as a gift – that we can use to glorify God with.**

Consider – How offering relates to suffering

1st – Everything is a gift –

Do I look at EVERYTHING as a gift? Do I offer EVERYTHING back to Him?
2nd – there are several kinds of offerings that I can make to God – Sacrifice

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- **Suffering AND love are inextricably bound up together**

"If my life is broken when given to Jesus, it may be because pieces will feed a multitude when a loaf would satisfy only a little boy"

What is your offering???

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3rd – The 3rd component of offering relative to suffering – the offering of obedience

- The highest form of worship – is obedience
- Ezekiel 24:16 on…
  - There's a great lesson on this in the book of Ezekiel, hidden back in the 24th chapter, beginning in verse 16. God told the son of man, "I

> take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow" (Ezek. 24:16–17 nkjv). In other words, forget all the ritual signs of mourning. And Ezekiel replies this, "So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded" (Ezek. 24:18 nkjv). Now that's a very short description of some pretty important things! In the evening my wife died, and the next morning I did as I was commanded.[1]

In suffering – there is no consolation – no comfort – no relief – like obedience

If Jesus is worth everything – What are you to offer Him?

What is the next right thing you are supposed to do?

What does it mean for my day to day living?

Prayer Discipline:
Moving Inward – Seeking the Transparency we need.

- **The SIMPLE prayer**
- **The prayer of the FORSAKEN**
- **The prayer of EXAMEN**
- **The prayer of TEARS**
- **The prayer of RELINQUISHMENT**
- **The FORMATION prayer**
- **The COVENANT prayer**

[1] Elisabeth Elliot, *Suffering Is Never for Nothing* (Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 2019), 86–87.