

Are You Doing God's Will Part 7 Suffering For Christ

“8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” (1 Peter 4:8-19 KJV)

“8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8 KJV) The key thing here to continue to live a life for Christ, and persevering in facing the suffering, is to have more love and as said here a fervent charity. Fervent is to be stretched out and to be without ceasing; having no limit for love in order to be able to dilute and finally blot out sins from among us. The increased of wickedness will make charity grow cold, ***“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” (Matthew 24:12 KJV)*** therefore to face the work of the evil one, charity should be abound.

Jesus confronted the Pharisees that they don't have the love of God. ***“42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.” (John 5:42 KJV)*** He also showed them that they are doing some of God's commands like tithing but they are neglecting and putting aside other commands, ***“42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Luke 11:42 KJV) Keeping all the commands of God and laying our lives for the sake of others will express the true love,*** ***“10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:10, 12-13 KJV)*** Christ abided in the Father's love when He kept His commands, and that what enabled Him to lay down His life on the cross to save us from sin. ***Putting Christ as our example will teach us to abide with God's commands and finally will lead us to lay our lives to serve Him by serving others.*** Christ was full of joy as He abided in God's commands and He was enabled to pass the period of great suffering. When we do the same as Jesus abided in God's commands we will have a joy and to the full: ***“11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” (John 15:11 KJV)*** That kind of fervent love

Christ declared it to us in Words and in deeds, and Christ continued to declare it to the whole world when He died on the cross to take away mankind sins, ***“26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (John 17:26 KJV)***

“8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8 KJV) The fervent love would be first manifested among the family of God, among the believers, the church community, and when it is increasing and overflowing will overcome sin and the work of devil, and will be manifested in repentance, in forgiveness and in transformation of people's lives and would be overflowing to the world around the church. It will be manifested in ministries and services to others among the believers and extend to the non believers and into the farthest places to reach the loss.

“9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.” (1 Peter 4:9 KJV) The believer should be hospitable and generous to guests, especially those who are moving to serve the Lord with us. We need to aid them in their service. Paul in his letter to Timothy and Titus addressed the hospitality to be linked with the church leaders, ***“2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach.” (1 Timothy 3:2 KJV) “8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate.” (Titus 1:8 KJV)*** And Peter made it a must to every believer. It's true that no one can bear fruit unless he is manifesting hospitality. ***Willing to give and to sacrifice is the character of Christ's charity.***

“9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.” (1 Peter 4:9 KJV) Grudging is murmuring, a displeasure and debate against one another. It is a sin and it is a personality and an attitude problem that the believer in Christ should deal with it because it can lead to lack of fruit. Murmuring can be directed as displeasure toward the Lord, ***“12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.” (John 7:12 KJV)*** or it can be directed against one another due to some privileges being overlooked as we read here in the early church, ***“1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.” (Acts 6:1 KJV)*** Therefore we are admonished to do everything without arguing or complaining, ***“14 Do all things without murmurings and disputing.” (Philippians 2:14 KJV) So in facing suffering we are still required to show charity, and to offer hospitality without grumbling.***

“10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:10 KJV) We should be people who are beneficial to others. Whatever we have it came from God and it is not for us alone. We need to use them for the benefit and the wellbeing of God's church and for others to taste and experience the goodness of God. Operating with good administration in sharing and using the gift for the benefits of others; every one of us had received gift from God and we are required to develop them and to use them to serve God and to serve others, manifesting in this way the manifold of the grace of God. The church is complete with its head, Christ. Who gave us various gifts so that his grace will be completely given to us.

“10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:10 KJV) To minister is to be a servant, to be willing to suffer to attend and supply the needs of others; to wait at a table, to prepare food for others, to supply food and distribute the necessities of life; to take care of the poor and the sick. To minister is to administer the office of a deacon in Christian churches and to serve as deacons. ***“10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 3:10, 13 KJV)*** Paul wished to keep Onesimus with him so he can serve him and help him while he was preaching the gospel, ***“13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel.” (Philemon 1:13 KJV)***

“11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:11 KJV)

“11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth:” Apostle Peter divided the spiritual gifts into two kinds. The first one that what is administered through speaking as we read here: ***“7 ... or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation:” (Romans 12:7-8 KJV)*** ***“8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 10 ... to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. 28 And God hath set some in the church,... diversities of tongues.” (1 Corinthians 12: 8, 10, 28 KJV)*** And the second one that what is administered by actions: ***“7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: ... 8 ... he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.” (Romans 12:7-8 KJV)*** ***“9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; ... 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, ...” (1 Corinthians 12: 9-10, 28 KJV)*** ***“11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-12 KJV)***

“12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:” (1 Peter 4:12 KJV) Suffering trials and suffering for Christ’s sake should not be a strange thing to happen into our lives. Not only trials but fiery trial, that devil will try against you, a trial that you will be tried with it. Your stand for the Lord and your service will be opposed by the power of darkness and by the principalities in this world that opposes Christ and His Kingdom. ***As Christ was opposed and suffered from the religious leaders at that time who opposed His mission which was affecting their position and setup, today it is expected that we suffer as He suffered when our preaching and the way we live and serve is condemning the sin and the work of darkness.***

“13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” (1 Peter 4:13 KJV) Instead of being puzzled with the trials, let us rejoice and be glad, and for the following reasons. We rejoice in trials because we knew that we had hit the target. We rejoice because we share the

suffering of our Master and Lord, knowing that one day He will be appearing and these trials will be ended up and we will be rewarded by Him.

“14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.” (1 Peter 4:14 KJV) Having the choice to suffer is a privilege and will have the reward of it. If people scorn us and abuse our names because we are following Him and in line with His Word then we should be happy for that. We are achieving what God wanted from us to achieve. The religious system at the time of Christ and later on the apostles, had rejected Christ because they were holding fast to their worldly privileges and prestige and because they were sitting over a corruptible system that Christ and His Word and conduct exposed and condemned. Now if we follow what Christ and His Word ordained then we are led by the Holy Spirit, ***“for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you”***, to accomplish His will and plan; that even we will be met by reproach of the people who are opposing God’s Word, we still need to be happy. ***“on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified”***; on their part He and/or we evil spoken, but on our part He is gloried and we are living His will in accordance to His Word. On their part He was called a deceiver, ***“Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.” (Matthew 27:63 KJV)*** and we today are called false prophets and deceivers, ***“By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true.” (2 Corinthians 6:8 KJV)*** But on our part He is the way and we are speaking the truth in love.

“15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters.” (1 Peter 4:15 KJV) There is suffering of other kind and that is due to sin. Followers of Christ should not suffer because sin like stealing, cheating, telling lies, promoting corruption, immoralities, and the rest of evil doing. We need to understand that non willingness to do what Christ wants from us, because we are not willing to suffer, then that will put on us the sin of compromises, and we will be sharers with evil doers. Paul said to Timothy, ***“22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.” (1 Timothy 5:22 KJV)*** When people do wrong and we keep silent, then as if we are laying our hands on someone who does not deserve the office. Keeping silent and swallowing lies and doing nothing about sin is not the way to serve God. With such attitude we are supporting wrong people and deserting Christ. Peter said, ***“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters.”*** When we don’t defend the truth we are killing it and we are murderers. When we abuse the terms that God placed in His Word, then we are thieves and evil doers. When we do many things but not touching the area that need to be corrected or the sin that need to be dealt with then we are acting as a busybody. Many they kick the blessings of God coming to them by siding with the evil doers just out of fear or just because they don’t want their lives to be in turmoil because of the back fighting of evil doers who would wage war against them when they are correcting them.

Apostle Peter when he said, ***“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters”***, he is addressing some big crimes like murder and stealing. Since the letter was addressed to the church, and there in his letter no evidence that there is among them people who do such, then must likely what he means is the following: when the church chose to avoid suffering on the hands of those who oppose the truth, and when the church is siding with them by keeping silent of their wrong doing to avoid

suffering, then the church is sharing the same criminal action that the religious system, composed of the chief priests and the teachers of law inflicted on Christ.

Let it be known among us that if we will not put a clear demarcation between good and evil in our lives and ministries then we are accused with the same crimes of those criminals who put Christ to death. God will judge us for that. Jesus said to the Pharisees, **“29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, 30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. 32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.”** (Matthew 23:29-32 KJV) When we keep silent while sin is going on, and when people who are called by God are doing evil and are indifference to the truth of God and to the law of God which is broken, then we are partakers with those who killed the prophets of God and who crucified Christ. Peter wept bitterly when he denied that he knows Christ. We ought to repent, every time we don't allow the truth of God to be well spoken, or when sin is not well dealt with.

“16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.” (1 Peter 4:16 KJV) We are called to glorify God by declaring the truth. Paul said, **“10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”** (Ephesians 5:10-11 KJV) Even if it causes us trouble, it is worthy to declare the truth in such a way. We should not be ashamed what the people getting bad opinion or impression about us. But let us be intimidated and be ashamed when we are not doing what the Word of God is telling us to do.

“17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17 KJV) Indifference to the truth is sin, as well as the indifference toward sin; both of them God judge. God will judge first His people because they knew His Word and because they had given His grace and they should show their accountability to all what they had heard, received and seen. **“For the time is come”**, so we are constrained with time and should not allow it to be too late to respond with God's call to do our part for Him. **“that judgment must begin at the house of God”**, it is very fair, and we should know that knowing Christ makes us more accountable and we will sure receive His judgment if we will not keep holiness and behave indifferently like those who have not heard Christ's gospel and God's Word. **“and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God”**, we will be judged first, and worse will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel. Therefore if we will be indifferent to the truth of God and compromise and escape our duty to face sin and correct evil doers then we will be in their camps and will share the wrath of God that He will send to them. **“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”** (Proverbs 13:20 KJV) We really need to move away from those who oppose the truth.

“18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (1 Peter 4:18 KJV) Apostle Peter made it clear to the church, **“And if the righteous scarcely be saved,”** that for our salvation we need to work it out with fear and trembling. Everyone would be tested and scrutinized; if we are willing to quit compromises and to stand firm with the truth then salvation will be ours, otherwise then we will share the lot of the ungodly.

My dear and beloved: * Putting Christ as our example will teach us to abide with God's commands and finally will lead us to lay our lives to serve Him by serving others. * Keeping all the commands of God and laying our lives for the sake of others will express the true love. *Willing to give and to sacrifice is the character of Christ's charity.

“19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” (1 Peter 4:19 KJV) Let us be willing to suffer for Christ's sake; keeping His Word and showing His love causes us opposition and suffering from those who oppose the truth and delight in lies. But it is worthy the suffering, and we need to endure, because God is faithful He will neither let us down nor will forget all the good that we had done for Him and for His people in keeping them walking in the truth and in keeping serving them in love.

Suffering according to the will of God should be our goal and aim in all our Christian walk and ministry, and we keep that by committing and yielding our lives and our souls fully to Him to take us and keep us in the way He want us to go as ordained in His Word that we explained in the message. We need to be assured that in pain He is there to sooth us, in opposition He is suffering with us, in suffering and serving others, He is our hope and inspiration to continue to do so, until we will meet with Him in the day of His coming in the clouds, **“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”** (1 Thessalonians 4:18 KJV) Let us pray

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death to give me eternal life. Lord I thank you for your word that makes me understand the way that you want me to live for you.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord _____. Ask God forgiveness for your non willingness to suffer, non willingness to serve and show love to others, and for your murmuring and compromises.

Lord, I commit my life to you being willing to serve others with the spiritual gifts that you gave me. Lord, I am willing to stand for the truth, willing to face sins, corruption and compromises inside and outside your church. Lord empower me with the Holy Spirit and encourage me when people says lot of things against me because of your Word and the truth. Lord sustain me and provide for me to continue to serve you.

Lord, I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who accepted your Word and are willing to live their lives and serve you and suffer for your Word. Lord protect them and provide all their needs. Lord deliver them from all persecution and the attacks of the devil.

Lord bless us and sustain us as a church. Lord help us, protect us, and provide for us to go on in serving you and do your work and your will. Lord, we pray that you will refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and enable us to serve others with love. Lord lead us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church and fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in Peace with Implementing the Whole Will of God'. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus' name, Amen.

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