

A Biblical Survey of Suffering:

Originally From Wilmington's Book of Bible Lists, but greatly modified: 25 Reasons Why Christians Suffer

- 1A Suffering is not unusual, 1 Peter 4:12-13, "12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation."
- 2A Suffering is a Sign of Progress in the Christian walk: 1 Peter 4:14, "14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you."
- 3A Christians Suffer to Develop Character:
 - 1B Elimination of character flaws:
 - 1C Job 23:10, "10 "But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold."
 - 2C Psalm 66:10-12, "10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. 11 You brought us into the net; You laid an oppressive burden upon our loins. 12 You made men ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water, Yet You brought us out into a place of abundance."
 - 3C Proverbs 17:3, "3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the Lord tests hearts."
 - 4C Isaiah 1:25-26, "25 "I will also turn My hand against you, And will smelt away your dross as with lye And will remove all your alloy. 26 "Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city."
 - 5C Isaiah 48:10, "10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction."
 - 2B Development of strengths:
 - 1C Romans 5:3-5, "3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."
 - 2C 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5, "3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; 4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. 5 This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering."
- 4A Suffering is a Testimony against the Schemes of Satan: Job 1:9-12, "9 Then Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 "But put forth Your hand now and touch all that

he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.” 12 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.”

5A Suffering is a Testimony for the Glory of God.

1B Psalm 50:15, “15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.”

2B John 9:1-3, “1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

3B John 11:1-4, “1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” 4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”

4B Romans 8:35-39, “35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Just as it is written, “For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

5B 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, “7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.”

6A Suffering is a Testimony to the World Concerning the Gospel: Philippians 1:12-14, “12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.”

7A Suffering is a testimony to Us of God’s Grace: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, “7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave

me. 9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

8A When Christians Suffer in Righteousness, They Receive Reward:

1B Matthew 5:10-12, "10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

2B Romans 8:16-18, "16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

3B 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, "17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

4B 1 Peter 1:7, "7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

5B 1 Peter 5:6-11, "6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. 8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. 10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. 11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen."

6B Hebrews 10:36, "36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."