



GOD'S FELLOWSHIP – JOY IN SUFFERING (19)

START HERE:

In his letters, Paul often wrote with honesty about the suffering, troubles, and difficulties of life. He made it clear that followers of Jesus should expect to experience these things. But he also made it clear that when we suffer, face troubles, or experience difficulties because of our faith, we somehow join with the sufferings of Jesus himself.

Paul wrote from experience. He was imprisoned (more than once!) for preaching the Good News about Jesus being the promised Savior and Lord. He wasn't just spouting words that sounded good or that he hoped were true. He knew they were true. He'd experienced the truth personally.

For Paul, being thrown in jail was worth it. He was determined to tell people the truth about Jesus Christ. He was determined to warn people about the world's lies. He was determined to teach people the wisdom he had learned during many years of studying scripture (for him that would have been the Hebrew Scriptures, or Old Testament). He was determined to explain what it meant to fully follow Jesus.

He did all these things because of his love for Christ. Then he wrote about them so that readers would grow and become mature followers of Jesus.

Paul was committed to proclaiming the "entire message" of God so it would be "fully known." Then his children would have "full assurance" and "complete confidence" that they understand Christ — who he is, what he did during his life on earth, and what he is doing now.

READ THIS: Colossians 1:24-2:5

THINK ABOUT:

Paul willingly suffered and risked imprisonment so people would know God's "full message." What might be dangerous about knowing only partial truth about God and faith?

Write about how you understand and experience "Christ in you."

What do you learn about each of these things from this passage:

Truth about God:

Truth about Jesus Christ:

Truth about the Spirit:

Truth about God's children:

AM: Today, be aware of ways you can exhibit mature and selfless faith in Christ.

PM: Today, how did you experience "Christ in you?"

Dear Lord, Thank you for the people who teach me your truth, who encourage me to live for you, who help me grow in understanding and wisdom, who serve you by serving others. Amen.

EXTRA THINGS

Some people think following Jesus means life will be happy, easy, fun, successful, and full of earthly blessings like money, fame, good jobs good health, and lots of awesome possessions.

That idea doesn't come from the Bible.

Most often the Bible reminds us that life is full of difficulties and that following Jesus doesn't necessarily eliminate those difficulties. In fact, following Jesus often includes its own set of difficulties - like giving up our selfish desires, loving all people even those who are considered enemies, humbly serving others, and so many more.

*"Dear brothers and sisters, WHEN troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy . . .
(read more in James 1)*

EXTRA VERSES

EXTRA STUFF

"Christ Lives in Me" by Rend Collective [HERE](#)

"As Long As You Are Glorified" [HERE](#)