

The Sufferings of our Savior... Crucifying Christ Again!

by Roy Philip

"The Apostle Paul unequivocally states that we "by nature are objects of wrath" (Ephesians 2:2). We were born sinners, meaning we were born with the sin nature; by default we were against anything that had to do with God. Left alone in that condition, we were destined to go to hell for all eternity and be punished for all our sins. It was all bad news for us...and then came Calvary, the Good News! Somebody did something for us and, in an instant, our destiny was changed forever. Our eternity is not hell, but heaven; we are not sinners, but saints; and all the punishment that we were supposed to take on...was transferred on to Jesus! He paid the penalty for our sins. The Good News is always appreciated when the bad news is made known. The bad news is that we were all on our way to hell and Jesus stepped in and saved us. In doing that Jesus endured horrific pain, pain we cannot imagine. Yet, he did it so our salvation could be purchased with his blood and sweat. He suffered in the following ways:

Sold – Jesus was sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver. This amount was even lower than the price of a man 20 to 60 years old (Leviticus 27:3). How do we crucify him again today? We sell him out when we disobey His commands to please our friends in this world or when we succumb to peer pressure.

Stressed – Jesus sweat blood (Luke 22:44) because of the stress He was feeling as He pondered the pain He was about to bear, both physically and spiritually. How do we crucify him again today? We do not even bat an eyelid when it comes to suffering for Christ? We just decide that we cannot handle that pressure, and give up on Christ.

Slighted – Jesus was insulted by his captors. He was bound before the High Priest (John 18:12); He was spat upon twice (Matthew 26:30, 67); He was slapped on the mouth by the High Priest's servant (Matthew 26:67); He was stripped and clothed in purple (Matthew 27:28). How do we crucify him again today? We bind ourselves to drugs and alcohol; we constantly use our mouth to lie and curse.

Scourged – Jesus was whipped and he had flesh hanging from his body after the severe beating. Proverbs 19:20 states that "only the back of fools was to be whipped." How do we crucify him again today? He became a fool for us and yet we continue to make a fool of Him when we don't stand up for Him and His truths because we don't want to "rock the boat."

Spiked – A crown of thorns was forced into his head; the spikes went deep into his skull. He took that pain for us. Nails were also spiked into His two hands and legs. The nails put Jesus on the cross, but it sure did not keep him there... it was His love for us that kept Him there! How do we crucify him again today? Those spikes should have gone through our heads, our two hands, and legs; our heads have ego and pride, our hands commit terrible crimes, and our feet go places of disrepute.

Speared – Even after Jesus was dead, he was speared by the Romans (John 19:34). How do we crucify him again today? We

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consider Him dead when we doubt His love and compassion and His work on the cross for us.

Separated – Yet the worst suffering of all was one of a spiritual nature for Jesus. When He hung on that cross for us, He was separated from his Heavenly Father. It was so painful that Jesus cried out “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” He became so lonely just for us. How do we crucify him again today? We choose to sell him out when he sold himself completely to us on the cross.

Roy Philip is an associate professor of Marketing and Production currently at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, Tennessee. He has been involved in teaching God’s Word for over 25 years both in India and the US. He often preaches at the monthly meetings of the Malayalee Christian Fellowship (MCF) in Nashville. He is married to Jooly (Professor of English) and has two boys Caleb (12) and Josiah (10). They attend Immanuel Nashville (an Acts 29 church).

Facing adversities

(Lesson from the Epistle of James)

by Junu Thomas

Know that if you are a Christian, several attacks and difficulties will rise up against you. Don’t view any of these as punishment from GOD instead know that it is part of the training ground of GOD. Some of these attacks will be very strange and intense even making you doubt in the existence of GOD and your election in Christ Jesus.

Consecrated Christian life is filled with insur-



mountable challenges and adversities as long as you live in this fallen world. And when hit with these challenges and adversities, our first tendency is to lose all hope in GOD, give up on Him and go back to the old carnal ways of the flesh.

So the question is when encountered with these difficult circumstances, would you still walk in faith, obeying what GOD has revealed? Or will you resort back to your old fleshly ways as a sign of your giving up on GOD where you shun GOD and His truths? The exhortation from James is not to get dismayed or give up when facing adversities instead continue to walk in faith. There will be several fiery adversities thrown your way to knock you off from your walk of faith in GOD. Everything around you wants to desensitize you from the awareness of GOD and His presence. There are times when you won't feel GOD. There are times when GOD or His ways makes no sense to you. There are times when GOD seems so far from you. In the midst of all these strange trials and experiences, GOD wants you to stay steadfast in faith and not shrink back from faith or His precepts. Even when it doesn't make sense, just go ahead and obey His revealed Will.

GOD wants us to be patient in the midst of these challenges and let patience have its perfect work in you so that you may be entire and complete wanting nothing. However, most of us when faced with such trials shrink back in faith and walk away from GOD. That is not how it ought to be. When you encounter such adverse events in life, from now on count it as a blessing in disguise knowing that what the enemy has designed for evil, GOD will turn it for good. Despite your feelings and emotions during the trials of life, when you continue to walk in faith, walking in obedience to what GOD has revealed, it will help your faith in GOD grow even stronger and develop perfect character and maturity that GOD desires to see developed in you. Turn these tough times to your advantage by remaining steadfast in faith as they will help you grow more rooted in GOD and in close fellowship with Him. Know that GOD has called you and chose you by His mercy.

All these adversities, all these strange events and feelings that you go through are all known by GOD. Nothing happens in your life by accident anymore. GOD has made a covenant with you and

HE will be always with you as long as you remain in Him. The adversities posed by a fallen world, satan and sin will only propel the roots of your faith in GOD even more deeper if you just won't shrink back in faith instead let the process take its complete course. Let your patiently waiting upon GOD take full course. The result of your willing patience, trusting GOD, waiting upon HIS time to move on your behalf, will result in a character formation in you that GOD desires to form in every single believer where one reaches the full stature of

Christ, with the mind of Christ fully developed in them, which is very necessary if you want to enter into eternal glory. Meantime, if you want much grace and wisdom to wade through the current adversity, ask GOD for it and HE will help you effectively handle the current challenge in a godly fashion by giving you counsel and grace. GOD reveals His counsel to all who willingly wants to grow into the full mental and moral character through this process. True Christian walk was never promised to be easy, but GOD promised that HE will be with us through it all as we embark on this challenging journey.

The life of a human being on earth is short. Whether you are rich or poor, you will soon go back to dust through death. So really, your money or your financial status has not much weight over your destiny. You will die sooner or later. However, what is of real value is your eternal destiny. In other words, where will you find yourself after death? In eternal heaven or eternal hell. Did you acknowledge GOD while you were alive and did you live by HIS statutes and commandments whether you were rich or poor? Know that very soon everyone will stand in front of the judgment seat of GOD and every man will be recompensed according to His deeds done in the flesh. Even though the carnal man thinks highly of riches and measures others by wealth, GOD laughs at such fools. For such men do not understand the fragility of life nor ponder about how short lived their life really is. But GOD sees man's life like the flower of the grass that buds up today and soon dead by the sun's scorching heat. Life on earth is too short

and that short life in this fallen world ought to be spent in holy fear of GOD and adherence to the revealed truths of the Scriptures.

Blessed is the person who hangs on to GOD in the midst of adversities and challenges posed against

his spiritual life here on earth. Once the trials are over and after enduring through it without shrinking back in faith, he will not only be blessed here on earth but also soon be ushered into heaven, the crown of life that GOD has

promised to all that love Him and trust Him until the end. Glory!

Junu Thomas is a Minister of the gospel currently involved in church planting in the Memphis area and has served as a bible teacher at different churches and as a campus pastor at the University of Memphis. Junu and his wife Nisha reside in Memphis with their three children. For more info visit www.paxdei.org

**What the enemy
has designed for evil,
GOD will turn it
for good**

MEETING SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

9:30AM— Worship Service

11:15AM—PM Bible Study

6:30PM—PM Fellowship Meeting

TUESDAY

7:00PM—Home Group

STREAMS OF LIFE

Every Friday at 9:00PM

Dial Life Prayer Line

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Lifestream Church is an International Christian community church in Franklin, TN, established to worship God in spirit and truth and to make a difference in lives irrespective of cultural backgrounds, preparing them holistically for all good works and for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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We meet Sunday at Best Western Meeting Room, 1308 Murfreesboro Road, Franklin, TN 37064

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