

II Timothy 3:12

“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

John 15:18

“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.”

Matthew 5:10-12

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The Purpose of Suffering

1) The Evangelization of Unbelievers

William Hendriksen

“The apostle’s recent experiences have had the same effect on the gospel-message as the work of sturdy engineers has on the progress of an army. These men are sent ahead in order to remove obstructions and clear the roads for the rest of the army. Now in the path of the gospel, too, there had been formidable obstructions...Paul’s experiences and reactions – his bonds, trial, constant witness for Christ, conduct in the midst of affliction - had served the purpose of tending to remove these obstacles. Thus, road-blocks set up by Satan to hinder and stop the progress of the gospel had become stepping-stones to better understanding and deeper appreciation of God’s redemptive truth and to rising courage in defending it. Paul had been bound, *but the Word of God could not be bound.*”

The Purpose of Suffering

- 1) The Evangelization of Unbelievers
- 2) The Edification of the Saints

Isaiah 55:11

“So will My word which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”

The Purpose of Suffering

- 1) The Evangelization of Unbelievers
- 2) The Edification of the Saints
- 3) The Exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ

Peter O'Brien

“Even by insincere preaching or from wrong underlying motives Christ is preached and made known in every way, and in this, the apostle rejoices.”

Colossians 1:24

“Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake.”

II Corinthians 6:10

“As sorrowful yet always rejoicing...”

Susannah Spurgeon

“The moment we come into any trial or difficulty, our first thought should be, not how soon we can escape from it, or how may we lessen the pain we shall suffer from it, but how can we best glorify God in it, and most quickly learn the lesson which he desires to teach us by it. Had we grace and faith enough to do this, our trials and troubles would be but as so many steps by which we should climb to the mountain top of continual fellowship and peace with God. The soul that has learned the blessed secret of seeing God’s hand in all that concerns us, cannot be a prey to fear; it looks beyond all second causes, straight into the heart and will of God, and rests content, because *He rules.*”