

Enduring suffering for Christ: By Erica Jermanus

This book is for Christians in their season of suffering.
This book will give you a better understanding of why
we go through pain and suffering.

There are many good times in our lives. But then there are bad times too. There are times when we are hurting, in pain, and suffering. God does not like to see us hurting and in pain. When we are hurting, He is hurting too. We are actually in the will of God when we are suffering, because Christ suffered for us as an example to follow. God has a reason and purpose for our suffering. Our pain and suffering is not in vain. It is not for nothing. God is using it for our ultimate good. God gets the glory whenever we are suffering righteously. Not that God takes pleasure in watching us suffer. But He is happy and pleased with us when we endure pain and suffering for His glory.

Suffering may not be pleasant at the moment, it is painful because it is supposed to conform us to Christ and His death. Pain was not originally God's plan and purpose for our lives. He wanted us to live with Him in perfection where there was no sickness, disease, pain, death, or darkness. But when sin came into the world through man's rebellion, that is when we had to suffer for Christ.

Suffering came into the world through Adam and Eve at the beginning of creation. God commanded Adam and

Eve not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the middle of the garden. He told them they could eat from all the other trees, but not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So, the serpent, which is Satan, deceived Eve.

Genesis 3:4-6 says, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Eve ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Her eyes were open and she saw both good and evil. She gave some of the fruit to her husband and his eyes were opened. They both knew that they were naked. That is how every bad thing came into this world because of man's sin and rebellion. So, it was not God's will for sin to come into the world. God wanted man to live in perfection and have life. But then death and

destruction came into the world because of sin and satan.

What the enemy meant for evil in our lives, God meant it for good. God is using our pain for a greater purpose. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." When we go through pain and suffering, we can find comfort, peace, and joy in the midst of it. We can choose to smile through the pain because we know that it is producing within us patience, endurance, and proven character. When patience has a chance to grow and develop, we will be perfected in our faith.

James 1:2-4 says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." When we endure suffering throughout a lifetime, we will reap eternal rewards and crowns. James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

When we suffer for Christ, we will also bear fruit for eternity. Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." The fruit of the Spirit is sowed through the suffering we endure. We are producing patience when we endure tests and trials of many kinds. When we endure suffering, we produce love because love is patient and love endures. When we rejoice in our suffering, we are producing joy. So, suffering produces fruit in us. When we continue to suffer for righteousness sake, we will bear good fruit. Hebrews 12:11 says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

A kind of suffering that Christians go through is God's discipline. The Bible says in Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Every true child of God will be disciplined because we belong to Him and because He loves us. Those who do not belong to God do not get disciplined or chastised. Hebrews 12:7-8 says, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons;

for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”

There are different kinds of suffering that a Christian may go through in their life. One of the sufferings we go through is weakness. We may be weak physically, mentally, or spiritually. God’s strength is made perfect in our weaknesses. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 says, “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

So, when we take pleasure in these weaknesses or these trials, His strength is perfected in us. It may not always be easy to smile or laugh when we are hurting. In fact, that may be the last thing we want to do. But when we smile or laugh in the midst of pain and suffering, we are producing patience and endurance through it. We become more like Christ when we suffer

for righteousness sake. Christ suffered for us the most gruesome death.

When we suffer with Christ, we partake in His death and as well as His life if we believe in Him and have repented of our sins. Suffering is all part of entering the kingdom of heaven. Acts 14:22 says, "...that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Few make it into the kingdom of heaven because few are willing to go through pain and suffering. The path of suffering is the straight and narrow path to eternal life. Also, choosing to trust in Jesus Christ and not in your works or religion is what keeps you on the straight and narrow path. Also, repenting and turning away from your sins and living a holy lifestyle keeps you on the straight and narrow path.

The straight and narrow path is difficult because it requires suffering and trials of many kinds. The straight narrow path requires self-denial. That is something that a lot of Christians, including myself, struggle with. But it is a lifelong process of becoming more like Christ. God is still working on us and perfecting us in His holiness when we submit to Him and His will for our lives. It will

be worth it in the end, because we will receive crowns and rewards for the suffering we have endured.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 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."

Matthew 7:13-14 says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

1 Peter 1:6-7 says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."