

## SUFFERING FOR BELIEVING

Being a believer in Christ is not for the weak at heart. To be a believer is hard and causes the person to endure suffering just as Christ did during his lifetime. Many people get this wrong and believe that being a Christian makes them free from pain and suffering, that God will protect them from all suffering. However, the scripture proves otherwise.

**Philippians 1:29** establishes that both faith and suffering on behalf of Christ are granted to believers, reinforcing that hardship is a normal aspect of Christian discipleship.

Jesus stated in **John 15:18** that suffering is a direct result of being associated with his name, as the world will hate his followers, but his followers should remember that it was him (Jesus) that was hated first.

He (Christ) doesn't prevent suffering, but rather, He (Christ) is there to help us through it.

Believers are encouraged to rejoice in suffering, knowing it allows them to share in the glory of Christ, especially when persecuted for living a godly life. Know you will be faced with ridicule by others. This is reflected in **1 Peter 4** which points out that since Christ has suffered, we will suffer. We will be slandered by others and give into human desire and lusts, indecent behavior, and idolatries. But by virtue of sharing the sufferings with Christ, in **verse 14** it states, "If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you."

Ultimately, we should have the position of knowing that suffering is not in vain, but a purposeful part of the Christian life, designed to strengthen us and glorify God.

Amen.