

# Seeking Joy Through Suffering and Missions

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Colossians 1:24

Scripture Reading: James 1:2-18

**Matthew 5:11-12**, "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad,"

**James 1:2**, "count it all joy when you fall into various trials"

**1 Peter 4:13**, "rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings"

**Acts 5:41**, "...they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

**Hebrews 10:34**, "for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods..."

**Romans 12:15**, "weep with those who weep."

**2 Corinthians 6:10**, "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing..."

## 1.) Christ Was Made Perfect by the Things He Suffered...So Are We

**Hebrews 5:8-9**, "though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him"

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**, "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

—**Malcolm Muggeridge**, *“Contrary to what might be expected, I look back on experiences that at the same time seemed especially desolating and painful with particular satisfaction. Indeed, I can say with complete truthfulness that everything I have learned in my seventy-five years in this world, everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through affliction and not through happiness, whether pursued or attained.”*

—**Samuel Rutherford**, *“that when he was cast into the cellars of affliction, he remembered that the great King always kept his wine there.”*

—**Charles Spurgeon**, *“They who dive in the sea of affliction bring up rare pearls.”*

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18**, *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

**Romans 5:3-5**, *“but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”*

**Hebrews 12:10-11**, *“chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”*

## **2.) Christ Brought Salvation to the World Through his Suffering...So Do We.**

Read Colossians 1:24

**Philippians 2:30**, *“because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.”*

**Philippians 4:1**, "Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved."

**I Thessalonians 2:19-20**, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy."

**I Thessalonians 3:8-9**, "For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. 9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God."

—**John Piper**, "Missionaries are not heroes who can boast in great sacrifice for God...They have discovered a hundred times more joy and satisfaction in a life devoted to Christ and the gospel than in a life devoted to frivolous comforts and pleasures and worldly advancements. And they have taken to heart the rebuke of Jesus: Beware of a self-pitying spirit of sacrifice! Missions is gain! Hundredfold gain!"

**Mark 10:28-30**, "Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." 29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life."

—**John Patton**, "Christ makes up Himself, every sacrifice. John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides, a man who did not find other house to welcome here there, he gives a beautiful testimony of the friendship and nearness of Christ when he was utterly alone. When he lost his wife and child, surrounded by head hunting natives. At one point hiding in a tree, he writes of this, 'I climbed into the tree and was left there alone in the bush. The hours I spent there live all before me as if it were but of yesterday. I heard the frequent discharging of muskets, and the yells of the Savages. Yet I sat there among the branches, as safe in the arms of Jesus. Never, in all my sorrows, did my Lord draw nearer to me, and speak more soothingly in my soul, than when the

*moonlight flickered among these chestnut leaves, and the night air played on my throbbing brow, as I told all my heart to Jesus. Alone, yet not alone! If it be to glorify my God, I will not grudge to spend many nights alone in such a tree, to feel again my Savior's spiritual presence, to enjoy His consoling fellowship. If thus thrown back upon your own soul, alone, all alone, in the midnight, in the bush, in the very embrace of death itself, have you a Friend that will not fail you then?"*

**—David Livingstone**, *"For my own part, I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa...Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blest reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger, now and then, with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver, and the soul to sink; but let this only be for a moment. All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice."*

**—Amy Wilson Carmichael**

*From prayer that asks that I may be, Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee  
From fearing when I should aspire, From faltering when I should climb higher  
From silken self, O Captain, free, Thy soldier who would follow Thee.  
From subtle love of softening things, From easy choices, weakenings;  
Not thus are spirits fortified, Not this way went the Crucified,  
From all that dims Thy Calvary, O Lamb of God, deliver me*