

# SUFFERING FOR BEING A CHRISTIAN

## PRECEPT

### PHILIPPIANS 1:29

<sup>29</sup> For it has been granted unto us not only to believe in him but also to suffer for his name sake.

### 1 PETER 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

## PROMISE

Suffering is inevitable, but not perennial. If faith is God's gift to us and we acknowledge who Jesus is in our lives; therefore, suffering has also been granted to us, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for His name sake (Philippians 1:29). Best believe that suffering is not relentless, but only God's love is. God says *"I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself."* (Jeremiah 31:3). We are also reminded in 1 Peter 4:12 to not be surprised when ordeals come our way, for this serves to test our faith and endurance. We are not to be afraid or ashamed when we suffer for following Christ, we can praise Him knowing full well that it is for our good at the end of the day.

Sufferings are like washing machines. They will twist us, knock us down, and choke us. But in the end, we will come out cleaner, better, and brighter than before. Experiencing sufferings is not a walk in the park, that's why the Apostle Paul instructs us to cast all our anxieties unto the Lord for He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). But sometimes, we just keep on carrying these loads in our backs and find it hard to surrender it all to Him. 1 Peter 5:10 tells us, *"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."* It could be easier said than done, but we are to face sufferings with confidence and assurance that God will never leave us nor forsake us.

Sufferings bring blessings; not the suffering itself but it is God who gives us the blessing. When we suffer for being a Christian, there will be blessings after we face it. God may not always explain what He's doing and why He's doing it, but only in the hour of testing that we need to imitate those through faith and patience received the promise of God.

**THE BLESSING OF RESTORATION.** God allows sufferings in our life to test us and build our persistence in faith, but He restores us and renews us in all aspects of our life; physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

**THE BLESSING OF SECURITY.** Only God can turn our fear into peace, turn a mess into a message, a test into a testimony, a trial into a triumph, and a victim into a victory. In God's hand, we are secure. *"<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:6-7)

**THE BLESSING OF FORTIFICATION.** God will strengthen us for He is our fortress and help (Psalm 18:2).

**THE BLESSING OF STEADFASTNESS.** No matter how hard and formidable the trials are, God's grace is wider and bigger. God will make us immovable when we go through sufferings. Life is never without difficulty, problems of many kinds, trials, sufferings, troubles, worries, and even depression, but life is also never without God to lean on.

## PRACTICE

**1. Suffering Experienced.** Think of a time you faced a serious trial or suffering. How did you deal with it and how did God make a difference as you face the trial?

**2. Faith Tested.** How does suffering help us grow in our faith? How can you rely more to God when facing sufferings?

## PRAYER

### I. North Life Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the North groups: Ocampo and Ico.

### II. Economy

- Pray for more jobs, increased family livelihoods, and economic empowerment.

### III. Canada

- Pray for wisdom for leaders to make sound & fair decisions that will make our country prosperous.

### IV. Unity

- Pray that the Lord will bring us together to work as one for the betterment of our world.

### V. Peace

- Pray that the Lord will grant His unshakeable peace to all of His children.

### VI. Security

- Pray for God's hedge of protection for all His children. May His goodness and mercy surround us daily.

### VII. Provision

- Pray for those who are in need; may their needs be met both physically and spiritually.