

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE WAY TO
VICTORY

PRECEPT

1 PETER 2:24

²⁴ Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. It is by his wounds that you have been healed.

JAMES 1:2-4

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

PROMISE

As Jesus told His disciples, He had to suffer many things and be rejected. Here we see His suffering at the hands of Pilate and the Roman soldiers who perform a mock coronation with a crown of thorns and a purple robe. Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd who reject Him as their king and call for His death. Jesus suffered and died with criminals, though He had done nothing wrong. People mocked Him for not saving Himself, and He certainly could have, but He loved us and sacrificed Himself for us. 1 Peter 2:24 says, "Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. It is by his wounds that you have been healed."

When Jesus died, the veil that separated the people from the holy of holies was torn. The veil represented the separation between God and human beings, caused by sin. To the disciples watching the crucifixion, Jesus's death looked like the ultimate defeat of their hopes for the promised Messiah. But his death was the way to victory over sin and death. We respond with faith in Jesus for our salvation. Jesus embraced all the pain and suffering He had gone through all for His love for us. The pain He went through is necessary to save us from all our sins. James, the brother of Jesus, who witnessed the life of Christ and His agony on the cross, gave us an amazing insight on how to handle our own pain and suffering in this life. In James 1:2-4 it says, "² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

EXPECT IT WITH GREAT JOY. Psalm 57:7 says, "My heart is ready, God, my heart is ready. I will sing; I will sing praises." Jesus knew from the beginning that it will be painful, but He also knew how the story will end. As we go through troubles in life, we must also have that same confidence, that victory is certain and is 100% sure. In James mindset, going through pain is an opportunity to learn and grow. God promises His comfort and presence in times of troubles. 2 Corinthians 1:4 says, "He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."

EMBRACE IT WITH THE RIGHT PERSPECTIVE. James 1:3 says, "Because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." Our pain and suffering have a purpose. Romans 5:3-4 tells us this, "³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. ⁴ And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." If we have the right perspective, going through trials will give us hope, it will produce endurance, and will develop our character.

ENJOY THE PROCESS AND THE OUTCOME. James continues in verse 4 saying, "Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." Whatever pain, problems, difficulties, and troubles we're going through, know that they are temporary, and the victory celebration is eternal with Christ. When we meditate on Jesus's suffering and death on the cross, we remember that He did it because of His love for us, and we are motivated to love others.

PRACTICE

1. Trials in Life. Are you presently going through some difficulties in your life? Thinking about the suffering of Christ on the cross, how can you respond to them differently?

2. Follow Christ. What does it mean for you to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

PRAYER

I. Joy

- May God fill us with His joy and His constant reminders that His Presence will go with us.

II. Trust

- Let us choose to trust Him and recognize the authority of who God is in our lives.

III. Love

- Pray that the body of Christ would faithfully show love to a hurting world in His Name.

IV. Healing

- Thank God that though we face trouble in this world, we can be assured He has overcome it.

V. Provision

- Thank Jehovah-Jireh, the God who provides, the One that owns everything in this world.

VI. Pastors

- Pray for our pastors, that their hearts and minds are directed towards Christ.

VII. Growth

- Pray that we will have a love for God's Word and truth.