

If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. **Luke 9:23**

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. **2Timothy 3:12**

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. **1Peter 2:21**

Suffering for Christ is an Essential Part of Christian Discipleship

Today's Scripture Text: **1 Thess 2:13-16**

1. **The Power of the Gospel** (vs 13-14)

They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, **explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead**, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." And some of them were **persuaded** and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. **Acts 17:1-4**

The message of Christ that saves us, is the message that gives us the power to suffer for Christ.

2. **Imitation of Godly Examples** (vs 14)

3. **An Interpretive Grid** (vs 14-16)

With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as **the Gentiles** do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

Ephesians 4:17-19 NLT

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth....Therefore *God gave them up* in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves...since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, *God gave them up* to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. **Romans 1:18, 24, 28**

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Romans 8:18