

THE PROMISES OF GOD IN SUFFERING

SUFFERING AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

When Christians suffer, they must see their suffering through the lens of God's sovereignty. Without the firm, rock-solid truth of God's all-wise and all-good sovereignty beneath the believer's feet when suffering, the believer can easily spiral into despair, hopelessness, and anger against God. The reality is this: Christians have been destined to suffer... therefore, God desires that we grow in our faith so that our trust and confidence is in Him, not in ourselves. This is what glorifies God as the all-sufficient King of His universe and His people.

- *Suffering is the reality for the Christian life... as a result, we should expect to suffer.*
 - *The Christian life will be a life of suffering.*
 - 📖 **Acts 14:22** ~ ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."
 - 📖 **Philippians 1:29** ~ ²⁹For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,
 - 📖 **James 1:2** ~ ²Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
 - *Suffering is ultimately the result of a sin-cursed world.*
 - 📖 **Genesis 3:16** ~ ¹⁶To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."
 - 📖 **Genesis 3:17, 19** ~ ¹⁷Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life... ¹⁹By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."
 - 📖 **Romans 8:22** ~ ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.
- *God has provided loving purposes for our suffering:*
 - *For Christians to examine their faith.*
 - 📖 **James 1:2-3** ~ ²Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
 - *For Christians to expand and build up their faith.*
 - 📖 **2 Corinthians 1:8-9** ~ ⁸For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came *to us* in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; ⁹indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;
 - 📖 **Romans 5:3-4** ~ ³And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

- *God is the One who sovereignly controls every one of our trials, therefore He can be trusted as the all-good and all-wise Father.*

📖 **Romans 8:28** ~ ²⁸And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

📖 **Psalms 115:3** ~ But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

📖 **Isaiah 46:9–10** ~ ⁹Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, ¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

PHYSICAL SUFFERING

- *There is a unique dynamic to physical suffering which makes it a difficult trial in one's life. This is illustrated by Satan's second temptation of Job.*

📖 **Job 2:3–8** ~ ³The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause." ⁴Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face." ⁶So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life." ⁷Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

- *Physical suffering ultimately finds its roots in the fall of mankind when sin and death entered the world.*

📖 **Genesis 2:17** ~ ¹⁷but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

📖 **Genesis 3:16a** ~ ¹⁶To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children..."

- *Physical suffering may or may not be the result of specific sin in a person's life.*

- *There are times when it is a result of a specific sin.*

📖 **1 Corinthians 11:27–30** ~ ²⁷Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. ²⁸But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. ³⁰For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

📖 **James 5:16** ~ ¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

- *There are times when it is not a result of a specific sin.*

📖 **John 9:1–3** ~ ¹As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ²And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

📖 **2 Corinthians 11:27** ~ ²⁷I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

📖 **1 Timothy 5:23** ~ ²³No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

📖 **Philippians 2:25–30** ~ ²⁵But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; ²⁶because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. ²⁷For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. ²⁹Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; ³⁰because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.

▪ ***The following two principles can help a believer to determine if suffering is a result of specific, known, unrepentant sin:***

○ *The Holy Spirit, as the one who convicts of sin (John 16:8), will help us discern our hearts to see if there is sin that we need to confess.*

📖 **Psalm 139:23–24** ~ ²³Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; ²⁴And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

▪ Thus, if He does not convict of sin, our consciences can be clear in the matter.

○ *Trust that in God's sovereignty and love for us He wants us to know if there is sin in our lives which is causing suffering and of which we must repent.*

▪ This is the point; therefore, He would not let us suffer without being able to determine the sin that is causing it.

• ***God gives hope in the midst of physical suffering through...***

▪ ***His loving comfort***

📖 **2 Corinthians 1:3–4** ~ ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

▪ ***Christ's compassion and sympathy***

📖 **Matthew 14:14** ~ ¹⁴When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

📖 **Hebrews 4:15** ~ ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

▪ ***The confident reality that all suffering will end in heaven***

📖 **2 Corinthians 4:16–18** ~ ¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

📖 **Revelation 21:4** ~ ⁴and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

• ***God gives practical help during suffering through communion with Christ in prayer and the promises found in the Word of God.***

📖 **Hebrews 4:15–16** ~ ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

📖 **1 Peter 5:7** ~ ⁷casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

- 📖 **Philippians 4:6** ~ ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- 📖 **James 1:2–4** ~ ²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- 📖 **Romans 5:1–5** ~ ¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
- 📖 **Romans 8:18** ~ ¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
- 📖 **Romans 8:28–29** ~ ²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- 📖 **Ephesians 6:10** ~ ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

- ***Communion with Christ strengthens our faith in God and His promises and it prepares us for the various temptations that come with physical suffering which include:***
 - Depression
 - Anger
 - Self-pity
 - Selfishness/entitlement
 - Loss of identity/purpose
 - Justifying sin

RELATIONAL SUFFERING

- ***God calls us to respond with the fruits of the Spirit in seasons of relational suffering. We, however, are often tempted to respond in self-pity, anger, and unrighteousness.***
 - 📖 **Galatians 5:22–23** ~ ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- ***The hope for sinners in relational conflict is faith, but faith anchored in three specific areas:***
 - 📖 **1 Peter 5:8–9** ~ ⁸Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.
 - ***God is sovereign over the hearts of people ~ He could change them.***
 - 📖 **Proverbs 21:1** ~ ¹The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes.
 - ***God is good even in the midst of relational suffering.***
 - 📖 **Psalms 145:9** ~ ⁹The Lord is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works.
 - ***God is loving and has sent Christ as our sympathetic example to follow.***
 - 📖 **Romans 8:35** ~ ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

📖 **Hebrews 2:18** ~ ¹⁸For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

📖 **1 Peter 2:21–24** ~ ²¹For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, ²²who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; ²³and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

- ***The anchor that holds our faith in these areas is the love of God at the cross.***

📖 **Romans 8:32** ~ ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

- ***Believers can apply 6 practical truths for responding to relational suffering:***

1. ***Confess Your Sins to God*** ~ Ask yourself, “Am I angry at this person?” If so, confess.

📖 **1 John 1:9** ~ ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. ***Confess Your Inability to Show the Love of Christ*** ~ Further, ask yourself, “Do I love this person?” and “Have I forgiven him?”

📖 **Romans 12:17–18** ~ ¹⁷Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

3. ***Trust the Love and Forgiveness of Christ*** ~ Having confessed your sins, trust the love and forgiveness of Christ for you!

📖 **Romans 15:13** ~ ¹³Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. ***Seek God’s Purpose in the Relational Hurt*** ~ What is God providentially seeking to help you in through this time of relational conflict?

📖 **Hebrews 12:11** ~ ¹¹All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

5. ***Pursue Reconciliation*** ~ Three ways to reconcile with your brother or sister:

a. ***Cover it over*** ~ This process is rapid as love extinguishes the offense without discussion.

📖 **1 Peter 4:8** ~ Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

b. ***Someone Has a Cause Against You*** ~ Quickly seek out and make things right with your brother or sister.

📖 **Matthew 5:23–24** ~ ²³Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

c. ***You’ve Been Sinned Against*** ~ Go quickly to the sinning believer in private and share it with them.

📖 **Matthew 18:15** ~ ¹⁵If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

6. ***Preach to Your Heart*** ~ Remember God’s goodness is making you into the image of Christ for His glory.

📖 **Romans 8:29** ~ ²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

“INNOCENT” SUFFERING

Innocent suffering is the kind that is not directly connected to a specific, personal sin in our lives. Since it is unexpected, the Christian must be prepared to handle the many questions that can arise from the pain that emanates from this type of suffering. Job is an excellent example of a believer who endured *innocent* suffering as well as the struggles he faced when seeking to know why God allowed his calamities.

- *Innocent suffering can and most likely will occur in the believer’s life.*

📖 **Job 1:13–19**

📖 **John 9:3** ~ ³Jesus answered, “*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

- *There may be reasons for our innocent suffering that are unknown to us and never revealed. Therefore, God does not owe anyone an answer for why He does what He does. Job was never told the actual reasons for his calamities.*

📖 **Job 1:6–12; 2:1–6**

📖 **Romans 9:20** ~ ²⁰On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, “Why did you make me like this,” will it?

- *God desires that His people remain loyal to Him in the midst of innocent suffering to prove the worth and value of His glory—that He is worthy to be loved and worshipped by His people even when they have nothing.*

📖 **Job 1:6–12; 2:1–6**

📖 **Matthew 5:16** ~ ¹⁶Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

📖 **Habakkuk 3:16–19** ~ ¹⁶I heard and my inward parts trembled, At the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, And in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, For the people to arise *who* will invade us. ¹⁷Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, *Though* the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, *Though* the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, ¹⁸Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹The Lord God is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds’ *feet*, And makes me walk on my high places. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments.

- *Lamenting in the midst of calamities is perfectly okay, but blaming God is never okay. Sorrow turns into sin when it is accompanied by unbelief.*

📖 **Psalms 42:3** ~ ³My tears have been my food day and night, While *they* say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

📖 **Psalms 42:5** ~ ⁵Why are you in despair, O my soul? And *why* have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him *For* the help of His presence.

📖 **Job 40:8** ~ ⁸Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?

📖 **Romans 15:13** ~ ¹³Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- *God can be trusted and loved for who He is, despite the innocent suffering He gives us.*

📖 **Job 42:1–6** ~ ¹Then Job answered the Lord and said, ²“I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. ³Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?” “Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.” ⁴Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.’ ⁵“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; ⁶Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.”

📖 **Psalms 119:71** ~ ⁷¹It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.

- 📖 **Romans 8:28–29** ~ ²⁸And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;
- 📖 **Psalms 73:25–26** ~ ²⁵Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. ²⁶My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
- 📖 **Psalms 63:3** ~ ³Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You.

PERSECUTION SUFFERING

- **Christians Face Persecution** ~ *This is a promised, certain reality for every true follower of Christ.*
 - 📖 **John 15:20** ~ ²⁰Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.
 - **Social Settings** ~ *As Christians, we often find ourselves driven out of social settings because of our position on moral issues.*
 - **Relationships** ~ *Family and friends can ostracize us for being followers of Christ.*
 - **Job Situations** ~ *Believers can be demoted, fired, or even hindered from promotions in job situations based on their Christian testimony.*
- **Christian Response** ~ *How should we as believers respond when persecution comes our way?*
 1. **Repent of Fear and Anxiety**
 - 📖 **Philippians 4:6** ~ ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
 - 📖 **Revelation 21:8** ~ ⁸But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
 2. **Rehearse the Gospel** ~ *Faith in the Gospel is the necessary component for ALL other aspects of responding to persecution.*
 - 📖 **2 Corinthians 4:6** ~ ⁶For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
 - 📖 **Romans 5:8** ~ ⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
 3. **Relinquish Life** ~ *We can therefore open our hands and trust Christ with the life and existence of all things that we possess or love.*
 - 📖 **Luke 9:23–24** ~ ²³And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ²⁴For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.
 - 📖 **Luke 14:26** ~ ²⁶If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.
 4. **Remember Christ and His Glory** ~ *God promises to be with us in suffering.*
 - 📖 **1 Peter 4:14** ~ ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.
 5. **Respond in Faith and Love**

📖 **Matthew 5:44–45** ~ ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

6. **Reach Out with the Gospel** ~ *When we are opposed for Christ's sake, reach out with the Gospel and depend on God's sovereign ability to open hearts.*

📖 **2 Timothy 2:24–26** ~ ²⁴The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, ²⁶and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

The sufferings of Jesus Christ provide a powerful help and hope for the believer. When we look upon His sufferings and see His glorious grace, our hearts will be humbled and helped when in the midst of our own sufferings.

- ***In God's infinite wisdom, He ordained that the greatest Person in the universe, Jesus Christ—the only One who had no reason to suffer—would live His entire life in suffering.***

📖 **Isaiah 53:3–5** ~ ³He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

- ***The Bible gives us 3 reasons why Jesus suffered throughout His earthly life:***

- ***So that Jesus can stand in solidarity with His people in their suffering.***

📖 **Hebrews 4:15** ~ ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.

- ***So that Jesus can be our Perfect substitute, for He completely obeyed in all of His suffering.***

📖 **Hebrews 5:8–9** ~ ⁸Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. ⁹And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

- ***So that Jesus could rescue sinners from their sin through His death on the Cross.***

📖 **Hebrews 2:9** ~ ⁹But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

- ***Jesus suffered to the extreme in all the ways we suffer:***

- ***Relational Suffering*** ~ *Each of the disciples abandoned Jesus in the time of His greatest suffering.*

📖 **Matthew 26:31** ~ ³¹Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.'"

- ***Spiritual Suffering*** ~ *Jesus' grief was so great, that it was literally killing Him... He felt as if He were dying from His sorrow.*

📖 **Matthew 26:38** ~ ³⁸Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."

📖 **Luke 22:44** ~ ⁴⁴And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

- *Despite the utter severity of this spiritual suffering, Jesus did not fail.*
 - 📖 **Matthew 26:39** ~ ³⁹And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."
- *Persecution Suffering* ~ *Jesus had already been persecuted by many Jews, especially the religious leaders who despised Him, and in the closing hours of Jesus' life, the persecution climaxed into blind rage.*
 - 📖 **Matthew 26:67–68** ~ ⁶⁷Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, ⁶⁸and said, "Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?"
- *Physical Suffering* ~ *The physical sufferings of Jesus were horribly brutal, so much so that it literally disfigured Him.*
 - 📖 **Matthew 27:26–32** ~ ²⁶Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. ²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole *Roman* cohort around Him. ²⁸They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. ²⁹And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. ³¹After they had mocked Him, they took the *scarlet* robe off Him and put His *own* garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. ³²As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.
 - 📖 **Isaiah 52:14** ~ ¹⁴Just as many were astonished at you, *My people*, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men.
- *Innocent Suffering* ~ *Of all the sufferings Jesus endured in His life, bearing the Father's wrath for our sin was the greatest and most difficult pain He suffered.*
 - 📖 **Matthew 27:46** ~ ⁴⁶About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
 - 📖 **Isaiah 53:6** ~ ⁶All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.
- *When we struggle in our weaknesses, when we are tempted, when we are facing intense difficulties... Jesus feels in His own heart what we are feeling in ours.*
 - 📖 **Hebrews 2:18** ~ ¹⁸For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.
 - 📖 **Hebrews 4:15** ~ ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.
- *Therefore, He calls us to trust in Him completely so that we can receive His grace and mercy—the very things we need for help and for hope.*
 - 📖 **Hebrews 4:16** ~ ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- *So, because of the sufferings of Christ, we have a sympathetic and sovereign Savior who will give us all we need in order to hold fast our faith in the midst of any and all sufferings.*
 - 📖 **2 Corinthians 12:9–10** ~ ⁹And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.