Suffering

Intro: Who do you look up to for your example (TV stars, music stars, sports stars, etc.). The Bible sets forth the one who we are to pattern our lives after.

1. Christ is our example.
   a. Gal. 4:19 “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,”
   b. Phi. 2:5 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;”
   c. 1 John 2:6 “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”

2. The Scriptures give emphasis to the fact that Jesus is our example in suffering.
   a. 1 Pet. 2:21 “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”
   b. 1 Pet. 4:1 “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;”

I. There can be no doubt of the fact that Jesus suffered.
   A. Suffered in the flesh.
      1. Isa. 53:3-4 “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”
      2. 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:1 “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:... 4:1Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;”
      3. Heb. 2:18 “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”
   B. The suffering of Christ generally refers to His death.
      1. Phi. 3:10 “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”
      2. Heb. 2:9-10 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”
      3. Heb. 13:12 “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”
      4. 1 Pet. 3:18 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”
      5. 1 Pet. 4:1 “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;”
      6. Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
   C. Christ suffering = death.
      1. We are to be of the same mind.
         a. Phi. 3:10 “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”
         b. 1 Pet. 4:1 “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;”
2. We are to suffer to death.
   a. The death we suffer is a spiritual death, not a physical death.
   b. Rom. 6:3-4, 6 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
   c. Gal. 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

3. When we suffer to death (die spiritually), we then cease from sin.
   a. Rom. 6:4-18 "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law [of Moses—MH], but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
   b. Col. 3:5, 9 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:... Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;”
   c. Rom. 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

II. The Fact Of Our Suffering.
   A. 2 Tim. 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”
   B. Mat. 10:24-25 “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?”
   C. We are to walk in the light.
      1. 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
      2. The world hates the light; John 3:20 “For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”
      3. Therefore the world will hate us.
III. OUR SUFFERING

A. It is because we are living for Him—for righteousness sake.

1. Mat. 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

2. Phi. 1:29 “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;”

3. 1 Pet. 3:17 “For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.”

4. 1 Pet. 4:16 “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”

5. 1 Pet. 2:19-21 “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”

B. Our attitude.

1. Unashamed:

   a. 2 Tim. 1:12 “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

   b. 1 Pet. 4:16 “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”

2. Rejoice, because we are blessed:

   a. Mat. 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

   b. 1 Pet. 1:6 “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:”

   c. 1 Pet. 3:14 “But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;”

   d. 1 Pet. 4:13 “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”

C. What suffering does for us:

1. Through suffering Jesus was:

   a. Made perfect:

       (1) Heb. 2:10 “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

       (2) Heb. 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”

       (3) Perfect is from the Greek τελειω (teleio) meaning “to complete, to make perfect by reaching the intended goal” (Zodhiates).

   b. Crowned with glory and honor:

       (1) Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
(2) 1 Pet. 1:11 “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

c. See what it can do for us.

2. Unites us:
   a. With Christ
      (1) Phi. 3:10 “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”
      (2) 1 Pet. 4:13 “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”
   b. With the prophets; Mat. 5:12 “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
   c. With all saints; 1 The. 2:14 “For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews;”

3. Gives us patience:
   a. Jam. 1:2-4 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; ’Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. ’But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”
   b. Rom. 5:3-5 “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; ’And patience, experience; and experience, hope: ’And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

4. Yields righteousness
   a. Heb. 12:11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”
   b. The fruit of righteousness primarily refers to right relations with others.

5. Makes us trust God in whatever circumstances we might find ourselves is: God’s answer to Job concerning his suffering.

6. Make us glorified:
   a. Mat. 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
   b. Rom. 8:17 “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”
   c. 2 Cor. 4:17-18 “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 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.”
   d. 1 Pet. 4:13 “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”
   e. 1 Pet. 5:10 “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”
   f. Rev. 2:10 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

7. 1 Pet. 5:10 “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”
Conclusion: The sufferer has reason, thus, to glorify God (1 Pet. 4:16 “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf”) for this is accepted with God; 1 Pet. 2:20 “For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.”