

Transforming Daily
“... I now rejoice in my sufferings ...”
Colossians 1:24

Paul is addressing the Christians at Colosse. At the time of this writing, he is imprisoned waiting to go before the emperor. That is the specific suffering of which he speaks. However, he also includes the general sufferings in Christ as a minister of the gospel for which he has been imprisoned. The irony is that he is writing to the believers to be encouraged in their everyday walk, and specifically against the false teachings of the Gnostics, while he faces incarceration and isolation.

An interesting point here is that it is believed that Paul didn't even personally know these believers. He hadn't yet been to the church at Colosse. He was responding to the reports of other ministers who were or had been there. Here Paul is in prison with more on his plate than he can eat and he is concerned for these Christians whom he has never met (read chapter one).

I've heard people say that they would be willing to die for someone or something. The real question is whether or not they will live for those or that which they would be willing to die. In other words would they be willing to suffer for their convictions. Death isn't always the hardest part of living especially for the believer. Living is the hard part. Suffering the daily trials, temptations, and travesties, the persecution and perhaps prosecution that one may be called upon to endure for Christ's sake, that's where the rubber meets the road.

It was long held and believed that a prisoner of war could endure any measure of interrogation. Military personnel and other government agencies were trained to give only their name rank and serial number if captured by the opposing forces (my dad was career military for 20 years, at the time of his death, he had been out of the military longer than he was in, and could still recite his serial number without hesitation). In fact, some of the more elite groups had (have) to endure intense training to simulate treatment that they might face if captured. However, it was soon discovered that NO ONE could hold out indefinitely against torture, as well as, severe and intense measures of interrogation.

In spiritual warfare, there is only one Man who was able to face every temptation such is common to man and not succumb to the trials, temptations, and torturous ways of this world. His name is Jesus Christ. The rest of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God. However, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the believer is victorious. He or she is an overcomer in this life. We are called to minister in His sufferings.

Where do you stand in light of the short and temporary trials of this life? Are you willing to endure these sufferings for the name of Christ? Everyone will endure sufferings. The question is whether or not you're willing to endure them in vain or for the glory of God? In Christ, can you say, "I now rejoice in my sufferings?"