

Week 04
022/343

Transforming Daily
“ . . . *His body, which is the church . . .*”
Colossians 1:24b.

It's one thing to suffer persecution rightfully; it's another to suffer persecution wrongfully. It's one thing to suffer persecution for one's own actions; it's another thing to suffer persecution for the actions of someone else. But what if you're suffering rightfully for the actions of another? That is an act of love. Jesus suffered that whosoever will trust Him and believe on His name might be saved, and Paul suffered persecution for the church which is made up of those who believe.

Paul explains to the reader that his suffering is in Christ on their behalf. He is living his life for, or investing it in, the church (elsewhere described as being poured out as a drink offering), the church at Colosse, specifically, as well as every church in general, that they may also know and experience the sufferings of Christ. Paul's sufferings reached farther in discipleship than just to the church at Colosse. His sufferings reached all the way to your church and mine.

Just the other day I was reading about a Baptist preacher who was on trial. In fact, he was convicted. My immediate response was, "A Baptist minister on trial?" The next response was, "What for?" "Was he on trial for preaching the gospel?" "Was he on trial for reasons of contempt regarding confidentiality?" "Was it a case of mistaken identity?" It was for none of these reasons. It was for murder. A minister (every believer for that matter), through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, is supposed to offer life. He is not expected to take life (self defense notwithstanding). You know who the minister was found guilty of murdering? He was found guilty of murdering His wife.

The church is the Bride of Christ. The church is the "wife" of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33). He didn't take her life for Him. He gave his life for her. That is called love.

What about you? Do you or have you suffered in Christ for His body, His bride, the church? Are you willing to pay the price of discipleship? Are you willing to suffer the price of discipleship for believers that you don't even know? In Christ, are you willing to suffer persecution and perhaps prosecution for His body, which is the church?