

**Transforming Daily**  
“... *sufferings of Christ* ...”  
*2 Corinthians 1:5*

What does Paul mean by the sufferings of Christ? Very simply, Paul is referring to anything the believer experiences related to his or her relationship with Christ. It is often an adverse experience, but doesn't have to be. You may suffer the praise of others regarding your relationship with Christ from selfless ministry on their behalf. On the other hand, most of the time “sufferings of Christ” refers to adverse experiences such as Paul describes in his life and in the lives of others at Corinth.

Paul's life reveals a double dose of sufferings. On one side of the fence, Paul was experiencing persecution and prosecution from unbelievers, on the other side of the fence, Paul was receiving ridicule and rejection from believers. The unbelievers didn't believe what Paul said he believed, and the believers didn't believe that Paul believed what he said he believed. So Paul was often caught between the proverbial rock and hard place. Nevertheless, Paul rejoiced in his sufferings for Christ and encouraged others to do the same.

How about you, is there any evidence that you are associated with the sufferings of Christ? Mind you, the believer doesn't have to go looking for any; they will sure enough find the believer. But how do you respond to the sufferings of Christ? Do you complain to others? Do you act “pooky faced” and depressed? It is easy to react that way especially if you are in the flesh over it.

The best way to remain steadfast and secure through the sufferings of Christ is for the believer to discipline themselves before the sufferings come. Developing spiritual disciplines is the best way to prepare. Prayer, Bible study, soul winning, practical service and ministry are just some of the spiritual disciplines that will prepare the believer for the sufferings of Christ.