

Praying for the Persecuted

Sharing in their Suffering and their Joy

Romans 15:30 I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

We can tend to seek living in a Happiness Bubble

What perceived benefits and also costs come with this isolation?

Why connect with the pain of the world? What would God have for our hearts?

We can be encouraged and share in the rewards of persecution.

Luke 6:22-23 Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets

Mt 10:42 "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

We encounter Jesus there. Christ and suffering and joy are found together.

Philippians 1:29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,

2 Corinthians 1:5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

1 Peter 4:13-16 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

It cleanses our affections, gives us a bigger perspective.

1 Peter 4:1-2 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

What can we give?

Our support. Our concern. Our unity. Our prayers. Our resources. The compassionate heart of God.

1 Corinthians 12:20,26 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. ... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Hebrews 10:34 You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

2 Timothy 1:8 So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

Hebrews 13:3 Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.