

Rain and Thorns Acts 17:5-9

Every rose has its thorns
Never promised a rose garden

Suffering is inherent in choosing to serve Christ

We need to understand that being serving Christ means things will not be sunshine and rainbows here on earth.

2Timothy 3:12 *Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

1Peter 2:21-25 *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.*

Story of Israel is a story of suffering and oppression

Daniel & his friends suffered even while being blessed

Jesus was not showered with blessings on earth

Persecuted, rejected, cast out, hiding, killed

Luke 14:26-27 *If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

Matthew 8:20 *Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

Early Christians were not blessed with wealth, health & happiness

Acts 4; 5:27-33; 17:5-9

2Corinthians 8:1-2 *Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.*

Hebrews 10:32-34 *But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.*

Some even persecuted unto death

Acts 7:54-58; 12:1-4

Paul

Philippians 3:4-6 *although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.*

Acts 22:3 *I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.*

Prison and jail on multiple occasions

2Corinthians 11:23-32

2Corinthians 12:14-15 *Here for this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?*

1Thessalonians 2:8-9 *Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

Being a child of God means

Giving up wealth

Matthew 6:19 *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*

1Timothy 6:17 *Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.*

Enduring suffering & persecution

2Timothy 3:12 *Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

Stranger & traveler

1Peter 2:11 *Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.*

Our wealth and happiness is not here, but in Heaven

Matthew 6:20-21 *But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

1Timothy 6:18-19 *Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

Are you willing to deal with rain and thorns?