

Philippians 1:28-30

Grace to Suffer

Opposition ...

- I. You are Saved by Grace
 - A. The Gift of God
 - B. The Grateful Life
 - C. The Grit to Stand

- II. Your Suffering is of Grace
 - A. Faith's Privilege
 - B. Facing Persecutors
 - C. Fears Pacified

- III. Separated by Grace
 - A. Sign of Salvation
 - B. Signal of Destruction
 - C. Sent as a Witness

... undermined.

Children, Listen ...

1. How is the forgiveness of sin through Jesus a gift from God?
2. Can we always understand why Christians suffer because they live for Jesus?
3. Why Don't God's people have to fear when people treat them badly?
4. Should people who treat God's people badly be concerned about meeting God?
5. What is the only hope for sinners like us that will make meeting the Holy God a good thing?

A Second Blessing?

Salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ is the wonderful truth of the Gospel. While new life in Christ is a free gift to repentant sinners, it was accomplished, by God's perfect design, at the great cost of Jesus' crucifixion. But the call to believe and be saved is not merely a call to passively rest on a profession we once made; the call to faith is a call to discipleship, to follow the Savior, to live for the Lord. Jesus work of salvation is complete. Repeat: We cannot add or take anything away from what He has done for our salvation. At the same time we are called to actively live our lives (as Paul wrote earlier) in a "manner worthy of the Gospel." Believers who know Christ as Savior live for Him as Lord. That can, and to some degree always will, cause conflict with the fallen world we live in. Jesus told us so Himself. In another place Paul reminds us: *Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 2 Timothy 3:12.* The odd thing is, according to this text, such suffering is *granted* to saints, or to put it another way is *gifted* or *graced* to us! To strengthen it even more Paul says that such opposition is actually a sign of our salvation. We will probably never face the kind of persecution the Christians at Philippi faced, but if and when we do face persecution to any degree we do not need to be afraid or think that something strange is happening to us. It is part of God's design - even His grace towards us. We are truly blessed if we are privileged to suffer for His name's sake and our unflinching trust in Him in the face of opposition will prove to be a witness to the mighty work of our Savior.