

Study Notes:

Have you ever been criticized or laughed at because of your faith? If you can, please share a bit about your experience.

When you read about people in other countries suffering for the cause of Christ, does it seem real to you? How do you respond to it?

Thinking back to Sunday's service, what encouraged you, inspired you, challenged you, or changed your thinking?

Read **John 15:18 & 20**.

Should Christians be surprised if they are maligned and persecuted? Explain your answer.

Should a Christian be concerned if he faces no opposition from unbelievers? Explain your answer.

Read **Matthew 5:10-12**.

The word translated as "blessed" is the Greek *markarios*. Some translators use "happy" for *markarios*, but that may not grasp the fullness of the word. It means to have a heart and mind attitude of complete contentment and satisfaction that is above the cares and pains of this world.

How might this understand of the word "blessed" change how you view Jesus' words?

For most Americans, persecution is not our immediate personal concern, yet do we still lack the sense of contentment and satisfaction to which Jesus refers in Matthew 5? Why might this be so?

Read **2 Timothy 3:10-17**.

Paul is writing to Timothy, but his words also speak to us.

What stark contrast does Paul present in verses 12 and 13?

In verse 14, Paul encourages Timothy to "continue."

How hard might it be to continue in your faith knowing you'll face persecution?

What is the biggest thing you've learned about suffering?

GRACE NOTES

Sunday, November 5, 2017

Series: Colossians—Jesus Is Enough

Message: Joy in Suffering (part 2)

Scripture: Colossians 1:24-2:5

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

¹ For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

From last week's message ...

- ◆ Your suffering is not what defines you.
- ◆ Your suffering is not forever.
- ◆ Don't let your suffering go to waste.

