

AMBASSADOR SUFFERING

During the month of July, we have been studying four lessons on Ambassadorship (2 Cor.5: 17-21).

- July 6 Ambassador Status
- July 13 Ambassador Service
- July 20 Ambassador Shoes
- July 27 Ambassador Suffering

The Ambassador's prayer: LEAD ME TO SOME LOST SOUL TODAY, TEACH ME LORD JESUS WHAT TO SAY. FRIENDS OF MINE ARE LOST IN SIN, LEAD ME LORD TO EACH OF THEM.

“And pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, *for which* I am an **ambassador** (presbeuo/ p.a.ind 1ps) **in chains**; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” (Eph.6:19-20)

- First, Paul desired prayer that he would not flee the field of spiritual battle (Eph.6:10-18).
- Then he desired prayer that he would not lose heart as a POW (Eph.6: 19-20).

This lesson will study FIVE aspects of Ambassador Suffering. The ambassador for Christ must be taught not only how to present the gospel, but also how to suffer because of it.

1. The active ambassador of the grace gospel of Jesus Christ will suffer hardships in the world.

“Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I *suffer hardship* (*kakopatheo/ p.a.ind 1ps*) even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.” (2 Tim.2:8-10)

“**But you**, be sober in all things, *endure hardship* (*kakopatheo/ a.a.impv.2ps*), do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. **For I am** already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have *fought the good fight*, I have *finished the course*, I have *kept the faith*; in *the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness*, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Tim.4:5-8)

2. The suffering of an ambassador, for the sake of the grace gospel is part of the angelic conflict (Eph.6: 10-18; Phil.1: 7,12-21; 2:3).

“Now I want you to know, brethren, *that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel*, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and the most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.” (Phil.1:12-14)

“Therefore *do not be ashamed* of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,” (2 Tim.1:8)

“For this reason I also suffer these things, *but I am not ashamed*; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.” (2 Tim.1: 12)

3. There are a variety of hardship sufferings which the ambassador for Christ can experience for the cause of the gospel (2 Cor.11: 23-28; Heb.11: 36-38).

“Why are we in danger every hour?” (1 Cor.15:30) “We were *burdened excessively*, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life.” (2 Cor.1:8)

“But in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, [in afflictions, in hardships], [in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonment, in tumults], [in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger], [in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left], [by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; regarded as deceivers and yet true; as unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things].” (2 Cor.6: 3-10)

4. The suffering of an ambassador for Christ must never become a cause of discouragement or despair (2Cor.4: 1-18).

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the *surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves*; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor.4:7-11)

“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.” (2 Cor.4:17) “Indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves **in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God** who raises the dead.” (2 Cor.1:9)

5. The Lord will protect the active ambassador through as well as from suffering for the gospel of Christ (2 Cor.1:3-11; 7:2-6).

“But the *Lord stood with me, and strengthened me*, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion’s mouth. The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.” (2 Tim.4:17-18)

“For just as the suffering of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.” (2 Cor.1:5)

“But we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus.” (2 Cor.7:5b-6)

“Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.” (1 Pet.4:19)