

Series: Truth for All Time **On the Road to Glory**

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Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

Craighouse Christian Fellowship



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When you're in the ministry, you feel the pulse of the people, what they're going through. Right now many are suffering. It's not all physical suffering; some of it is emotional, some mental, some financial, some spiritual. But people are in pain right now, praying...but in pain.

I don't need to spell it out for you; you hear it, read it, and experience it. But now more than before, you (and me, too) are holding on to the Word of God for your very life. That's good; we find comfort in the Word of God.

The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, the One who comes alongside while we're going through fires or floods (Isaiah 43) or adversity. He is there to comfort us in all our tribulation. There is a purpose to what we're going through. What happens is just so "tailor-made" just for us.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort where-with we ourselves are comforted of God. (2 Corinthians 1.3, 4)

Paul goes on to say that as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ. God provides what we need to handle our days. And whether we are afflicted or whether we are comforted, Paul says, it is for the consolation and salvation of others. We're enduring together in the sufferings we suffer. We're to strengthen one another, bear one another's burdens, stir one another up to love and good works, and fellowship with one another.

As you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall you be also of the consolation. (1 Corinthians 1.7b)

Paul despaired even of life; he was so pressed by trouble in Asia. He was pressed out of measure. That's Bible talk for being in the crucible of the Cross, being crushed like spices while God makes of you a sweet smelling fragrance before Him. That's Gethsemane, the place of the olive press. That's "the pressure cooker."

The purpose? ***But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us. (1 Corinthians 1.9, 10)***

And how do we help each other most? ***You also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. (1 Corinthians 1.11)***

We have seen and continue to see this. People are helping people, seeing a need and helping to meet it. People pray for one another, sympathize, empathize, and get active. For twenty years MCM's Barnabas Project has reached needy families and forgotten people in South Florida, providing encouragement and hope. Today a Barnabas Project How-to Guide is available in the "Free Books" section of www.marycraig.org. MCM giving extends to ministries helping the homeless, helping veterinarian missionaries with general animal health training, helping those in persecution, and more. People bringing people to find help and hope in Jesus Christ—that's what we want to be doing.

It's a hard thing to deal with suffering and to gain a right perspective on it. Paul suffered the loss of all things he formerly counted as "really something valuable" for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. Jesus was his Lord, meaning that Jesus held Paul's destiny, his life, in His hands.

Paul submitted to Jesus as Lord. He wanted to ***"be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."*** (Philippians 3.9-11)

There's something more out there. Paul reached for it, the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Paul exhorts us to grow up, to be mature in our thinking, to have God reveal to us this mindset toward the days of our lives.

It pleased God to bruise His Son, the Messiah (Isaiah 53). Check into what God revealed through Isaiah, the Prophet.

⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

⁸He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

⁹And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Isaiah 53: 5-11 KJV

Jesus endured the cross, despising its shame. He endured “sufferings.” This One who had no sin, who is the Beloved of the Father, came from heaven to earth to do something astounding—suffer. He is the Lord of Suffering. He died paying the penalty for the debt note of sin; taking the wrath of the Holy for all that is unholy. He made peace through the Blood of the Cross. He redeemed believers from the curse of the Law. He defeated Satan in *his* own territory.

Those guys on the road to Emmaus were down in the dumps, their hopes dashed, their emotions rampant with thoughts that the One in whom they trusted had failed them. ***But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. (Luke 24.21)***

The Risen Christ responded, **O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, Was it not necessary for Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? Luke 24.25, 26**

The path to glory doesn't bypass the Cross and suffering; suffering is right there, on the path to glory. 1 Peter 1. The glory follows the sufferings of Christ. So we are to gird up our minds, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Look, in the Christian life we travel through levels of understanding and relationship with the Father. First, our sins are imputed to Christ and His righteousness is imputed to us. **Imputation** Then after being defined “holy, blameless, and without reproach,” a definitive sanctification, we start the process of becoming what God has declared us to be. God begins to impart holiness to us. **Impartation**. Then we start to imitate Christ, to follow Him. **Imitation**. Then we begin to identify with Him, with what He experienced through His life, with what and who He is. **Identification**. Finally, as Jesus was God in the flesh, a divine person with a divine nature who took on a human nature in a human body, we *partake* (we never become God or a god) of the divine nature as human beings. **Incarnation**, Christ in us the hope of glory.

Simply put, the One True and Living God has a plan of redemption. Everything He does has a purpose. Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven is fulfilling prophecy, the prophetic Word. So is His coming again in power and great glory. It is all necessary, and sufficient, for the redemption of those whom the Father has given Jesus; and of those, Jesus will not lose even one. The path is narrow, for narrow is the way that leads to Life. Is it worth it? Is Jesus worthy as the Lamb slain? Who will follow the Christ? Will we?

Think about it. And whatever you're going through right now, know that God has a purpose in it and His Holy Spirit is right there alongside as Paraclete and Comforter.

God is moving mightily in our midst right now. The Holy Spirit is moving in an unprecedented way. Let's endeavor to keep in step and align ourselves with His plans and purposes. Let's stay on the path, on the road to glory. Amen.

Mary Craig, D. Min.

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***Neither is there any creature that is not
Manifest in His sight;
But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him
With whom we have to do...
Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we
May obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.
Hebrews 4: 13, 16 KJV***



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