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8 SPECIFIC REASONS... WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER

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8 SPECIFIC REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER

Be Patient

Patience is not something we do; it is something we become – it is a Fruit of the Spirit that develops as we encounter the need to exercise it. Patience is one of the most important Christian virtues. It is impossible to walk in the Spirit without it. The Spirit Himself is patient; therefore, as believers, we must develop patience if we are to walk as He leads us.

The Fruit of the Spirit is patience (**Galatians 5:22**). Love is patient (**I Corinthians Chapter 13**). I do not see how we can develop any of the other fruits of the Spirit unless we first develop patience. How can we be kind without patience, or how can we be meek (mild) if we have little or no patience? Without patience, we are harsh, hard, and rigid.

I believe we should concentrate on patience; and as we become more patient in our dealings with people and the affairs of daily life, we will have a great deal less stress! Many people today are physically sick because they are impatient with everything and everybody. To be patient is to walk in love – to be patient is to display the character of Jesus Christ.

Patience is a Fruit of the Spirit that is developed only under trial. Therefore, we must not run from difficult situations. The difficulties we encounter in life may seem to be our enemies, but in reality they are our friends – they teach us the very things we need to ultimately be really happy, content, and satisfied.

James 1:4 – The patient man is fully developed, lacking in nothing. He is perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

How can we be happy and content and impatient at the same time? Patience is not the ability to wait; it is how we behave while we are waiting.

Hebrews 10:36 tells us we need patience in order to inherit the promises of God. Faith and patience working together will lead us into God's best for us.

We are joint heirs – A worker or laborer strives and struggles to get things in their own timing and their own way. An inheritor waits for the natural order of things to take place.

Prayer: Father, help me develop the fruit of patience. Give me the grace not to run from things and people that aid in the growth of this important fruit. Forgive me for the **sin of impatience** and teach me to be Christlike in all my ways!

I. Patience And Contentment

- A. **James 1:4** – When patience has fully worked, we become people who want or lack nothing.
- B. Contentment is wonderful – getting the patience is painful!
 - 1. **James 1:2-4** – Patience develops as we resist impatience during unpleasant situations or as we deal with unpleasant people.
 - 2. Vine's Greek dictionary states "**patience is a Fruit of the Spirit which develops only under trial.**"
 - 3. Patience (defined) – "to stay under," long-suffering, persistent continuance.
- C. **Running away** from hard things have become quite popular, but those who do never mature.
 - 1. Running away from responsibility
 - 2. Running away from a difficult marriage
 - 3. Running away from debt incurred by filing bankruptcy

4. Running away from the responsibility of children by abortion
 5. Running away from pain through drugs and alcohol
 6. Running away from a hard job by seeking one that is easier
- D. “**Staying under**” develops patience and eventually brings us to a place of full contentment.
1. Contentment does not come due to having perfect circumstances – it is the result of spiritual maturity.
 2. Stay where God puts you until **HE** moves you.

II. **This, Too, Shall Pass.**

- A. The horizon of our life is always changing!
1. Something new is always on the horizon – **it comes to pass** – and a new scene appears.
- B. A woman who was very upset about being pregnant calmed down immediately when I told her that she would not be pregnant this time next year.
- C. It is much easier to cast your care if you realize “**this, too, shall pass.**”
- D. My husband chose to be peaceful in trials because he logically reasoned that next week it would be different anyway, so why not be happy now.
- E. Joseph is a good example:
1. Thrown in a pit by his brothers who hated him
 2. Sold into slavery
 3. Lied about and put into prison for walking in integrity
 4. Forgotten by those he helped

5. Eventually became the number two man in authority in all of Egypt – His trouble came to pass, and eventually he enjoyed good times again.
6. **Psalm 91:15** – I will be with you in trouble, and I will deliver you.

III. Relationships Change.

- A. People change.
 1. People I was once VERY close to are now casual friends.
 2. Those who try to “hang on” when God is “moving on” will be miserable.
- B. Children grow up – our relationships with them must change, or we ruin them.
- C. Our relationship with God changes.
 1. There was a time when God regularly spoke to me in various ways.
 - a. Scriptures that literally jumped off the page at me
 - b. Prophecies that directly confirmed something God had already spoken to me
 - c. I had many “fleeces” before God that He honored.

Example: God, if this person walks into the room, then I will know for sure You want me to give her this bracelet.
 - d. Needed direction and opened the Bible randomly seeking an answer and got it
 - e. I actually heard Him talking to me very frequently.

2. Now I just “know” a lot of things. His Word has become a part of me, and I have discernment. I have wisdom about how to handle situations that I once needed guidance on.
 3. God has been in my life for so long that we are one. I do not have to seek Him about everything in my life. I spent years doing that, and He has taught me what to do.
 4. Prayer changes.
 - a. In my early years, I did a lot of “warfare praying.” I am sure I was breaking through many obstacles.
 - b. In my early years, I cried a lot when I prayed. I was such a mess; I cried all the time. I do not cry as much now.
 - c. I can remember getting very excited because I felt God’s presence or the Anointing of the Holy Spirit. I am more used to that feeling now, so it does not affect me the same way. I am very appreciative, but not as emotional.
- D. **Daniel 2:20–21** – God changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets them up.
- E. We must be patient through the changes in our life.
1. Sometimes we miss things being the way they once were.
Beware of letting emotions rule.
 2. Be careful when making major decisions during times of change. Emotions can be very deceptive during these times.
- F. Be patient. Whatever is going on now – you are only passing through!
1. **Psalms 23:4** – Yes, though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.
 2. **Isaiah 43:2** – Pass through the waters and through the fire unharmed

3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fiery furnace unharmed.
4. Daniel came out of the lions' den unharmed.

IV. The Devil Says, "YOU WILL NEVER CHANGE."

- A. It is a lie – we are always changing!
- B. **II Corinthians 3:18** – Change from glory to glory
 1. There are places to “pass through” between the glories.
- C. Tell the devil and people – **I AM ONLY PASSING THROUGH!**
- D. **Philippians 1:6** – He will finish the good work He has begun.
- E. **Hebrews 12:2** – God is the Author and the Finisher.
 1. It is not in His character to start something and not finish it!!

V. Two Ways That God Works

- A. Gradually or “little by little” (**Deuteronomy 7:22**)
 1. Gradually is the normal way He works – we must be **PATIENT** because about ninety percent of the time He works little by little.
- B. **SUDDENLY** – When we have become **PATIENT** as He works little by little, then He **SUDDENLY** moves in our lives.
- C. Examples in Scripture:
 1. **Malachi 3:1** – He shall **suddenly** come to His temple.
 2. **Mark 13:36** – He comes **suddenly**, so stay awake and watch.

Do not be like the five foolish virgins who became impatient and were not ready when the Master came.

3. **Acts 2:2** – **Suddenly**, the Holy Spirit came as a mighty wind.
4. **Acts 9:3** – **Suddenly**, a light shone about Paul (formerly Saul), and he was changed forever.

SUDDENLY, YOUR LOVED ONES CAN CHANGE.

5. **Acts 16:26** – **Suddenly**, Paul and Silas were set free from their prison.

VI. Put On Patience.

- A. “Put on” means to make a decision – A QUALITY DECISION!!
- B. **Colossians 3:12** – Put on patience (which is tireless and long-suffering, and has the power to endure whatever comes, with good temper).
- C. **Colossians 1:11-12** – Paul did not pray for their troubles to go away, but rather that they exercise every kind of endurance and patience with joy.
- D. **Ephesians 3:16** – Be strengthened in the inner man by the Holy Spirit indwelling your personality.

**LET THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELL YOUR
PERSONALITY AS WELL AS YOUR SPIRIT.**

How To Be Completely Satisfied

Foundation statement: People often suffer due to wrong seeking!

I. What We Seek Discloses Our Level Of Spiritual Maturity.

A. **Proverbs 21:21** – *He who earnestly seeks after and craves righteousness, mercy, and loving-kindness will find life in addition to righteousness (uprightness and right standing with God) and honor.*

1. Not life in the sense of breathing, but **LIFE** as God knows it – joy, peace, right standing with God, no condemnation, no fear, satisfaction, contentment, increase everywhere, prosperity, favor, etc.

B. **Matthew 5:6** – Those who seek righteousness shall be completely satisfied.

1. Seeking righteousness means “the right way of being and doing” in every situation.
2. **Find out what is right and do it!!**

C. **Isaiah 55:2** – *Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your earnings for what does not satisfy? . . .*

D. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek **FIRST** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these **THINGS** will be added.

E. We should **STOP** and **ASK** ourselves **WHAT WE ARE SEEKING!!**

1. God’s will or our own?
2. To serve or to be served?

3. Prosperity to provide more pleasure for ourselves, or prosperity to be a blessing to others?
 4. Power to help hurting people or power for the sake of appearing powerful?
 5. Growth to feed an oversized ego or growth to help as many people as we can?
 6. Are we seeking God's ways of doing things or doing things our own way and expecting God to make it work?
 7. Are we seeking to change our circumstances or asking God to change us?
 8. Are we ready to obey at all costs, or do we get a sudden case of *deafness* when God speaks something we do not want to hear?
- F. Examining our prayer life can be very revealing. It reveals what we are truly seeking.
- G. Paul's prayers
1. **Ephesians 3:14-19** – Strengthened in the inner man, personality filled with Holy Spirit, be rooted deep in love, experience God's love, become a body wholly filled with God.
 2. **Philippians 1:9-11** – That your love may abound and display itself in greater ways; learn to sense what is vital, excellent, and of real value that you may approach the day of Christ without stumbling or causing others to stumble; abound in and be filled with the fruits of righteousness.
 3. **Colossians 1:11-12** – . . . *that you may be invigorated and strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, [to exercise] every kind of endurance and patience (perseverance and forbearance) with joy, giving thanks to the Father . . .*

II. Seek Mercy And Loving-Kindness.

- A. What would happen in our lives if our FOCUS changed from what we can get to how we treat people?
- B. See **Proverbs 21:21** again!
- C. **Isaiah: Chapter 58**
- D. **Colossians 3:12-14** – What if mercy became our major!
 - 1. We usually major in what we want and minor in how we treat people.
 - 2. The result is – we never get what we want!
- E. **Ephesians 4:29-5:7** shares how we grieve the Holy Spirit by treating people in wrong ways and acting in wrong ways toward them.
 - 1. **Verse 6** warns us not to deceive ourselves with empty excuses and groundless arguments.

III. Completely Satisfied

- A. **Matthew 5:6** – Those who seek righteousness (right way of being and doing, which includes the right way to treat others) will be COMPLETELY SATISFIED!
- B. **I Timothy 6:6** – . . . *godliness accompanied with contentment . . . is great and abundant gain.*
- C. A look at the negative:
 - 1. **Discontent** – Not satisfied, unhappy, a sense of resentment.
 - 2. **Dissatisfied** – Unsatisfactory; the condition of being displeased or discontent; feeling or displaying discontentment.
 - 3. A tormenting place to be

D. A look at the positive:

1. Content – Satisfied, resigned to your circumstances, satisfied with things as they are. (See **Philippians 4:11** for clarification.)
2. Satisfied – Fulfilled, adequate; to free from doubt or question, to gratify the desire.
3. Content (Greek) – To be sufficient, to be strong, to be enough, to be satisfied.

The flesh will never be satisfied or say, “It is enough.”

E. Content means to be strong or to have strength.

1. The joy of the Lord is your strength (**Nehemiah 8:10**). There can be no joy where discontentment reigns.

F. **Luke 3:14** – Jesus instructed the soldiers to be satisfied with their rations and wages.

**I HAVE LEARNED THAT GOD NEVER INCREASES
AN UNGRATEFUL, DISCONTENTED PERSON.**

G. Learn to love your life!

1. Most people either put up with their life, or they hate their life – they endure it; but few love it.

IV. A Return To Simplicity Is A Doorway To Contentment And Satisfaction.

A. **II Corinthians 11:3** – Do not let Satan corrupt your mind and turn you from the **simplicity** that is in Christ.

B. **II Corinthians 1:12-13** – The testimony of our conscience is this, that in **simplicity** and godly sincerity we have lived our lives in the world.

1. They felt that living in **simplicity** was a testimony.

- C. **Isaiah 57:10** – You have wearied yourselves with the **multiplicity** of your ways.
- D. **Romans 12:8** – Whatever your gift is, function in it with **simplicity** and singleness of mind.
- E. The complexity of religion versus the simplicity of Jesus!
 - 1. Religion gave thousands of laws and rules to follow. They took the ten original commands and turned them into two thousand laws.
 - 2. Jesus said, “. . . this sums up all the Law and the Prophets . . . love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind . . . love your neighbor as yourself.”
 - 3. Religion has to reason everything out – simplicity says I will trust Jesus!
- F. Complicated things that leave us discontented and not satisfied:
 - 1. Trying to do too much in too little time
 - 2. Owning more than we want to take care of
 - 3. Reasoning
 - 4. Trying to control everything and everybody!
 - a. Adapting is easier!
 - b. Example: Dave wanted me to do something I did not want to do. I was miserable. I cried out to God, “Oh God, what am I going to do?” He said, “STOP MAKING A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT AND JUST DO IT!”
 - 5. Life is much simpler when we obey God! We make life hard, God doesn’t!

6. Not following the leading of the Holy Spirit always complicates life. The Holy Spirit will lead us in the simplest way to do things if we will follow Him and not worldly ways.

Isaiah 55:8 – My ways are not your ways.

G. Keeping priorities straight aids us in simple living.

1. Always keep God first and everything else second, third, fourth, etc.
2. **Luke 10:38-42** – Mary and Martha: Mary chose the one thing that was needful.

SPECIAL NOTE: Contentment requires a basic understanding of the nature and purpose of trials. We will study this fully in future messages.

How To Get From Where You Are To Where You Want To Be.

Foundation Scripture: Romans 8:17-18

I. How To Get From Where You Are To Where You Want To Be.

- A. Paul did not care what he had to go through as long as he **finished** where he was supposed to be.
- B. You may be hurting:
 - 1. Physically (sick or in pain)
 - 2. Mentally (worried or confused)
 - 3. Emotionally (hurt or rejected)
 - 4. Socially (alone or lonely)
 - 5. Financially (lack or debt)
 - 6. Spiritually (dry, plagued by doubt; cannot seem to sense God's presence; have trouble praying)
- C. WHAT IS THE ANSWER? HOW CAN YOU GET FROM WHERE YOU ARE TO WHERE YOU DESIRE TO BE?

**STABILITY IS THE KEY – SPIRITUAL, VERBAL,
MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL STABILITY.**

II. Spiritual Stability

Foundation Scripture: Philippians 1:28-30

- A. Keep seeking God.
 - 1. **Matthew 7:7-8** – Ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking.
 - 2. Bold, insistent asking, without qualms
 - 3. **Keep** praying, praising, worshiping, reading, studying, going to church, giving, serving, etc.
- B. **Psalm 37:4-5** – Delight yourself in the Lord, commit **your way** to Him – He will bring it to pass.
- C. **Hebrews 11:6** – He is the rewarder of those who seek Him diligently.
- D. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these THINGS will be added to you.

III. Verbal Stability

- A. **Psalm 103:20** – Angels hearken to the voice of His Word.
 - 1. They do not hearken to the voice of complaining, grumbling, being negative, fearful, etc.
- B. **Hebrews 10:23** – Hold fast your confession.
 - 1. Say the same thing as God says.
- C. **Amos 3:3** – How can two walk together unless they be agreed.

NOTE: I believe some people feel spiritually dry and separated from God's presence due to their own wrong words.

- D. **Isaiah 53:7** – When He was oppressed, He opened not His mouth.
- E. Examples in Proverbs:
 - 1. **Proverbs 14:23** – . . . *idle talk leads only to poverty.*

- a. Many people have financial problems, and they stay buried in lack due to their own negative talk.
 - b. For example: I cannot afford it; I do not have any money; I will never get out of debt, etc.
- 2. **Proverbs 16:24** – Pleasant words are healing to the body.
 - 3. **Proverbs 18:21** – *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who indulge in it shall eat the fruit of it [for death or life].*
 - 4. **Proverbs 21:23** – *He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from troubles.*
- F. **Psalms 34:12-13** – If you desire life and long to see good – keep your tongue free from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.
 - G. **I Thessalonians 5:18** – **In EVERYTHING** give thanks, for **THIS** is the will of God for you who are in Christ Jesus.

IV. Mental Stability

- A. **II Corinthians 10:4-5** – Cast down all the “imagination” that Satan suggests.
- B. **Proverbs 21:5** – *The thoughts of the [steadily] diligent tend only to plenteousness . . .*
- C. **Proverbs 23:7** – As a man thinks, so does he become.
- D. **I Peter 1:13** (KJV) –Gird up the loins of your mind.
 - 1. Make up your mind that you are going to make it.
 - 2. “Gird up” refers to not allowing thoughts to go wild.
- E. **Colossians 3:2** – Set your mind and keep it set.

V. Emotional Stability

- A. **You may not always be able to control how you FEEL – but you can, through the Holy Spirit, control how you ACT.**
- B. Things that do no good:
 - 1. **Excessive crying** only makes you tired and gives you red puffy eyes.
 - 2. **Self-pity** does not move God and makes our problem seem much worse than what it really is.
 - 3. **Extreme discouragement** leads to depression, despair, and despondency.
 - 4. **Spirit of grief** – Grieving over a situation for a reasonable period of time is acceptable, but allowing a spirit of grief to rule your life is not.
- C. **Psalm 7:9** – God tries the hearts and emotions and thinking powers.
 - 1. He sometimes allows us to “go through” a trial to see how stable we are.

VI. Hope Is The Anchor Of Our Soul.

- A. **Hebrews 6:18-19** – Hope aids in stability.
 - 1. The soul = Mind, will, and emotions – the mouth gives expression to the soul.
- B. **Romans 5:2-5** – Such hope never disappoints us or leaves us in shame.
- C. **Psalm 91:15-16** – He is **with us in trouble**, and He will **deliver us** and **honor us**.

Eight Reasons Why Christians Suffer

I. In Patience Possess Ye Your Souls.

- A. Luke 21:19
- B. What is the soul?
 - 1. Mind, will, and emotions
- C. Hebrews 4:12 – Must divide soul and spirit
- D. Man's ways end in death.
 - 1. Proverbs 16:2, 9, 25
- E. Luke 5:4 – Come out into the deep and get ready for a haul.
- F. Hebrews 9:8 – We cannot live out of the Spirit as long as we recognize and bow down to the outer man.

IF YOU DO NOT POSSESS YOUR SOUL, IT WILL POSSESS YOU!

II. Patience Precedes Promised Land Living.

- A. Deuteronomy 1:2 – Why has it taken you forty years to make an eleven-day journey?
- B. Deuteronomy 1:6 – . . . *You have dwelt long enough on this mountain.*
- C. Numbers 21:4-7 – The Israelites had an **impatient attitude**, and it kept them in the wilderness.
- D. Hebrews 10:36-37 – Through faith and **patience** we inherit the promises.

- E. **Luke 8:15** – . . . *bring forth fruit with **patience**.*
- F. **Hebrews 12:1** (KJV) – . . . *let us run with **patience** the race that is set before us.*
- G. **Psalms 37:7** – *Be still and rest in the Lord; wait for Him and **patiently** lean yourself upon Him; fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass.*
- H. God does not always do things the way we want them done, and He usually does not do them **when** we want them done.
- I. When God, When?
 - 1. A child on a trip always wants to know, “**when are we going to get there?**”
 - 2. We tell them, “**We will get there when we get there – settle down and enjoy the trip!**”
 - 3. Enjoyment is not possible without patience.
- J. Patience is not waiting – it is how we behave while we are waiting.
 - 1. **James 5:7** – Be patient “as you wait.”

III. Reason Number One – Lack Of Knowledge

- A. **Hosea 4:6** – *My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge . . .*
- B. The world seeks carnal knowledge, and they are destroyed.
 - 1. **I Corinthians 1:19**
- C. Paul sought spiritual knowledge.
 - 1. **I Corinthians 2:1-2**
 - 2. **Philippians 3:10** – That I may know Him.

- D. People in the world spend their lives gaining carnal knowledge.
 - 1. They get divorces.
 - 2. They get abortions.
 - 3. They hate; they are filled with greed; they covet; they are jealous; and they compete.
 - 4. They live under unbelievable stress trying to climb the ladder of success.
 - 5. They get sick; they die; and they go to hell.
 - 6. Most people are glad they are gone because nobody liked them anyway.

- E. Satan destroyed them for a lack of knowledge.
 - 1. **II Corinthians 10:4-5** – We cannot refute Satan’s lies unless we know the truth of God’s Word.
 - 2. **John 8:32** – Continue in My Word, and the Truth will set you free.

- F. Make an investment in the Word of God.
 - 1. Invest your time, your money, and your energy.
 - 2. You will love the return you get on your investment.

IV. Reason Number Two – Disobedience

- A. **James 4:7** – Submit yourself to God; resist the devil, and he will flee.
 - 1. Do not quote half of this Scripture.

- B. **Psalms 91:10-11** – God gives His angels to us for defense in all our ways (of obedience and service).

C. **Isaiah 1:19-20** – *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword . . .*

D. Obey God, not man!

1. **Acts 5:29**

2. Beware of being manipulated and controlled by people who are not hearing from God.

3. Submit to the authority God has placed over you – but do not obey them at the cost of disobeying God.

Example: I had a boss who instructed me to lie and help him steal a customer's money. I refused, knowing it might cost me my job.

E. Beware of obeying the impulses of the flesh!

1. **Ephesians 2:3** warns about obeying the flesh and our own thoughts and emotions

F. **Deuteronomy 28:1-23** – We are blessed if we obey God's commandments and cursed if we do not.

G. Beware of giving "religious sacrifices" when God is asking for obedience.

1. **I Samuel 15:22** – To obey is better than sacrifice.

a. Saul was told to utterly destroy the Amalekites and all their goods, but he kept the best of their belongings, saying he wanted to sacrifice them to the Lord.

b. If God tells you to give your favorite watch away, do not give a \$25.00 offering instead.

c. God once told me to give a watch away – I did not want to, so I offered to buy them another one; and He said, "No, give them yours."

- d. If God tells you to go make peace with someone who has hurt you and treated you unjustly, do not disobey and then try to make up for it by sacrificing one night to do nursing home visitation with a church group.
 - e. Etc., etc.
- H. **Haggai 1:2-11** – Their circumstances were bad because they had been disobeying God for eighteen years.

V. Reason Number Three – To Purify And Test Your Faith

- A. **I Peter 4:12** – *Beloved, do not be amazed and bewildered at the fiery ordeal which is taking place to test your quality . . .*
- B. **I Peter 1:6-7** – Trials and suffering test the genuineness of our faith.
- C. **Deuteronomy 8:1-7** – We always get tested before we get promoted.
- D. **Revelation 3:14-22** – The Laodicea church
 - 1. Get serious, start passing your tests, and let them purify you. Get excited about God’s correction in your life.
- E. **Test** (defined) – A means employed to examine, try, or prove. A series of questions or problems designed to determine knowledge or intelligence. To achieve a score or rating through testing. To exhibit certain properties under test conditions.

VI. Reason Number Four – Brokenness

- A. **Mark 14:3** – The alabaster box
- B. The outer man must be broken for the inner man to rule.
 - 1. Pride
 - 2. Rebellion

3. Stubbornness
 4. Selfishness and self-centeredness
 5. Reasoning
 6. Being ruled by emotion
- C. **Job 10:16** – *If I lift myself up, [speaking of pride] You hunt me like a lion and again show Yourself [inflicting] marvelous [trials] upon me.*
- D. **Lamentations 3:27-28** – It is good for us to be disciplined. Let him sit alone, uncomplaining, because God is dealing with him for his ultimate benefit.
- E. **II Corinthians 1:8-9** – Paul underwent severe trials and said they were to keep him from trusting in himself.

VII. Reason Number Five – Compassion

- A. Jesus understands what we are going through because He went through the same things.
1. **Hebrews 4:15-16**
 2. **Hebrews 5:8-9**
- B. **Hebrews 5:1-2** – We are able to minister to others because we have the same liabilities they do.
- C. **II Corinthians 11:24-29** – Paul felt the pain of others because of what he had been through.
1. Recently, some ministers I know had some serious trouble in their lives. They commented that they had no idea what kind of pain people were going through until this happened to them.
- D. Jesus was moved with compassion, and He healed the sick.
1. **Matthew 14:14**

2. **Luke 7:13**
- E. Peter needed compassion.
1. **Luke 22:31-32**
- F. **I John 3:17** – We do not know the first thing about God (love) unless we have compassion for others in their time of need.

VIII. Reason Number Six – To Encourage Others

- A. Paul’s imprisonment encouraged others in their witness.
1. **Philippians 1:12-14**
 2. **II Corinthians 1:5-6**
- B. Examples:
1. Our flat tire on the way to the meeting encouraged others when they saw us handle it patiently.
 2. The ice storm in Birmingham that ruined our meeting became a major witness to one of our employees who watched how we remained the same during the trial.
- C. People in the world need role models – Do not **preach** a message if you are not going to **BE** a message.

IX. Reason Number Seven – Because Of The Word

- A. **Colossians 1:24-25** – Paul suffered in order to make the Word of God known.
- B. **Mark 4:16-17** – Persecution comes on account of the Word.
- C. **Matthew 5:10** – Persecution comes for righteousness sake.

1. Satan does not want you to learn the right thing and begin to do it.

**THERE ARE TWO TIMES WHEN SATAN ATTACKS YOU:
WHEN YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT AND
WHEN YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING WRONG.**

X. Reason Number Eight – Because You Are In The World

- A. We are in the world – we are not **OF** it, but **WE ARE IN IT!**
 1. We cannot always avoid everything in it.
- B. The world lies under the curse of sin and all the misery it brings.
 1. **Romans 8:6** states that sin brings misery.
 2. Misery does not always come because of “personal sin”; but sometimes, just due to “sin in the world.”
 3. A baby who gets cancer does not get it because of personal sin, but simply because there are a lot of bad things in the world – and we are in the world.
- C. Aren’t we protected and kept by God from bad things in the world?
 1. Yes, to a large degree we are. But there are things that happen which we cannot explain.
 2. **WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO EXPLAIN EVERYTHING.**
- D. We pray for protection; we live under the blood of Jesus; we believe in guardian angels sent by God to help us; we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, and we walk in obedience to the best of our ability . . .

**BUT WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT
WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND – WE TRUST GOD!**

