

The Riches of Christ as Seen in the Sufferings of Christ

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon explores the unsearchable riches of Christ's sufferings, revealing a deeper understanding of the connection between suffering and glory, and the positive side of Christ's suffering as a means of life giving and life forming.

Duration: 1:14:55

Scripture: Acts 9:15-16, 2 Corinthians 4:7-11, Ephesians 3:1, Colossians 1:24

Topics: "The Cross", "Atonement"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the suffering of Jesus on the cross and the purpose behind it. He emphasizes that Jesus willingly endured immense suffering to atone for the sins of humanity. The preacher draws parallels between the first Adam and Jesus, highlighting the creation of Eve as a helper for Adam. He also mentions the various sufferings and hardships that the apostle Paul endured in his ministry. The sermon concludes with a discussion of Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he willingly accepted the cup of suffering according to God's will.

Transcript

Lord Jesus, we seek thy face. Within the veils we bow. May thy glory fill this place.

Lord, there is nothing we covet more than thine own glory. Thy presence with us is our joy, our comfort, our satisfaction. We do pray that this night, as we gather together here unto thyself, thou will be pleased to be present with us and bless us with thyself.

We do commit this hour into thy hands. Lord, to whom shall we turn but to thee. And we do fix our gaze upon thee.

We do ask thee that as we gaze upon thee, may thy spirit transform us from glory to glory and conform us to thy image. We ask in the precious name of our Lord Jesus. Some brothers and sisters may have an anticipation as to what we will have tonight.

We sing of glory. We pray of glory. And if you read the letter to the Ephesians, aside from that word grace, probably you will find many times this word glory is being used.

To my account, eight times. And if you put that glorious church in it, nine times. But dear brothers and sisters, the Lord seems to reserve that for the future.

And it is my hope that my brothers will tell us of the riches of his glory. It is something beyond. And instead of that, it seems as if the Lord put upon my heart something that seems to us the very opposite of glory.

And that is suffering. To our natural mind, glory and suffering stand at the end, at the two extremes. If it is glory, then no suffering, no pain, no tears, no sorrow, no death.

If it is suffering, pain, sorrow, tears, even death. Now where is the glory? But somehow the Lord seems to put upon my heart this matter of suffering. The unsearchable riches of his suffering.

May we turn to a few places in the word of God. The letter to the Ephesians, chapter three, verse one. Ephesians, chapter three, verse one.

For this reason I Paul, prisoner of the Christ Jesus for you nations. In the same chapter, verse thirteen. Wherefore I beseech you not to faint through my tribulations for you.

Which is your glory? The book of Acts, chapter nine, verses fifteen and sixteen. And the Lord said to him, Go for this man is an elect vessel to me to bear my name before both nations and kings and the sons of Israel. For I will show to him how much he must suffer for my name.

Second Corinthians, chapter four. We'll read from verse seven. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the surpassingness of the power may be of God and not from us.

Every way afflicted but not straightened. Seeing no apparent issue but our way not entirely shut up. Persecuted but not abandoned.

Cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus. That the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body.

For we who live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus. That the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So that death works in us but life in you.

The same chapter, verses sixteen and seventeen. Wherefore we faint not but if indeed our outward man is consumed. Yet the inward is renewed day by day.

For our momentary and light affliction works for us in surpassing measure an eternal weight of glory. The same book, Second Corinthians, chapter eleven. We'll read from verse twenty-three.

Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as beside myself. I above measure so. In labors exceedingly abundant.

In strife to excess. In prison exceedingly abundant. In death oft.

From the Jews five times have I received forty stripes save one. Thrice have I been scourged. Once I have been stoned.

Three times I have suffered shipwreck. A night and day I pass in the deep. In journeys often.

In perils of rivers. In perils of rubbles. In perils from my own race.

In perils from the nations. In perils in the city. In perils in the desert.

In perils on the sea. In perils among false brethren. In labor and toil.

In watchings often. In hunger and thirst. In fastings often.

In cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without. The crowd of tears pressing on me daily.

The burden of all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak. Who is humble and I burn not.

If it is needful to boast I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. The last place in Colossians chapter one. Colossians chapter one verse twenty four.

Now I rejoice in sufferings for you and I fill up that which is behind all the tribulations of Christ in my flesh for his body which is the church. Dear brothers and sisters we often think of suffering as a misfortune. It speaks of pain.

Of distress. Of sorrow. We think it is an unnecessary thing in life.

We think it is very negative in nature. We try to avoid it. And if we can we try to escape from it.

Very often we find people ask this question. Why so much suffering in this world? Why is it that God allows so much suffering in this world? Is God a God of compassion? A God of love? And if he is that why does he allow such suffering? We can understand a little bit. We suffer because we have sinned.

We always connect suffering with sin. The world must suffer because it has sinned. We must suffer because we have sinned.

Once our Lord Jesus passed by with his disciples and they saw a man born blind. I do not know how you feel but somehow when I see a blind man to me I feel that is the worst a man can have. And immediately the disciples asked the Lord a question.

Now whose sin is it? This man's sin or his parents sin? We connect suffering with sin and rightly so. We can see the reason of suffering if it is because of sin. The world suffers for its sin.

I suffer for my sin. We suffer because we have sinned. Whenever we see suffering immediately we trace it back or try to trace it back to someone has sinned.

And yet brothers and sisters our Lord Jesus answers surprised the disciples. And even to this very day he surprises us. He said it is neither this man nor his parents but it is for the glory of God.

Dear brothers and sisters you never relate suffering to glory. You put suffering in the same category as sin. That is where it belongs.

But somehow our Lord Jesus has taken suffering out of his association and put it with something that seems to us contrary to the nature of suffering which is glory. And the Lord connects them. Dear brothers and sisters who does not love glory.

Not to say of the eternal glory. The glory that is ahead. Even some kind of glory on this earth.

How we will seek after it. We all love glory. But dear brothers and sisters in our mind we never connect glory with suffering.

We want glory but we do not want to suffer. Is it not true in the days of our Lord Jesus while he was on earth. You remember that towards the end of his life journey.

The Lord began to open up to his disciples. Those who have followed him for years. Those who were very close to him.

The Lord began to open up his heart to them. The Lord took them aside. Certainly these people they could not understand.

The Lord did not even try to tell them. But the Lord took his disciples aside. And opened his heart to them.

Telling them that he must go to Jerusalem. And there he will be rejected. He will suffer.

Intensely. And he will be killed. He will die.

But on the third day he will rise up again. You know what happened. When the Lord Jesus tried to tell his disciples that he was going to suffer.

First of all. Peter with good heart. Peter held on to the Lord.

And rebuked the Lord. Oh brothers and sisters dare you rebuke the Lord. We were not there to do that.

But Peter was a daring man. He dared to do anything. There he held the Lord.

Looked at the Lord. And rebuked the Lord. And said Lord not so.

Be kind. Do not invite suffering unnecessarily. You may go to the throne without going by the cross.

You can have the kingdom without suffering. Don't be so foolish. And dear brothers and sisters you know.

The reaction of our Lord. It was most severe. Can you think of anything severer than what the Lord reacted.

The Lord turned around. Looked at him. And said Satan get me behind.

Because you are not minding the things of God. But your mind is focused on the things of God. Dear brothers and sisters.

In the mentality of Peter. He could never see that glory and suffering are together. If it was glory.

There was no suffering. If there was suffering. There wasn't any glory.

It was true. Not only to Peter. It was true to the other disciples.

Our Lord Jesus three times. Took them aside. Opened up his heart to them.

Told them that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer. But he will rise again. They never could.

They were too polite to contradict him. Because they saw what happened to Peter. Now dear brothers and sisters you know.

If you are a little bit more clever. Then you can avoid many unpleasant things. Now they noticed what happened to Peter.

So no one will try again. But brothers and sisters. Even though they did not try to contradict the Lord.

What the Lord has said did not register in their mind. They kept on arguing. Who will be the great glory? And they tried to maneuver against each other.

And here you'll find the sons of thunder seem to get ahead. They outmaneuver the other disciples. They use a kind of.

Instead of coming to the Lord openly. They use their mother. And ask the Lord that the Lord will do something to them.

Promise. Do anything that they will ask. Unconditional.

Without saying why. Now. It was.

They knew in asking that. There was something wrong behind it. They knew the other disciples would not be happy with it.

So they tried to get an unconditional promise first. Before they will say what they want. And the Lord said well.

What do you want? Well I'll speak. That in thy glory. One may sit on your right.

And the other may sit on your left. They were thinking that as our Lord went into Jerusalem. He was to take the nation.

He was to be enthroned. He was to be king. And they wanted that glory very much.

One on the right. And one on the left. You know what our Lord Jesus answered them? The Lord said you do not know what you're asking.

Oh yes. We know what we ask. We want the left and the right.

We will be up below all men and above all men. That's the position we seek. We know it.

We have plan on that. The Lord said you do not know what you're asking. Can you drink the cup that I? Can you be baptized with the baptism that I will be baptized? Oh yes.

We can. The Lord said yes. You must.

You must drink the cup that I drink. You must be baptized with the baptism that I will be baptized. But to sit on the right is not for me to do.

But it is the Father. Dear brothers and sisters again here you'll find our Lord Jesus connect suffering with the cup. What is the cup? You remember our Lord Jesus at midnight in the darkest of the night.

Dark, darkness prevailed at that time. And how he entered into the garden of Gethsemane. He left the others and he took three with him.

And how he begged them to stand with him. To watch with him. He was sorrow in his spirit even until death.

And he went forward and poured out his soul before the Lord. How he prayed Father if it is possible let this cup be removed from me. But not according to my will but according to thy will.

Three times his perspiration came down as drops. He was agonizing. The angel had to come and sustain him.

Otherwise he would die right there in the garden. After three times he came out. And Judah with those who came to see him.

Peter drew out his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. And the Lord Jesus said the cup that my Father has given to me shall I not drink it? Dear brothers and sisters what is the cup? Suffering. The denying of self.

The holy self. The Father's will. Not my will but thy will.

And what is the baptism that he is going to be baptized with? You remember once our Lord Jesus told his disciples I have a baptism to be baptized with. And before that how straightened I am. I feel that I am being straightened.

Squeezed. Imprisoned. Pressed in.

Oh I long for that release. I long for that liberty. But here I was caught.

Squeezed. Pressed. Shut in.

Straightened. The Lord said I am looking forward to that day when I shall be baptized and then I'm released. You remember that dear brothers and sisters.

The Lord connected. That gave us a new meaning. Brothers and sisters Paul discovered the unsearchable riches of the sufferings.

It is impossible for me to tell you the unsearchable riches of the sufferings. It's impossible. Unsearchable.

But by God's grace we will like to fellowship with Paul in his understanding of the sufferings of Christ. Because of the time we can only concentrate on a little. But there is much more that Paul understands of the sufferings.

Maybe for the sake of clarity we will just concentrate on the sufferings. Of course there are much more. Much more.

But we will just concentrate. Dear brothers and sisters. We know that Christ suffered on Calvary's cross.

We remember how at midday the sun hit itself. Darkness prevailed over the horizon. And there our Lord Jesus was hung on the cross.

And he cried out. My God. My God.

Why do you forsake me? Isaiah the prophet prophesied. But 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. For he was cut off out of the land of the living.

For the transgression of my people was his spirit. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He has subjected him to suffer.

Dear brothers and sisters. Who can understand the suffering? Who can understand the time while he was on the cross becoming the sin offering of the world? God has made him who knew no sin to be sin. And there the hand of the Lord was heavy upon him.

He was crushed. My God. My God.

Why? On the cross he tasted eternal death for you. And he suffered to atone. Oh dear brothers and sisters.

We can never understand that. We can never fathom the depth of his suffering on Calvary's cross to atone for our sins. Think of that.

Our sins. The sins that we have committed. He suffered for us.

And he is suffering in such a way. He was literally by the hand. Is there anyone here tonight who does not know that Christ has died for you? Is there anyone here who is still struggling under the burden of sin? He has died.

Oh how he suffered. Why does he suffer for you? That you need not eternal separation from the Lord. Dear brothers and sisters.

This suffering of Christ is unique. There is no one in this universe who has ever suffered that kind of suffering. He drank the wine alone.

All by himself. Dear brothers and sisters. It is not that.

He suffered for your sins. And you suffered too. And when you add up these sufferings.

Your sins. The suffering of Christ on the cross for our sins is unique. He is alone there.

There in total darkness. He was alone before God bearing the sins of this world. And thank God.

Because he. You need not suffer. You need not die.

You need not be eternally separated from the living God. Your sins are. Oh dear brothers and sisters.

How we do for that atonement. This suffering is not something that we can share with. This suffering is something that we can only accept with grace.

But dear brothers and sisters. There's another side of his suffering. He suffered on the cross.

Not only for atoning our sins. He suffered. And he died.

In order that. He might give. Dear brothers and sisters.

In the same prophecy of Isaiah. You may see that. When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin.

He shall see a seed. He shall prolong his days. And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see of the fruit of the camel of his soul. And shall these. Dear brothers and sisters.

When our Lord Jesus suffered on the cross. On the one hand. He suffered for our sins.

On the other hand. He suffered the death of the cross. In order to release.

To give life. To form a body. A bride.

This afternoon. A brother. When we were talking.

Asked a question. Not exactly a question. But in the talking.

It became like a question. Must Christ suffer. If mankind never falls.

Of course. It is a supposition. Historically.

It does not happen that way. But suppose Adam. And suppose Adam.

Had not fallen. Must God send his son. And die and suffer for us.

Our brother. Has mentioned before. That this.

Redemption. Actually is a remedial. In the original plan of God.

In the original thought of God. What God has in mind. Before.

The foundation of the world. Is not that. Man.

Shall fall. As if if man does not fall. Then God has nothing to do.

If man does not fall. God is at a loss. Dear brothers and sisters.

No. Even after man fell. God had already provided.

But dear brothers and sisters. That is not the original thought of God. The divine intention of God.

In the divine purpose of God. God. Will create man.

As a vessel. And God will give his life. To that vessel.

By giving his life. To that vessel. That vessel.

Joins. Life. Life giving.

Life union. Is the purpose. Dear brothers and sisters.

We find something of a type. In the first Adam. As a type.

Of the last Adam. We find that in Genesis. Chapter two.

God created man according to his image. After his own likeness. And after he had created man.

Adam. God said. It.

Was not good. For man to be alone. He needed.

A help. And you all remember that story. God put Adam.

And out of his eyes. God took out a river. And built.

The word there is literally built. Like you are building a house. And built a woman.

With that woman. And then God let the woman. This is the womb of my woman.

She shall be called woman. And the two are joined into one. Now brothers and sisters.

When did this thing happen? It happened before man ever. Dear brothers and sisters. The sufferings of Christ.

At least tells us truth. One is more negative. That is atoning side.

He had to suffer for our sins. To atone for us. But that is negative.

Because sin came in. But dear brothers and sisters. There is that positive side.

Of his suffering. He suffered. He died.

As typified by Adam. He was put to sleep. Death.

Suffering. Out of his sight. Something may be taken out.

And be built into. Dear brothers and sisters. The bible says Christ loved the church.

And gave himself. Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die. It abides alone.

And if he should die. He will bear. As you read the word of God.

You find there is a side of his suffering. Which has nothing to do with sin. The matter of sin does not come in at all.

There is a side of his suffering. Which is related to life giving. And life forming.

Out of that suffering. Dear brothers and sisters. His life is poured out.

Released. He gathers us up. To be joined to him.

Oh that is. There are many sisters here. Who have children.

You have gone through the trial. You have gone through the trial of child bearing. Not to be unjust.

Unfair to the brothers, the husband. Some say that the husband go through the travel even much more than the wife. There seems to be some reason.

To say that. Anyway you find. In order to give birth to a child.

The parents must go through suffering. And the suffering is the suffering of death. When the parents go through the trial.

How they hope that this thing never happen. It pays by death to them. They go through deep suffering.

Pain, distress, struggling, agonizing, dying. But out comes out a beautiful day. And because they have got a son.

All the suffering they rejoice. Brothers and sisters. The suffering of Christ.

For the giving birth of his church. Is something I do not know how many times. Something beyond our understanding.

The illustration we use is just a little bit trying to make us understand. But it is not compared. Cannot be compared.

All the suffering of Christ. In order to give birth to his church. No wonder he loves his church.

Because it is the child. Dear brothers and sisters. In the power of his resurrection.

And the fellowship. Being conformed. I do not know how to explain it.

I hope by the mercy of God. I can at least express a little bit. But I know that it is beyond me.

Brothers and sisters. That atoning suffering of Christ. Is something purely for us to enjoy.

And to enter into. We cannot share with him in that suffering. He suffered alone for us.

We come into the good of that suffering. And that is all. Do not think that you can suffer.

To atone the sins of the world. Recently I met a young man. And we had a talk together.

And he told me that he must suffer. Why? Because he must suffer to atone the sin of the world. Look at the world.

So sinful. So he had determined. He will take off some years.

To join the Peace Corps. And go to somewhere. And there try to suffer.

To atone the sins of the world. Dear brothers and sisters. That is the theory of Buddhism.

But certainly. It is not in the word of God. Christ alone can atone.

He alone suffered to atone the sins of the world. Praise him for that. But dear brothers and sisters.

Paul said. To share in his What does he mean? It cannot be the atoning suffering of Christ. But can it be? The life poured.

Let me explain. Of course. No one can give life to others.

The only thing we can do is to be the channel of his life. There is only one life. That is life.

Christ. He is life. Brothers and sisters.

His life is in you. And in me. Is it not the will of God? That having Christ in us.

We should not imprison him. We should not try to live in comfort and ease. We should not try to seek our own interest.

We should not dare to live our own lives. But for the sake of the release of Christ in us. We must be willing to it.

Oh dear brothers and sisters. There you find in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4. Our brother has already explained that. We have this treasure in the earthen vessels.

We are but earthen vessels. Clay pots. But we have this treasure in us.

Christ. Life. In us.

What is the purpose of God? In putting this treasure in earthen vessels. What does he want to do? Just throw the treasure in the earthen vessel? No one will do that. If you have a treasure.

You won't put it in an earthen vessel. You will put it in a nobler vessel. Now why is it that the treasure is put in the earthen vessels? Why? It is said that the surpassingness.

The surpassing power. May be of God and not of us. In other words.

The treasure in the earthen vessel is for the sake of showing for the power of the treasure. You put a treasure in an earthen vessel. Our brother has already explained.

It is opaque. The treasure in the vessel. Even though it shines.

Even though it is brilliant. Yet it is covered. It is in prison.

Unknown. Invisible. But if the earthen vessels are cracked and broken.

Then the light of the treasure shines forth. Dear brothers and sisters. This is the falchion of the epistle.

Dear brothers and sisters. This outward man of ours. Needs to be consumed.

That the inward man may be renewed day by day. The inward man is Christ in the spirit. The outward man is yourself in the soul.

Oh dear brothers and sisters. How we love the earthen vessel. In our eyes these are not earthen vessels.

In our eyes these are alabaster. How we love to preserve. How we love to see our integrity.

Our perfectness. How we strive to strengthen ourselves. To make it more beautiful.

How we love to see it more admired and appreciated. But dear brothers and sisters. If we do not suffer.

If we do not bear in our body the dying of Jesus. The life of Jesus cannot be manifested in our lives. Why suffer? So many dear children of God.

Ask this question. Before you believe in the Lord Jesus. Now you may suffer something.

And you see the reason for it. You accept it. But after you are saved.

Now certainly you shall live in glory. And no more suffering. But dear brothers and sisters.

If you do not love the Lord. You can avoid much suffering. If you love the Lord.

The more you love the Lord. It seems as if the more you suffer. Can you explain that? Many strange things come to you.

Unexpected things. You will expect those people. Who are blasphemous.

Sinful. Rebellious. Now these things shall happen to them.

But instead of that. Strange. When these sufferings come to you.

What is your reaction? Have I sinned? You must have sinned. Oh your best friends will come and try to comfort you. And say confess your sin.

And you will be alright. Dear brothers and sisters. Why suffer? It seems so unreasonable.

Meaningless. Do you know? You suffer for Jesus. You suffer for the body.

God in his wisdom. By his spirit. Order.

You may think a Christian life is a life of free sailing. But you find yourself surrounded. On all sides.

You may think your Christian life is a highway. But you find yourself shaking. You may think your Christian life is a life of power.

But you find you are knocked down. I think it is Phillips who used that term. Knocked down I think.

Dear brothers and sisters. You will find in your Christian life. Many things.

Strange. Unexplainable. How we desire to reason with the Lord.

You are not only one. You will be that long. Brothers and sisters.

Why? Why suffer? Why this sickness? Why this loss? Why the other unexplained? The only reason is. There may be broken. There may be manifested.

Not only in you. Dear brothers and sisters. This is the only way.

Paul rejoice in suffering. He is not a stoic. He knows the pain.

We have read 2nd Corinthians chapter 11. He gives a whole story of his suffering. And while he is giving his story.

He must have gone through this once again. In his heart. He is a human.

He knows what suffering is. And yet he said I rejoice in suffering. That I may fill up the tribulation.

The sufferings of Christ. The sufferings of Christ is not complete. It is complete.

But in another sense. It needs to be filled in. Oh the church.
Oh dear brothers and sisters. The Lord loves his people. Out of his tribulation.
And he does desire that a body. The church shall be a glorious church. Full of life.
He is using you. As he said to Paul. I must show him.
How he must suffer. For my name. Brothers and sisters.
He has called us. Are we so selfish? That if it does not bring anything to us. We will refuse the cross.
Are we ready. By his grace. To offer ourselves to him and say Lord.
If it is thy will that thou desire that I must suffer. I must bear in my body the dying of Jesus. That the life of Jesus may work in others.
That the body may be Lord. But as our brothers say. If you do not know the power of his resurrection.
You will not be able to enter into the fellowship of him. You cannot. It is that new life in you.
That demands you to suffer. Otherwise you will be straightened. You will be bound.
Oh brothers and sisters. We need a release. A release of the life of Christ in us.
And that release comes from. I am not speaking only of awkward suffering. Oh Paul had lots of them.
But he said aside from these. There are inwards. Brothers and sisters.
We are called into the fellowship. Can it be. That this is the reason why.
The children of God. In this world. Sometimes we wonder why.
Sometimes we think it is a waste. But dear brothers and sisters. Can it be.
That it is the filling up. Of the sufferings of Christ. For the bodies.
May the Lord. Make us well. Our heavenly Father.
We do marvel at. The depths. Of the suffering of Christ.
Oh how we enjoy. The atoning suffering of our Lord. How we praise and thank thee that our sins.
Are forgiven. Because he. Lord how we praise and thank thee that thou dost.
In order to give life. To make thy church thine own. Oh Lord can we love thy church less.
And love ourselves more. We do pray that the love of Christ. May so fill our hearts.
That we may know the fellowship. For the bodies sake. Oh Lord.
Grant in thy mercy. We ask in the preciousness of our Lord Jesus.

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