

Christ's View For Suffering

“19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” (Luke 16:19-31 KJV)

In this story that we had just read and Jesus narrated, we can outline important points about life and how we need to live it while we are on earth. In this story Christ gave clear points about life, ministry, suffering and eternal life and as the following:

1. The poverty of the poor can be still a good thing for them. *“20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.” (Luke 16:20-21 KJV)* The poor man in the story, when he persevered in the situation that God had placed him in, it proved to bring him finally to the bosom of Abraham. *** Poverty can be putting the person in a good atmosphere and prohibit him from sinning against God.** Poverty or lacking of certain things that God would not allow you to get can be a protective thing in your life if you accustomed yourself to fear God and to walk in His ways. *** Sometimes material blessing can push man or push you to sin against God.** Therefore poverty can be a safe guard for some not to sin against God. Certain times, some people start to sin after they receive material blessings from God.

2. Sickness and physical disability can help us in our salvation journey to eternity. The sickness of this poor man worked out for the good for his eternity. He was full of sores and the dogs were licking his sores. His sickness put him in a constant suffering, but it seemed that he determined to keep his life pure before God, and continued to live on the hope of God's Word promises, His goodness, His mercy and His faithfulness; He was finally got to the bosom of Abraham, Heaven, as an eternal home for him. **Sicknesses and certain physical disabilities are not hindrance for salvation and living for God and serving Him.** Perseverance in sickness and suffering

and willingness to stay on the ways of God is the secure and safe way for us to live to God and to inherit eternal life.

3. The poor man did not sin against God by trying to change the situation that he was in. The poor man did not try to steal from the rich man. Notice also, that he did not covet the riches of the rich man. He only desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. His aim was to fill his stomach with food and to satisfy his hunger. Notice also that he did not set his heart to fill his stomach with the delicious food that was on the rich man table. He did not covet his delicious food. *** The poor man was content with what God gave him. He did not grumble. He did not complain, and in fact he was a good example that God placed beside the rich man that he may take heed and learn from his good character. * Reflect now on the message in your life and see where you are now from the descriptions that the Word of God is outlining to us from this passage of Scripture.** Many people they fell in debts due to their desire to eat nice food, restaurants' food, travel, wearing expensive clothes, makeup, perfumes, accessories, etc.

4. The poor man was begging because he was afflicted by sores all over his body. So here we can notice that the poor man was begging not because he was lazy but because he was sick and cannot do the work, or he was not accepted to work. Many people they are begging because they are lazy and they are not begging for food, but for other material things. Even those who are begging for food, they are not begging for simple food but for a delicious and costly one. **According to what we have read in this story of Jesus, many who beg they have no right to do that.**

5. Death is God's mercy on those who set their hearts to walk in His ways. *“22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.” (Luke 16:22 KJV)* **When we live our lives in obedience to God and willingly accepting the suffering that God had ordained for us, then death is the way that we are translating to Heaven.** Christ died on the cross for our sins to give us eternal life, and in repentance and following Him in our lives then we will be with Him in Heaven. The death of that beggar man was his comfort.

6. When we spend lavishly on our food, dress and other luxurious things then we are sinning against the Lord. The rich man described by Jesus that he was dressed very well and that he spent lavishly on himself. *“19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.” (Luke 16:19 KJV)* He was not satisfied to buy ordinary things to meet his needs, but he was buying expensive and branded things to furnish his table. **Many people they spend much on their clothes and on the food they are eating. They will pay much for just a taste of the food. They will spend much only just for a brand. Wasting is the sin of the prodigal son who wasted his father's money on the riotous living.** The rich man received good things while he was on earth. He used his riches to pamper his body and to boast with his riches in the way he spent. Abraham as we read in the story told him the following: *“25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.” (Luke 16:25 KJV)* Abraham told him that you had received your good things in life. The rich man was sent to hell because he did not allow his body to suffer. He received the best of all the good things during

his life right to his death. He denied himself no pleasure. That rich man was not judged because he did not help the poor Lazarus, but because of his unwillingness to live a simple life and he refused to heed the good example of Lazarus. **We are not saying here that we should make ourselves poor or to neglect the poor among us, but to heed and follow the pattern of life that God ordained for us.** The rich man in the story of Jesus did not steal, did not commit adultery, did not murder, but he did not live the life style that God wanted from him to live. **Now the message for us today is this: If you are working in this direction, just to receive the good things in this life, the good things of food, dress, shoes and other luxurious things, then you are only working to satisfy your pleasures and not in your mind the style of life that God wants you to live.**

7. When we have no concern for the needs and the afflictions of others, then we are not doing the good that we ought to do, and in this way we are sinning. The rich man was having no concern for the poor man who was sick and begging to feed himself. There is nothing that we read that the rich man had done something to help and to relief the poor sick man. He was living at the gate of the rich man but he was not relieved by him. **Therefore, when God bring poor people near to our gates, we are accountable to help them.**

8. God called us to help the poor whom He placed beside us. Notice that God called us to help. But God did not call us to support poor people whom we do not see. Also God will not call us to feed and support people who can feed themselves. The Lord calls us to support the needs of those people who cannot and is impossible for them to meet their needs. For example this poor man was sick and afflicted with a sickness and cannot work and feed himself. God had placed that poor man at the gate of the rich man so that he can help him with the needful things. **Let us also be aware that many will come with some stories and ask help, but only few are genuine and fit to be helped because they are in situation like this beggar in the story of Jesus.**

9. Death is the punishment of the wicked. "... the rich man also died, and was buried;" (Luke 16:22 KJV) The rich man was materialistic, self centered, selfish and his concern was only to satisfy his own pleasure and flesh. He was unmerciful to the poor beggar who was sick and not able to feed himself.

10. Hell is real and the torment in hell is real. "23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (Luke 16:23-24 KJV) Many they say please don't tell sinners about hell, but Jesus in the New Testament clearly preached about hell. Therefore sinners need to repent so they will not go there. Therefore, also we need to preach the gospel and warn sinners, so we will be free from their blood.

11. After death there is judgment and destiny cannot be changed. The rich man's request for Lazarus to cool his tongue was refused by Abraham because there was a great gulf fixed between them. Abraham said to the rich man: **"26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." (Luke 16:26 KJV)** That is why we need to preach the gospel and warn

sinners to repent because after death there is judgment, and we cannot pray that their destiny will be changed.

12. The bad example that we live can lead others into wrong direction and got lost without salvation. Upon hearing that, he again requested that Lazarus to be sent to his house so that Lazarus can tell his five brothers not to come to that place, The rich man was pleading to Abraham to sent Lazarus to the house of his father to warn his five brothers, to repent, so they will not go there, **"27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." (Luke 16:27-28 KJV)** The bad example that this man was living, misled his five brothers who possibly younger than him. His sin was enjoying the material things that he had received from God. Even he did not steal; even he did not get his money by cheating, it is still sin because he spent it in a way that displeased God, for he was living only to satisfy his egos and pleasures. The rich man had left behind five brothers who had witnessed how he had lived in luxury. So he was a bad example to them and he wanted to correct it by sending Lazarus to tell them the truth that their brother was being tortured in hell. *** That non scriptural style of living will be noticed by others, and they might imitate and follow and they will be lost as they are more concerned of themselves than the things of God. * Put in your mind that even if you are rich, you still need to live the style that God wants you to live and not the style that you like.** The beggar was doing his ministry well. He stayed where God had placed him and did not move to other places in order to continue to minister to the rich man, and he was a good example to him up to the point and that was why the rich man requested father Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house to preach to his five brothers. The rich man was judged because he used the good things that he received from God for his own comfort. He neither looked towards God nor got himself involved in the ministry of God or at least helped the people around him to know and live in the truth. **We are accountable before God for everything we have received from Him and are expected to act prudently. Neglect of things we have received from Him to be used for His purpose is a dangerous thing, and God sooner or later would judge us for that.**

13. Suffering is not an option for Christian life, but it is mandatory. Now it is clear why we need to be willing to embrace the idea to suffer in this world, **"1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." (1 Peter 4:1 KJV)** *** Living a Godly life is the best way to escape from the sin of indulging our flesh in worldly pleasure. With such a mind and attitude we will become a good example to others in living away from worldliness and the lust of the flesh, accepting trials as ordained by God for us, persevering in all holiness and Godliness, directing our resources to serve God and the ministries of the church, and inviting others to follow our example as we follow the example of Christ. * Suffering is not only for the poor or sick or disabled people, but suffering is also ordained to the rich and well to do people. If God had blessed you that does not mean you spend all on yourself and deny yourself nothing. * I am aware that many they hate this teaching and they hate me because of this teaching, but I need to continue to teach that to save my soul before God.**

14. The Scripture is what is ordained for us from God to be taught in God's way. "29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:29-31 KJV) The prophets of the Old Testament and the New Testament apostles, prophets, and saints are good examples to us today to live away from worldliness and to live a simple life that pleases God with the willingness to suffer for Him. The style of life that the rich man was living in was contradictory to the Word of God and the style of living that Moses, the apostles, and the prophets declared in God's Word. **I am not saying that we should live like a monk but to live simply according to God's Word. We need to go through the Scriptures (The Old Testament and the New Testament) and apply them in our lives and in our relationships and communications with the people around us.** Jesus died and rose from death, and by His blood we are saved. Jesus, who came to fulfill the Scriptures also said, **"16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." (Luke 16:16-17 KJV)** **Therefore let us be persuaded by His Word and instruction, and let us go through God's Word and understand the way of suffering that He ordained for us to live and to live it precisely.**

My dear and beloved: Let us come now to God and be willing to follow His way, the narrow way that He ordained for us to pass through and be willing to go through suffering and the style of life that He ordained for us to pass through until we reach Heaven or until He comes and takes us.

Repent early and before death. Let us be willing to repent and renounce all our sins and our wrong doings and amend our ways. Let us be encouraged with the Word of God and His promises to us, the eternal life and the place and the inheritance that He prepared for us in Heaven. **Let us pray**

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that enlightened my mind and made me see life and suffering from your perspective.*

Repent and renounce all your sins. Repent of your worldliness, the lust of your eyes and your love for material things. Repent of the luxurious life that you are living, wasting your resources on food dress, restaurants, parties, accessories, makeup, perfumes, cars, pleasures and journeys. Repent of your grumbling, ungratefulness, and lack of contentment. Repent of your lack of concern to others around you who are in need and in troubles. Repent of your bad example to others and to your own family. Repent of your bad stewardship and wasting your resources. Repent of your lack of faith in God's Word and your disobedience to the Word of God. Repent of doing your own will and your own plan, and not the will nor the plan of God. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins

Lord open my eyes to see those whom you placed beside me that I need to help and support. Lord I am willing to live the style of life that you want me to live. I commit

myself to the principles of stewardship and the thriftiness in living. I commit myself to go and serve you and do the works that you had prepared in advance for me to do. Lord I am willing to suffer, according to your will, fulfilling the Scripture, and moving forward in the mission work of yours till you come and take me with you. Lord sustain me and provide all my needs so I will continue to serve you. For in you I commit my life and in you I trust.

Lord bless our Brothers and Sisters who repented and committed their lives to live for you. Lord fill them with the Holy Spirit and give them the spiritual gifts that they need in their lives to go on and serve you.

Lord bless us as a church and lead us and open to us new doors to evangelize and share our life testimonies with others so they will know you, repent of their sins and follow you. Lord reveal yourselves to them in visions and in dreams. Let them know you are the true God and we are your servants. Lord enable us to go and make new disciples and to baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Lord lead us and help us to train new workers to serve you. Lord help us to plant new congregations and new Bible studies for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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Dr. Ramiz Khalaf
The Church Overseer
Church of God
United Arab Emirates
Email: thebread1@gmail.com
Mobile Tel #: [00971551902647](tel:00971551902647)

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