

submitted to all that he had to go through here as a means that was ~~by~~ necessary that He should share fully in our experience, and that He should fully represent us in saving us from that punishment that we so richly deserve. God had a great purpose, a necessary purpose in the sufferings of Christ. God does not want us when we through our mistakes, through our errors, through our carelessness cause -- bring suffering upon ourselves to say, Isn't this wonderful? No He wants us to avoid making mistakes, but when it comes in spite of these, when we push forward to serve Him we find ourselves in suffering. When we find ourselves perhaps spit upon; perhaps looked down upon for our faith. When we find suffering that we have to undergo, He wants us to praise God for giving us an opportunity to realize something of what Jesus's sufferings meant. God has a purpose in any suffering that comes to us. God has a purpose in any experience we have to go through and these are necessary if He is going to mold us into the type of character that he wants us to be. If he is to fit us for the kind of service He wants us to render. If He wants -- if he is going to make us such as He desires to have have fellowship with Him all through eternity. He sends experiences into our lives, and when these experiences come not through our carelessness; not through our foolishness; not through our neglect, but through situations we can't help, He wants us to rejoice in learning to know something of the fellowship of His suffering -- a very important part in our coming to know Him, to know God, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom God has sent. "That I may know the fellowship of His suffering ." Paul goes even further - "being made conformable unto His death." We all inherit the fleshly nature. We all inherit the sinful nature. We all inherit many qualities that God wishes to rid us of. He wants us to die to self and to live to Christ. He wants us to be able to say, I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." He ~~wants~~ wants us to be made conformable unto His death. And if we are through it we come to know Him in a way we cannot possibly do through hearing some words, by reading some statements, by gaining the knowledge of a few facts. Knowledge is wonderful, but O how much knowledge there is in the world that seems to be of little value. How ~~easy~~ easy it is for those of us who have an intellectual type of mind to just enjoy getting this knowledge, enjoy getting that knowledge enjoy getting the other knowledge. I said a couple of years ago, If the Lord would give me