

So prone to feel that the little things that are so pleasant to us are so important and we forget the big things that are important to God. He wants to fit us, to mould us, to make us into what He wants us to be. So he wants each of us to learn to know the fellowship of His suffering. When you have a decision to make God wants you to think the decision through very carefully. He does not want you to rush hastily or blindly into a decision. He wants you when you commit yourself to something to do it with careful thought and consideration.

There are some things we commit ourselves to for life. There are some things we commit ourselves to for a certain length of time. You desire to come here to take our course for three years. You commit yourself to do this work for three years. Then it begins to be hard. You begin to have difficulties. You begin to think, Oh this dry language work, these simple facts what's that got to do with people's lives. You begin to get discouraged. God wants you when you take on an obligation, he wants you to look at that obligation and push forward and accomplish it. If you find a difficulty to realize that it is part of his will for you to learn to know the fellowship of his sufferings.

He who knew no sin, he who was creator of the universe, he who had everything in this universe that was worth having, came down and lived in the imperfections of human life. He had no place to lay his head. He suffered cold, suffered hunger, suffered privations, and then gave himself on the cross to die for our sins. He wants us to learn to know the fellowship of his sufferings.

If you have a decision, a decision for life perhaps, a decision for a few years perhaps--whatever type of decision--if you've made it with careful study, careful consideration and have committed yourself to it and things go wrong, he wants you to realize that he is giving you experiences in order that you may learn to know the fellowship of His suffering.

There is no excuse for a Christian to become grumpy or discouraged, or irritated because he knows that everything that comes into his life is there because God has sent and it is part of God's plan and is for his good. He can take advantage of the power of God's resurrection, but he also can learn to praise God for the opportunity to have the fellowship of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ!

I remember hearing some years ago when I was considering where to go to seminary, and I mentioned a seminary that was then a very orthodox seminary and I thought of going to it, and I met a man who had been there for only a brief time and had left, and he said, The professors there don't get any joy out of their Christianity. He said, That's not-- I was very unhappy there, they don't have any joy in their Christianity." Well, God wants us to have joy in our Christianity. When I got to know those professors I found they did have. This man had misunderstood them.