

that the Lord would teach me the lessons He wants to teach me without my having to go through such an experience, but ~~that~~ that if some kind of suffering or ~~for~~ pain was necessary in order to mould me into the sort of person He wants me to be, or to fit me to do the kind of work he wants me to do, that He would send it and would give me the power to ~~be~~ bear it.

Paul is not ~~asking~~ asking here that he may suffer. He is asking that He may enter in in some realization to what Jesus Christ has done for us, and that if necessary to help ~~him~~ make the progress he should make that He would, if necessary, give for that purpose give him suffering. So we can know that whatever happens in our life if we truly know the Lord and belong to Him we can know it comes because He sends it for our good, and that He who controls all things has a good purpose in what He sends to us. He may have a great purpose for some of us in having us learn something about knowing the fellowship of His suffering being made conformable unto His death.

But now we come to a very strange statement. Paul says, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained either were already perfect but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended in Christ Jesus. Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended. But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and pressing == reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Did Paul have doubts whether he would be raised from the dead when Christ returned? No! He knew he'd been saved through Christ and his resurrection was absolutely certain. He knew that