

You notice then that word "began" which suggests this important fact of its continues. But then you notice "all that he began to do and to teach until he was taken up into heaven after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen." After his suffering he showed himself to these men in many convincing proofs that he was alive.

The NIV seems very weak there --"after his suffering." I think most of us are accustomed to the KJV--"after his passion." The word passion carries the idea of strength, the idea of something tremendous much more than suffering. We use the word suffering when we have a little cold! When we sprain our finger! This here is something that goes far beyond our ordinary use of the word suffering. And through the years I think I've gotten the correct idea from the KJV--"after his passion"--and it wasn't until I began thinking about this talk today that I realized that to a person without Scriptural background, to a person who had never studied the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Elizabethan dramatists, to the person who was not accustomed to reading the English of 300 years ago, the word "passion" would never convey that idea.

We would never say when a man was suffering a broken leg-- Oh, I'm sorry about his passion. We would never think of it. The word passion today does not have that meaning. Yet the word suffering has gone the other way, and while it can mean great suffering it can mean something as we would say today that is quite casual. Of course here he was saying what happened after all that Jesus went through--through his arrest, through his appearance at the different courts. Including the scourging and the carrying of the cross, and the ~~x~~ terrible pain and anguish of the crucifixion and the humiliation and the way people talked to him and yelled at him. All that is comprehended in what is meant here.

I wish I could think of an English word that would really give the idea that is meant here. There may be one, but I've not been able to think of it. Passion doesn't convey it any more unless you've heard it all your life and realize it. "Suffering" doesn't convey it because the word to us is used so often in a comparatively slight way.

We notice here --after his passion, after his suffering he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. Gave many convincing proofs. We immediately remember what John said in 1 John. "That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, which our hands have touched. This we proclaim concerning the Word of Christ." We do not presuppose the facts of Christianity. We do not assume that they are true. We have them on evidence. We have the witness of the Apostles who saw Him crucified, who saw him after he was risen from the dead and who talked to Him. We have the witness of those whose lives have been changed through the activity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our faith rests upon evidence.

Faith does not mean we simply take something for granted. That we assume it and then presume to act upon it! Faith is confidence