

The Pain of Betrayal

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I. There are many things which leaders who are Christian can expect.

A. There are certain things that we must expect just because we are Christian.

1. We will suffer persecution (II Tim. 3:10-12).

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra--what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Anyone who belongs to Christ Jesus and wants to live right will have trouble from others. –CEV

Persecution is inevitable for those who are determined to live really Christian lives. –Phillips

a. The world and those belonging to the world system will hate you because you are not and never will be part of them. They will hate you for no other reason but that they hate God (John 15:18-25).

If the people of this world hate you, just remember that they hated me first. 19 If you belonged to the world, its people would love you. But you don't belong to the world. I have chosen you to leave the world behind, and that is why its people hate you. 20 Remember how I told you that servants are not greater than their master. So if people mistreat me, they will mistreat you. If they do what I say, they will do what you say. 21 People will do to you exactly what they did to me. They will do it because you belong to me, and they don't know the one who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Everyone who hates me also hates my Father. 24 I have done things that no one else has ever done. If they had not seen me do these things, they would not be guilty. But they did see me do these things, and they still hate me and my Father too. 25 That is why the Scriptures are true when they say, "People hated me for no reason." –CEV

b. Persecutions are part of what we will receive in this life. There are many blessings, but the blessings come with persecutions (Mark. 10:28-30).

Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or

*lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, **with persecutions**--and in the age to come, eternal life.*

- c. This was understood even by David in the Old Testament (Ps. 7:1-2; 119:81-88).

O LORD my God, in You I put my trust; save me from all those who persecute me; and deliver me, lest they tear me like a lion, rending me in pieces, while there is none to deliver. Psalm 7:1-2

The Jerusalem Bible says, “save me from all who hound me.”

- 2. We will have tribulation (John 16:33).

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

The word “tribulation” in this verse means “pressure, oppression, affliction, distress and anxiety.”

- a. The word of God is something for which we must contend (Mt. 13:20-21).

But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

This passage indicate “when” persecution comes not “if” persecution comes because of the word.

- b. The principles of the kingdom are things for which we must contend (Acts 14:21-22).

And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

- 3. We will be reviled and falsely accused (Mt. 5:11; Luke 6:22).

*Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you **falsely** for My sake. Matthew 5:11*

Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Luke 6:22

Other translations add:

- Ostracize you
- Outlaw you
- Put you away from them
- Discriminate against you
- Reproach you
- Insult you
- Smear your name
- Denounce you
- Detest all you stand for because of your loyalty to the Son of Man.

4. We will suffer for doing what is good (I Pet. 3:13-17; 2:19-25).

*And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should **suffer for righteousness' sake**, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who **revile your good conduct in Christ** may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. I Peter 3:13-17*

*For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, **suffering wrongfully**. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when **you do good and suffer**, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. 21 **For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:** 22 "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. I Peter 2:19-25*

B. There are a lot of additional things that leaders will experience by virtue of their placement in ministry.

1. Leaders will face the first and fiercest attacks of Satan, the real enemy (Zech. 13:7b).

Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered...

2. Leaders will receive accusation from officials in the nation (Mt. 10:16-20).

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. 18 You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

3. Leaders will receive accusation from the own spiritual sons and daughters (Mt. 10:21).

Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 10:21-22

An example of this is David's son Absalom who tried to turn people away from his father (II Sam. 15:1-6). He did this by suggesting three things:

- a. The king doesn't have time for you.
 - b. The king doesn't care for you.
 - c. If I was king I would care, understand and give you a hearing ear.
4. Leaders will experience desertion by those into which they have invested themselves.
 - a. Jesus experienced this.
 - i. In Gethsemane all of the disciples forsook Him and fled (Mt. 26:56).
 - ii. In Peter, who one minute was making a verbal vow of everlasting commitment, and in the next moment he was denying that he even knew Jesus (Mt. 26:31-35, 74; John 13:37; 18:25-27). Is this the "rock" on which the church is to be built?
 - b. Paul experienced this.
 - i. He was deserted on his first missionary journey by a young man he was attempting to disciple (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39).
 - ii. He was forsaken by one of his fellow laborers, Demas for the lure of worldly things (II Tim. 4:10; See also Philemon 24; Col 4:14).

...for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica... II Timothy 4:10

5. Leaders will experience betrayal by those that they have loved.

Jesus was betrayed by Judas who was one of His closest friends (Mt. 26:50; Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14).

But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Matthew 26:50a

Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me. Psalm 41:9

Lest you think that this was easy for Jesus, consider the following:

- a. Judas had been undoubtedly been baptized by John the Baptist (John 1:28).
- b. Judas had been a faithful follower of Jesus (John 3:22).
- c. Judas was chosen by Jesus after an all night prayer meeting (Luke 6:12-16).
- d. Judas was sent out two by two and experienced the power of God (Luke 9).
- e. Judas had been entrusted with the treasury for the apostolic company (Mt. 6:20; Luke 12:1-3).
- f. Judas sat in a seat of honor at the Last Supper (Mt. 26:23-25; John 13:26-27).

Note the practice of dipping in the sop or sauce. William Barclay in his *Daily Study Bible* makes the following observation,

“For the host to offer the guest a special tidbit, a special morsel from the dish, was again a sign of special friendship. When Boaz wished to show how much he honored Ruth, he invited her to come and dip her morsel in the wine (Ruth 2:14)...When Jesus handed the morsel to Judas, again it was a mark of special affection. And we note that even when Jesus did this the disciples did not gather the import of His words. That surely shows that Jesus was so much in the habit of doing this that that it seemed nothing unusual. Judas had always been picked out for special affection.”

In fact, it is very likely that with John sitting next to Jesus on His right side, Judas was sitting next to Jesus on His left side. This was certainly a place of honor.

- g. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, a sign of love and affection (Luke 22:48).

C. Betrayal, rejection, misunderstanding and false accusation are part of the benefits of being God’s chosen leader.

1. Joseph experienced this privilege of leadership.
 - a. He was betrayed by his brothers and rejected by those he was called to serve.
 - b. He was framed and lied about when his only crime was maintaining purity and loyalty to his master.
 - c. He was forgotten in his time of need by someone he had helped.
2. Moses experienced this privilege of leadership.
 - a. He was rejected by his brethren when all he was doing was attempting to deliver them from bondage.
 - b. He was murmured against and blamed for everything including clear acts of God.
 - c. He was rebelled against by his own flesh and blood (Aaron and Mirium).
3. David experienced this privilege of leadership.
 - a. He was hunted and nearly killed by a man he was attempting to be loyal to.
 - b. In his early ministry he was rejected by most of the nation in spite of the anointing by the prophet of God.
 - c. He was maligned by his own sons who led major uprisings against him.
4. Jesus experienced this privilege of leadership.
 - a. He was abandoned by those He had fed, healed and preached to for 3 ½ years.
 - b. He was betrayed to death by one that He had loved.
5. Paul experienced this privilege of leadership.
 - a. Paul went from one bad situation to another with stonings, imprisonments and beatings.
 - b. Paul was rejected by the nation that he dearly loved.
 - c. Paul was never warmly received by the apostles and the leaders of the Jerusalem church.

Could we say that when you are persecuted because of your leadership, you are in some very good company?

II. Leaders can be overwhelmed by feelings when they go through times like this.

A. They may be tempted to question their call.

Moses at times questioned his call (Ex. 3:11; 4:1, 10; 5:22-23). He asked questions like, “Who am I?” and “Why is it that you have sent me?”

B. They may be tempted to take it personally.

Jesus indicated that it was not necessarily a personal thing. They hate you because they hate God (John 15:18-25).

God assured Samuel that he was not rejected but God was the one being rejected (I Sam. 8:7).

And the LORD said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.”

C. They may be tempted to blame themselves for failure in others.

It is easy for pastors to rehearse the scenario over and over again and bemoan, “If only I had done.....!” In some cases there is nothing that you could have done to change things without misrepresenting God and His word.

D. They may be tempted to give up.

E. They may go through an actual grieving process.

1. Some symptoms of a grieving process.

a. Some common physical symptoms

- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Sleeplessness
- A need for sighing (difficulty getting air)
- An empty, hollow feeling in your stomach
- Pain in the area near your heart (as if it were broken)
- Extreme tiredness

b. Some common emotional symptoms

- Shock and numbness
- Guilt (if only's)
- Anger and angry outbursts
- Depression
- Worry
- Self-criticism
- Difficulty in establishing new relationships
- Irritability
- Lack of initiative
- Loss of self esteem/feeling of worthlessness
- Moodiness

c. Some common mental symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating/mental blocking
- Forgetfulness and memory loss
- Confusion
- Loss of creativity
- Loss of productivity
- Past orientated rather than present or future orientated
- Things seem unreal or surreal

2. Some recommendations or guidelines during a grieving process.

People who know that they are in a time of grieving should...

- a. Avoid the use of drugs or alcohol.
- b. Avoid making any hasty decisions.
- c. Put off making any major decisions.
- d. Let others know what you need and how to help you.
- e. Continue to walk forward understanding that it is a normal process.

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you... I Peter 4:12

III. Jesus prepared His disciples for betrayal.

A. He warned them of its coming (Mt. 24:8-10; Luke 21:12, 16-17).

All these are the beginning of sorrows. "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Matthew 24:8-10

But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. Luke 21:12

You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.

Luke 21:16-17

B. He taught them concerning their responses.

1. They were to shake the dust off of their feet (Mt. 10:14-15).

And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

2. They were to rejoice and jump for joy (Mt. 5:11-12; Luke 6:23; Acts 5:41; I Pet. 4:13-14).

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:11-12

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! Luke 6:23a

And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. Acts 5:40-42

3. They were to remain faithful to God and their assignment from God (Rev. 2:10; Jam. 5:10-11).

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:10

My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. James 5:10-11

James uses the example of Job. The only reason that Job went through the suffering that he did was because he had been such a model of what he was supposed to be. The perseverance of Job is seen in the way he responded to “unjust suffering.”

Notice Job’s faith responses:

- a. He did not charge God with unfairness (Job 1:20-22).

Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

- b. He refused to lower his standards of integrity in his time of trial (Job 2:10b).

Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

- c. He put no conditions on his service to God (Job 13:15).

Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

- d. He made up his mind that he would be faithful unto death (Job 27:3-6).

As long as my breath is in me, and the breath of God in my nostrils, my lips will not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit... Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.

The only way you can do this is if you have the attitude of Joseph in that you take all that comes to you as coming from God for the purpose of your good (Gen. 50:19-21).

Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, “Behold, we are your servants.” Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

If you do not have this attitude you will never be able to speak kindly to them and allow them to come back in a gracious way.

Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. II Timothy 2:8-10

4. They were to turn and bless their persecutors (Mt. 5:43-48).

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Be perfect, or be the mature one in this situation.

5. They were to pray for those who mistreated them (Mt. 5:44).

I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer... --MSG

6. They were to overcome their enemies by repaying them in acts of kindness (Mt. 5:44; Rom. 12:19-21).

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; and in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:19-21

- C. He showed them by His example (I Pet. 2:21-23; Luke 23:34).

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously... I Peter 2:21-23

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Luke 23:34a

- D. After His ascension, He gave grace to His followers when they faced persecution.
 - 1. The apostles maintained their testimony in the face of threats (Acts 4:20-21, 33).
 - 2. The apostles rejoiced after a physical beating (Acts 5:41).
 - 3. Paul and Silas responded with praise in the Philippian jail (Acts 16:25).

IV. Jesus wants to minister to us in our times of betrayal.

A. He wants to stand with us.

- 1. As He did with Stephen (Acts 7:55-56).

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

- 2. As He did with Paul (II Tim. 4:16-18).

At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

B. He wants to give us grace to do the right thing (II Cor. 12:9; Heb. 4:16; I Pet. 5:9-11).

Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. I Peter 5:9-11

C. He wants to enter into a deeper relationship with us.

- 1. As He did with Job (Job 42:5).

"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You."

- 2. As He did with the three Hebrew children (Dan. 3:24-25).

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

D. He wants to lead us into greater levels of maturity.

He wants the virtues of Christ to be seen in us as a witness to the world and a testimony to others. In order to share in Christ's glory, we must be a partaker of His suffering.

E. He wants to deliver us from the fear of man (Pro. 29:25).

This means that He is concerned that we come to a place where we are more concerned about pleasing God than appeasing men.

F. He ultimately wants to vindicate us from all false testimony (Ps. 17:1-15; Is. 50:7-9).

Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be dismayed. Therefore, I have set my face like a stone, determined to do his will. And I know that I will triumph. He who gives me justice is near. Who will dare to oppose me now? Where are my enemies? Let them appear! See, the Sovereign LORD is on my side! Who will declare me guilty? All my enemies will be destroyed like old clothes that have been eaten by moths! Isaiah 50:7-9, NLT

God will vindicate the righteous. He will stop the mouths of your accusers...but not necessarily in your lifetime.

V. There are some important keys for overcoming in times of betrayal.

The only reason that you have a problem in this area is because you are a true pastor and you care deeply about people.

A. Forgive people the way that Jesus forgave (Luke 23:34).

1. Realizing that people do what they do out of ignorance.
2. Realizing that even though you will still remember it, it does not have to affect your ability to love (I Cor. 11:23).

B. Learn how to turn people over to the Lord, the Great Shepherd.

Just like Paul commended his churches to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, we need to commend (hand over) people to the Great Shepherd who loves them and is committed to them eternally.

C. Put the government back on God's shoulders.

1. Let God worry about it and pace in heaven while you sleep.
2. Let God be your defense.

D. Resist the temptation to become defensive.

Don't feel that you have to justify everything to everyone. Some people are "unpersuadable" (my word).

E. Resist the temptation to retaliate.

1. Never let your hurt come out over the pulpit.
2. Direct your anger at the devil.
3. Learn to be faithful even when other people are not (Ezra 9:9; Heb. 13:5).

F. Overcome evil with acts of kindness (Rom. 12: 17, 21; I Cor. 4:12).

And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. I Corinthians 4:12-13a

We have worked wearily with our own hands to earn our living. We bless those who curse us. We are patient with those who abuse us. We respond gently when evil things are said about us. Yet we are treated like the world's garbage, like everybody's trash--right up to the present moment. I Corinthians 4:12-13, NLT

G. Refocus your eyes on your overall goal and larger purpose (Phil. 3:12-16).

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

It is Satan's goal in these things to get us side-tracked and out of the race.

H. March into the future focusing on willing and responsive disciples.