

## Weekly Devotions: THE REFINING FIRE OF TRIALS 18

### Are You Ready to Suffer for Jesus?

Someone said that when we meet God, He will not be interested in our trophies or the great things we have done for Him. He will be interested in our scars that come as a result of our faithfulness and standing up for His Name. Charles Spurgeon said; “As soldiers show their scars and talk of battles, when they come at last to spend their old age in the country at home; so shall we in the dear land to which we are hastening, speak of the goodness and faithfulness of God, which brought us through all the trials.”

The Church has existed until today because of the countless believers who readily laid down their lives that others might know Christ and His gift of salvation. The apostle Paul told the early Christians in Philippi; **“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him but also suffer for His sake.”** To suffer for the name of Jesus is the greatest privilege and the highest calling. The call to suffer for Christ is not reserved for the few but for all believers.

### Read John 15: 18-25

Jesus made clear to His disciples that persecution was inevitable and that they would face opposition and persecution from the world. Jesus gave two reasons why the world would hate and persecute His followers. First, the world hated Him; they would also hate those who belonged to Him (18). Second, the world would hate His followers because of their distinctiveness in being and doing. If we are like those in the world the world would love us (19).

As followers of Christ, we are called to be the light of the world and our conduct, lifestyle, ethical standards must reflect God’s holiness. Our light will show up the darkness of sin and flesh, hence, we will be hated by the world. True faith is to be ready to suffer for the name of Christ and be prepared to face opposition and persecution.

### *Questions to ponder*

1. What type of Christians does the world hate and love (18-20)? Why? Do you think the world finds God’s people today are more like them or different from them? Is this good or bad? Why?
2. In hating Jesus, who does the world really hate and why does the world hate Jesus (23 & 25)? How does the world display their hatred for Jesus and God?
3. How have you suffered for Christ or what scars of faithfulness can you show to Jesus and fellow believers in heaven? What do you think is needed to build strong believers ready to suffer for Jesus today?