

Lamb or Badger

No one enjoys suffering, not even Christ relished the idea. Suffering however is a must for those who wish to follow in His footsteps, for those who desire to be perfected in Him. For Christians, it is seen as a stepping stool and a honing stone. But not everyone views suffering in the same way. You can tell a lot about a person by the way he handles his particular trial. Many people are actually hardened by it; they become calloused and even worse, hard-hearted. We have all met those who are intolerable when they are challenged by suffering; whiners, complainers, angry men and women. We often refer to them as short-fused or hotheads, impatient and irritable. In many cases we choose to leave them alone, and instead of welcoming growth they experience resentment.

On the other hand, suffering softens us as Christians. Instead of hard hearts we develop thicker skin and softer hearts. In lieu of being intolerant of others, we actually welcome companionship during these times. And rather than being irritable we become humble, developing a deeper appreciation for what Christ endured and how He accomplished it. Bottom line, we become resilient, the world becomes residue; meaning suffering takes away from their character leaving behind only that which is unpalatable.

What makes us different? What makes us react so extreme from the norm? Simply put, it is an indwelling of God's Spirit. We are called for such turmoil; the world looks to avoid it. We search for wisdom and understanding through it, they merely seek a way out. There is no need for us to create a way out; we know God will provide one when we are ready. The Christian harnesses these trials and converts them into means for helping those who follow behind, the world wants restitution and retribution.

Examine your lives this week. How do you respond when confronted? Do you exemplify the Spirit of Christ? Are you a like a lamb led to the slaughter, or does a badger dug in his burrow better suit you? Nothing we will experience is unique, but if handled properly we ourselves become unique.

But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

NASU 1 Peter 5:9-10

Think about it.....

In His Service, Byron