



ACTS

Disciples Making Disciples

The word 'suffer' is defined as:

- To feel pain or distress; sustain injury or harm
- To have a specified shortcoming or weakness
- To sustain a loss, setback, or decline in effectiveness; become worse
- To appear at a disadvantage
- To experience, undergo, or feel

¹ And Saul approved of his execution.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Acts 8:1-3 (ESV)

The suffering of the Christians

- Philip and the rest of the Christians suffered at the hands of Saul, the Jews and the Romans
- They were being imprisoned and martyred
- The general population hated them

⁷ For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.

Acts 8:7 (ESV)

The suffering of the Samaritans

- The Samaritans were an afflicted people
- They dabbled in religious and spiritual practices
- As a result they were beset by unclean spirits
- They also suffered at the hands of the Jews for generations as outcasts

²⁰ But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.”

Acts 8:20-23 (ESV)

The suffering of Simon

- He suffered because of his own capability and ambition
- He was bitter at God for taking away his power and prestige
- He was no longer the 'great' man of Samaria

³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

Acts 8:30-31 (ESV)

The suffering of the Ethiopian

- Despite access to riches, the Ethiopian did not have access to understanding
- Despite power and wealth, he couldn't figure out a way into salvation

The power of suffering is to highlight the Good News

- Suffering and death is the wages we have earned through sin
- God has offered the refreshing water of the Gospel in the midst of our suffering
- Allow your suffering to bring you to Jesus