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*The Suffering of Spiritual Childhood*

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SELF INDUCED MISERIES

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## *Suffering of Spiritual childhood*

The Bible is not a book about suffering but it reveals powerful divine assets for coping with all kinds of difficulties. Every Church Age believer must know what causes and apply the right solutions to his sufferings in this life. Every instance of suffering has a reason, an explanation, and a solution.

No suffering is inexplicable and God anticipates that His children must learn to execute the proper solution for each kind of suffering. From the time Satan seized control of the world from the reign of Adam, the world has groaned in suffering. Every person born into this world is born to suffer. Some suffers even without knowing the reason for it, and majority of them suffers unaware that there is a solution for such adversary.

The general causes of suffering:

- Loss of health, wealth, loved ones and friends
- Administration of justice like imprisonment and penalty
- Interpersonal and social conflict (gossip, mockery, insult, slander, character assassination).
- War, social unrest and political conflict.
- Poverty (famine, food shortage, loss of job).
- Natural calamity (storm, flood, earthquake, tornado, landslides, tsunami, hailstones).
- Mental pressure (worry, fear, intimidation, jealousy).
- Isolation by society (exile, imprisonment, exclusion)
- Mental attitude sins (carnality, reversionism)
- Rejection of authority (divine establishment laws).

There are three major categories of suffering (see last page) for the unbelievers in time:

- Self-induced misery
- Violation or rejection of divine establishment laws

- Divine judgment
  - Judgment by pain
  - Judgment by finesse
  - Judgment by death

Suffering of the unbelievers in eternity: in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:12-15)

The sufferings of the spiritually immature believer from the time of his salvation until he departs from world by Rapture or by sin unto death are:

- Self-induced misery
- Violation or rejection of divine establishment laws
- Divine discipline (Ex. 32:34-33:3, Prov. 3:11-12)
  - Warning discipline (Rev. 3:20, James 5:9)
  - Intensive discipline (Psalm 38:1-14)
  - Dying discipline or sin unto death (1John 5:16)

The suffering of the spiritually mature believer from the time he enter the status of spiritual adulthood until he departs from this world by dying grace or Rapture are divided into three stages:

- Under Spiritual Self-esteem: Preventive suffering
  - Slanders
  - Pressures
  - Persecutions
  - Stresses
- Under Spiritual Autonomy: Momentum testing
  - People testing
  - Thought testing
  - System testing
  - Disaster testing
- Under Spiritual maturity: Evidence testing
  - Loss of wealth
  - Loss of health
  - Loss of loved ones and friends
  - Loss of human integrity

### Reasons for Christians sufferings:

- Frantic quest for happiness in the world
- Reaction and suppression of guilt of sin (1 Timothy 1:5-6)
- Negative volition of the callous soul (Ephesians 4:17-19)
- Related to Angelic Conflict (1 Peter 1:12)
- No capacity for life and lack of contentment
- Failure to isolate sin (Heb. 12:15)
- Rejection of legitimate authority (Judges 19 -21)
- Rejection of the right-man or right-woman (Ezekiel 16 & 23)
- From interrelationship with those who are sufferings (1 Chron. 21)
- Because of divine discipline (Heb. 12:6)
- Because of rejecting God (Jeremiah 13)
- To demonstrate the power and grace of God (2 Cor. 12:1-10)
- To learn the value of Bible doctrine (Psalms 119:67,68,70)
- From the rapid and accelerated growth in the Word of God (James 1:1-6)
- From natural disaster (Isaiah 59:15-21)
- From temporary loss of norms and standards of Bible doctrine (Jeremiah 2:24-25)
- Because of war (Deut. 21, 24)
- Because of the short circuit emotion of the soul (John 20:9-18)
- In process of dying (Job 5:20) either sin unto death or dying grace.
- Irreverently partaking of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:29-31)
- Because of the special gifts and calling to serve God like the apostles.

In this study, we will focus only in the suffering during spiritual childhood (Self-induced misery, violation of divine establishment laws and divine discipline). The study will look into the reason, explanation, purpose and solution of these sufferings.

Miserable circumstances (see Tract No. 24: Self-made Misery) are often times the result of bad decisions or sins. Misery comes deliberately giving warning signs that are often ignored by the one suffering. Misery is not accidental but a planned condition that ignored basic principles, truth, and reality.

It can be avoided and prevented by the individual himself and not by others, not even by God. It's a matter of choice, desire, decision and wishful thinking for ones prosperity that turned into a calamity. A person may design his own misery that will affect many people around him and that may last for a long time.

Self-made misery is the most common type of human suffering; it has swallowed up every person in this world. People in general and Christians in particular cause themselves tremendous anguish, both within their souls and in the overt circumstances they have created.

The law of volitional responsibility recognizes that a believer's decision has natural and logical consequences. When he made bad decisions, suffering will naturally result. In almost every instance of the Christian sufferings, part or all of the suffering can be traced back to the choices of the one who suffers.

God designed man with freewill, (it is the ability to make decision for one apart from influence and pressures from others). By divine decree, human indecisions or decisions have real repercussions for which we are solely responsible. . These are the laws of human consequences in which each individual's thoughts, decisions, actions and reactions establish the trends in his life.

Every human being has free will and we make decisions constantly using this freewill volition. Volition is the decision of the souls. We continuously make decisions, some of which are good, and others that are bad. The human freewill volition is the source of personal sins and human good and evil.

The law of volitional responsibility implies that every human being is personally responsible for his own decisions and actions. Every person must understand that blaming others for his miseries is unreasonable since it is the product of his freewill. In the spiritual life, when we follow divine protocol we are blessed, but when we violate divine protocol we suffer. This further implies, that we must know, learn divine protocol plan and abide by it.

It is not easy for any individual even those properly reared in Bible doctrine by spiritually mature parents to accept and acknowledge his mistakes or wrong decisions that he has made without pointing fingers to others. Only the spiritually mature believers have the capacity to acknowledge mistakes or wrong decisions regarding relationships, activities, motives, functions in life whereby he likewise fulfills the obligations he has incurred.

Self-induced miseries will start pouring out when a believer starts to revolt against established authorities assigned by God there are:

- a) In human privacy the freewill volition
- b) In marriage the husband
- c) In family the parents
- d) In national entity the government

A mature believer does not blame others for his troubles and miseries. If he suffers from causes beyond his control, he does not allow pain and bitterness to tyrannize and poison his soul. He makes use of his present options and opportunities through good decisions compatible with the perfect plan of God. He personally acknowledges his personal responsibility and accountability based on this law:

Be not deceived, God cannot be mocked. Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap (Galatians 6:7). Sowing and reaping can be profitable or destructive.

This verse illustrates the law of volitional responsibility, warning the believer not to ignore or violate the protocol plan of God. It is a call for every believer to remain within the sphere of the divine system. The sins a person commit sprout and follow a natural pattern of growth. A believer's sins produce suffering in keeping with all variables of his life. The harvest of suffering will differ from one person to another even if they seem to commit the same sins.

But anyone who thinks he will escape the consequences of his decisions is deceiving himself. Because man has freewill, his bad decisions have bad effects. Arrogance is self-deception. A puffed up opinion of self is the believer's great enemy, an illusion which will relentlessly undermine his life and happiness. Most sufferings in life are caused by arrogance. Arrogance is divorcement from reality. Arrogance is a mental attitude that magnifies self above others.

It is the assumption of superiority or inferiority. False humility is arrogance in disguise. It is being proud to be humbled (Philippians 2:1-9). Arrogance is a major hindrance to spiritual advancement.

The divine decrees guarantee that the consequences of man's decisions occur in reality. Because the thought and perception of the arrogant believer is separated from reality, the natural results of his wrong or bad decisions always take him by surprise. Miserable situations for which he himself is responsible will shock and disappoint the arrogant believer; it will disturb his misplaced hope and confound his great expectations of himself.

In arrogance and spiritual ignorance the believer will falsely blame his miseries on other people, environment, childhood trauma, bad luck, karma, the devil and worse even God. Blaming others for the self-made miseries is direct refusal of accepting the accountability for making the bad decisions. Such is maximum display of arrogance.

The arrogant believers are out of touch with reality, ultimately illogical in their thinking, always confused and without hope. He is occupied with the things of the world, people around him and his greatest enemy is self. He is blaming others and rationalizes on the ground of self-confidence and false knowledge of self. Blaming others is not only rationalization but also a sign of severe spiritual problems.

James 1:13-16 explains this principle. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

Personal sin is an act of volition contrary to the will and standards of God; it is the individual's manifestation of his fallen state. Personal sin results from volition that says yes to temptation; whether or not the individual knows he is transgressing the will and Word of God. The presence of the old sin nature is not an excuse for committing personal sins, nor spiritual ignorance. God has provided everything we need to overcome any problem.

Jesus Christ has resolved our problems with sins once and for all. But the consequences of personal sins (mental, verbal, or overt) will continue to bring miseries. We will suffer for personal sins while on earth, because in heaven, no miseries or undeserved suffering is possible. The Christian suffering is but temporal and short compared to eternal suffering of the unbeliever.

The old sin nature is the genetic legacy of Adams's sin in the body of each of his descendants. The old sin nature is passed on to every human being by biological conception, with the exception of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Self-made miseries are the by-product of freewill violation or rebellion against the established laws in the world such as the natural and human laws. Any decision to revolt or violate the existing laws will eventually suffer the consequences. Human laws are made for violators not for its advocates or supporters. The laws are designed to destroy those who go against it, not for those who follow it. Laws are created to protect the individuals by persecuting the violators.

Many are miserable because they chose to violate certain established principles and policy created to protect them. People without personal relationship with Christ are miserable. Christians without Bible doctrines are producing or manufacturing miseries that eventually harass their minds and souls. Self-made miseries are controlled or neutralized by the amount of Bible doctrine in the souls of believers. Maximum Bible in the soul means less self-made miseries for Christians.

Only Bible doctrines in the soul of spiritual and advancing believers can prevent the development of miseries that might affect others. Self-made miseries are produced by decisions coming from human viewpoint, inspired by old sin nature. Human viewpoint is the policy of the cosmic system which Satan uses as the operating system of the world. Divine viewpoint is the mental attitude of Christ prescribed for every member of His kingdom.

Cosmic thinking means a mind inspired by demonic policies and human viewpoint. Any decision based on human viewpoint will give birth to miserable circumstances. Start thinking and making decision based on Bible doctrines and stop being miserable. To stop being miserable begins by the act of knowing the divine protocol. This calls for a consistent, systematic, and progressive study of Bible doctrines. The truth (epignosis) will set free the believer from pains and misery.

Majority of Christians' suffering arise from the believer's own thoughts, decisions and actions. One bad decision follows another until his life becomes unbearable. He makes his life a shamble of his present experience where his future options are destroyed. No one can destroy a person's life as much as himself. At some point in this self-destructive process, God intervenes with divine discipline. God will not stand by while members of His royal family sink into corruption and degeneracy.

Divine discipline is an uncompromised measure to alert the carnal believers to their extremely bad status before God and to encourage them to make rebound and reenter the divine power system. All divine discipline is administered in grace. An ignorant believer under divine discipline may doubt that God is treating him in grace, but he could not imagine how much more he would hurt if God were not acting in grace. The perfect God knows exactly the most effective way to confront the carnal believer with the right discipline, and He disciplines every carnal believer for their own benefit.

Divine discipline is the sum total of corrective action taken by the justice of God in grace to correct, to discipline, to encourage, to train, to alert, and to motivate the believer's free will toward the perfect Plan of God. Divine discipline is administered exclusively to believers and occurs only in this earthly life. There is no punishment or divine discipline after death. For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you, as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? (Heb. 12:5-15).

Divine discipline is a warning for the believer outside the boundaries of God's plan. When a believer cuts off his fellowship with God through sin and remains in the cosmic system, God in His grace must deal with him as a child. Bible doctrine has been ignored; God must get the believer's attention through pain and misery.

Divine discipline is tailored made for each individual believer (Hebrews 12:5). Discipline is neither too light nor too severe but rather has the exact duration and intensity suitable and exact for the each erring child.

Divine discipline from the Lord is part of the parental training in the royal family of God. As there is no perfect child at home, there is no perfect Christian in the royal family of God. Every child needs training to function effectively in the society. The individual who leaves home without authority orientation will become a social monster. To prevent this, enforced humility must come outside the home.

Divine discipline will serve as an executor of the "enforced humility" against the stubborn and arrogant believer (Jeremiah 5:25). A positive volition believer on the other hand is ever thankful for his divine discipline (Job 5:17, 36:9-10). He is willing to be corrected and to learn from each instance of suffering. As the believer matures spiritually, he will sin less frequently, but periodically he will give in to temptation and once again enter the cosmic system.

Divine discipline is God's trumpet call for believers for them to re-enter the divine dynasphere and leave the cosmic system. If the believer remains longer in the cosmic system his thinking loses touch with the reality of God's protocol plan. Under prolonged cosmic influence, his arrogance will become antagonism towards God. At this point, the carnal believer becomes candidate for more severe divine discipline.

God is never arbitrary in administering discipline. His discipline is just perfect to the individual concerned. Since all divine discipline comes from His justice it does not only fit the violation but also matches the believer's receptivity. When the believer does not use rebound, these three categories of divine discipline become progressive. Warning divine discipline gives way to more and more severe discipline if the believer fails to respond.

A more severe discipline than the believer's self-induced misery will shock the stubborn believer who continues in carnality in spite of God's consistent warnings.

The believer who refuses to live in the divine sphere receives warning divine discipline, added to the misery he has already created for himself under the law of volitional responsibility. He has isolated himself from the fellowship with God and he has shut Christ out of his thoughts. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me (Rev. 3:20).

That knock at the door is a warning discipline. Since the believer is still sensitive to the truth and he has not yet declined into the later stages of negative volition, the believer can still profit from this degree of discipline (and God does not have to proceed to intensive discipline). The knocking is a call to re-enter the divine dynasphere and leave the world system at once.

If the believer can hear the knocking on the door, which means that God can catch his attention with relatively mild suffering, then the believer can easily be restored back to fellowship by the privilege of rebound, but ignoring such knocking will result to intensified discipline. The knocking may last for a while but not for a long time.

Take note that the issue of Revelation 3:20 is not salvation but restoration to a fellowship with God. You do not restore to fellowship someone who has no personal relationship with God. All the spiritually mature and immature or ignorant believer may receive warning discipline depending on their spiritual sensitivity and receptivity of Bible doctrine.

In like manner, both the immature and mature believers may receive intensive divine discipline depending on their spiritual stubbornness and arrogance.

Warning divine discipline is exclusive for the spiritually sensitive and receptive believers, who are determined not to stay longer in the cosmic system. When they hear the "knocking on the door" of their soul they instantaneously respond "to open the door" (through obedience of rebound). Warning discipline is for sensitive, evaluating, and sinning believers while intensive discipline is for the stubborn, calloused and arrogant believers. The difference is in terms of intensity and the duration of pains.

Warning discipline comes in various forms such as physical illness, loss of property, cancellation of privileges, physical injury, unnecessary expenses or anything that produces physical and psychological pains. If the believer continues to ignore, reject, and resist the Word of God and refuses to rebound the situation will eventually require intensive discipline. The Bible described intensive discipline as severe sickness (1 Cor. 11:30). The term "sick" is used as figure of speech to denote the intensity of suffering administered from the justice of God. "For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep".

Intensive divine discipline is necessary when the believer's sensitivity and receptivity has become dull, calloused and totally passive to Bible doctrine. The divine Plan of Grace for blessing such believers remains unchangeable, and the execution of intensive discipline is an evidence of God's grace.

God is exceedingly patient with His children, extending every possible opportunity to fulfill His perfect plan for them. But with each rejection of God's gracious appeal to return to the divine dynasphere, the carnal believer renders himself less capable of making a good decision from position of strength. The carnal believer is demolishing his only access to abundant life in Christ (John 10:10).

The carnal believer who refuses to leave the cosmic system by rebound will develop the hardening of the soul (kardia) and sooner or later locks his volition in negative mental attitude sins (Heb. 4:7, 6:6), and unless he rebounds he will reach the final stage of divine discipline which is the sin unto death (1 John 5:16). These sufferings are the expressions of God's grace to men.

God will administer the sin unto death (or dying discipline) only after prolonged rebellion and resistance in the cosmic system. The pains of intensive discipline increase as the believer's stay in the cosmos diabolicus are extended. The longer he remains carnal, the greater the pains and suffering. God continues to support the carnal believer with logistical grace blessings, keeping him alive so that he might return to his divine dynasphere.

The divine discipline is designed to ignite the feeble flame of hope in the soul of the carnal believer even after he has insulted and blasphemed God by choosing to stay in Satan's dungeon for a long time. Satan treats all believers as spies or enemies, if they tried to serve him, Satan will eventually dispose of them after they have served their purpose, because they belong to God.

The carnal believer living in the cosmic system is suffering from three areas of attack: under intensive discipline, harassment from the world and harassment from the devil. The carnal believer who remains in the world will become a spiritual loser. He is going to heaven and nothing can change that fact, but without the blessings of time and eternity. A spiritual loser is a believer who failed to utilize the divine resources and to win his part in the angelic conflict.

He failed to use Bible doctrine in solving his problems and he failed to receive the blessings that will glorify Christ in eternity. He spent his precious time in the cosmic system chasing after the wind and therefore, missing the blessings of spiritual maturity, which is the objective of the Christian life.

He missed the privileges of glorifying Christ. He wasted his spiritual privileges, opportunities, while remaining spiritually immature. The objective of the divine discipline is far greater than the suffering it brings in the life of a carnal believer. There is no blessing, spiritual power, energy, resources, perception and spiritual growth outside the divine dynasphere.

The Lord Jesus Christ remained inside the divine system during the entire course of His humanity. There was no single minute when He "toured" the cosmic system and enjoyed the devil's world. The first rule for every believer is to stay inside the divine power system because any decision to linger and enjoy the world with its lust would mean intensive divine discipline. Our spiritual freedom excluded taking pleasure in the affairs of the world.

Prolonged residence in the cosmic system could lead to sin unto death. Sin unto death is the final stage of divine discipline for the carnal believer who lived according to the power of old sin nature (flesh) and did not advance to spiritual maturity. The grace of God extends to every believer even to those living in the world and for the world. Dying discipline (1 Cor. 11:30) or sin unto death (1 John 5:16) is the horrible departure from time into eternity.

It is administered after severe jolting give to the habitual rebellious believer into objectivity but refused to respond positively. Such Christian has no inner resources for meeting death, no capacity for life and no capacity for death. The candidate for sins unto death has no personal sense of destiny, no eager anticipation to meet Jesus Christ face to face, and has no expectation of eternal rewards. They have not learned Bible doctrine and therefore are totally handicapped to use divine solution for their sufferings. Bible doctrine alone has the solution for human problems. Human solution for a human problem is no solution.



Sin unto death is the death for the spiritual losers, those who lived without God in the world (Eph. 2:12). The immature believer will die apart from true peace, inner happiness and tranquility. It will be an extremely painful death. The carnal believer will die with anxiety for loved ones he will leave behind; he has false hope of eternal rewards and false assurance of the blessing in eternity.

He will die with too much bitterness and fear, even the fear of death. The only solution for all of these problems is Bible doctrine stored in the soul. The Bible through its Bible doctrine has solution for every difficulty in life. It gives profound explanation with effective solution for each kind of suffering. Bible doctrine in the soul prevents the believer from being engulfed by his suffering.

Divine discipline is a private mentor of the one in pain, in whom God confronts the ignorance of Bible doctrine. Believers who fail to learn doctrine will suffer (divine discipline and self-made misery) all their lives until they are disciplined by sin unto death. The holiness of God is never affected by human sins or self-righteousness.

Christians may be negative at different points in the learning process, which involves reception, retention, and recall of doctrine. Those who refuse to listen to Bible doctrine will live out their days in chaos of ignorance, self-induced misery, and divine discipline. They will be unhappy and will never understand why. There are those who listen consistently, but reject Bible doctrine which they do not like to hear. The points of doctrine they resist must be learned another way, the hard way through divine discipline.

Where the believer has reception and retention but has no recall of doctrine for application divine discipline will solve the problem by forcing the believer to concentrate on the doctrine in a shattering situation. God must teach and all of us must learn a certain number of lessons through suffering.

We have a choice: to learn the easy way through Bible teaching, or to learn the hard way through suffering. These are the two systems of learning in the Church Age. Biblical instruction from the pastor is God's unlimited means of communication. The spiritual orthodox pastor who teaches the Word of God line by line, verse by verse can cover the whole realm of truth, resulting in spiritual momentum and growth of the listeners.

Divine discipline is an extended opportunity to learn from God the vital lessons of the Christian life through pains and suffering. God is extending the invitation to all believers the opportunity to learn Bible doctrine in divinely designed classroom: the local church. God will continue to provide Bible doctrine where there are positive volition believers. If there are no positive volition believers, God will withhold Bible doctrine. However, God cannot deprive any positive volition believer with the spiritual provision necessary for spiritual advancement.

God will provide them with Bible doctrine. The gathering of negative volition believers is dangerous because they have resolved to human good works which will make them the subject for collective discipline. Collective discipline is executed against negative volition believers who have rejected Bible doctrine and who have ignored the divine principles of the divine establishment.

Divine Discipline comes in forms of accident, disaster, trouble, or crisis that always shock the nation. In some occasion, God will bring the unbelievers who have rejected the Gospel, the carnal and reversionist believers in one place for an accident or disaster designed to take home those qualified for dying discipline and judgment by death. Carnality is contagious and easily affects the people surrounding our life. In the same way, spirituality is also contagious.

Collective discipline is executed to a group of people who resolved to negative volition toward God and toward His Word. Nobody becomes a victim of the decision of others. Collective discipline is executed to a group of individuals with the same negative volition or rejection of the truth happening at the same place at the same time.

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? (Rom. 6:16). If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this (1 John 5:16).

The sin unto death refers to the judgment of God for believers who are under the state of prolonged carnality and who has deliberately ignored the warnings and intensive discipline. Prolonged residence in the cosmic system without the volition to rebound could lead to sin unto death

"Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1:20). The apostle Paul mentioned Alexander and Hymenaeus who suffered the sin unto death because of their prolonged reversionism as indicated by the term blaspheme, an indication of prolonged rejection of God's plan, purpose, and will. Such believer lives in maximum rejection of Bible doctrine and habitual disobedience.

Sin unto death is the final stage of divine discipline for the carnal believer who has lived according to the power of old sin nature or flesh and who did not advance to spiritual maturity. The grace of God extends to every believer even those living in the world and for the world (1John 2:15).

Dying discipline or sin unto death is the horrible departure from time into eternity. It is the trumpet call for the carnal believer to cease every thought, action and reaction patterned after the world. Sin unto death comes after the carnal believer refuses to pay attention to intensive jolting by pain and bitterness of life. Sin unto death is the termination of the prolonged carnality or reversionism and the end of a life spend in compromises.

Not every Christian who fails in his spiritual life and continues in negative volition is removed immediately from this life. God may keep a carnal believer alive for a long time under the intensive discipline. God employs these eternally saved enemies of the cross (Phil. 3:18) as instrument of momentum (people and system testing) suffering in the lives of growing believers. The candidates for sin unto death are called cosmic Christians, who are also called:

- Enemies of God (James 4:4)
- Haters of God (John 15:23)
- Anti-Christ's (1 John 2:18)
- Hostile toward God (Rom 8:7)
- Men of flesh (1 Cor. 3:1-3)
- Doubled-minded (James 4:8)
- Agents of the devil (1 John 3:8)
- Disciples of the devil (1 John 3:10)

The only reason for God to sustain the lives of some negative believers is to use them to train the growing believers. They have failed to execute the plan of God but instead God uses them to build up the strength of others. Their "ministry" is not of a Christian's calling, and there is no reward for such work of persecuting the growing and advancing believers. They are the goats in the sheepfolds that provide the necessary physical exercises for the fattening sheep. They minister to the advancing believers by providing them the compulsory spiritual exercises. God alone has the prerogative to remove immediately or to allow a sinning believer to stay on earth for a long time.

The issue is the degree of rejection of Bible doctrine. The issue is the believer's mental attitude toward Bible doctrine not the personal commission of sin. If God is going to destroy everyone who has committed grave sins against Him, then this planet will be empty of human beings. God has already solved the problem of sins through the spiritual death of Christ on the cross. God is not going to punish people in hell because of sins which Christ has already paid for with the spiritual death of Christ.

Nobody is going to hell for sins but merely for the rejection of Bible doctrine. These cosmic believers on the verge of maximum intensive discipline may be sincere, sweet, and legalistic but they have distorted the genuine Christianity into a religion of human good works. They are moral degenerates and negative volition believers in Satan's system who have ambushed the positive believers residing in the divine system. The believer who is going in the wrong direction (prolonged carnality) unconsciously contributes to the growth of the advancing believer who is in the right direction (Psalm 76:10).

The perfect integrity of God manages the administration of sin unto death, which is designed to remove the calloused and rebellious believer from the face of the earth by means of physical death. Sin unto is a reminder that we will never get away with negative mental attitude or with any personal sin. The manner of physical death can be swift, natural or even brutal depending on the lifestyle of the carnal believer.

God has never overlooked any member of His royal family and no believer is ever ignored by the grace of God. At the perfect time God will supply the just discipline to remind the believer of what is really important in his life. Sin unto death is the exclusive domain of the carnal and immature believers who have failed to live under the Plan of Grace. The immature believer will die apart from true peace, inner happiness and tranquility.

It will be an extremely painful death. The carnal believer will die with anxiety for loved ones he will leave behind; he has false hope of eternal rewards and the wrong assurance of blessing in eternity. Such mentality is a plain wishful thinking. The carnal believer will die with too much bitterness and fear, even the fear of death. The only solution for all of these problems is Bible doctrine stored in the soul.

Sin unto death is the opposite of dying grace in which the spiritually mature believer departs from this world in tremendous expression of grace. During the dying moment of such spiritually mature believer, there is no physical pain and agony, there is no fear for facing the Lord Jesus Christ and there is no fear for the future of his loved ones who will be left behind. He is certain of his heritage impact.

There is no such thing as premature or untimely death because death will come exactly on God's appointed time it is not even one minute advance or late. Medical science cannot prolong the life of a patient; but they can only relieve the patient from some physical pains. The appointment of every person with death is certain and definite (Heb. 9:27) and nobody can delay or advance it.

Though God may allow the manner of death as decided by the volition of a person, the time of death is His exclusive prerogative. The sin unto death may occur in a swift and shocking manner or in prolonged and anticipated sickness. A spiritually mature believer and a carnal believer may die in the same viral epidemic or bomb explosion but the difference is in their spiritual status. The mature believer will die under the dying grace (maximum blessing) and the carnal believer under sin unto death (maximum discipline).

Both will die in the same manner but the spiritually mature believer dies in tremendous blessings while the reversionist dies in severe pain and fear.

The first died in confident anticipation while the latter in absolute hopelessness and anxiety of seeing the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. The life of the believer who is going to die the sin unto death lives continually in all or any of the following:

- Rejection of God and His Bible Doctrine
- Rejection of God's plan and His purpose
- Irreverence, sacrilege and profanity
- Lovers of the world and things of the world
- Acceptance of human viewpoints

Every believer has the potential to grow and advance in the spiritual life or on the other hand become a potential collaborator of the devil though he is a member of the royal family of God. Believers without Bible doctrine can easily become instruments of Satan for inflicting sufferings to advancing believers (Acts 20:29-30).

The devil will use the negative volition of the carnal believers to distract the concentration of those advancing towards maturity. Spiritual maturity is the gateway for glorification of Jesus Christ since it puts the believer in maximum capacity for receiving the blessings of time and eternity.

The blessings that we receive because of imputed eternal life and divine righteousness magnifies spiritual maturity which glorifies Jesus Christ in time and in eternity. We glorify God by the blessings we and receive not by the things we do or give to God. Divine glory is independent from the created beings.

God did not leave the Christians in their spiritual childhood without any protection against self-induced misery and the continued enticement of the world. God has provided every believer with the permanent residency of the Holy Spirit, the incomparable resources of Bible doctrine, and the immovable fortress of every believer, the divine dynasphere.

The phrase "power and grace" of God refers to the ten problem-solving devices available and usable only inside the divine dynasphere, which are:

- Rebound
- Filling of the Holy Spirit
- Faith-Rest exercise
- Grace orientation
- Doctrinal orientation
- Personal sense of destiny
- Personal love for God the Father
- Impersonal love for mankind
- Sharing the happiness of God
- Occupation with Christ

The believer in spiritual childhood will learn to avoid making bad decisions and obey God little by little as he acquires Bible doctrine in his soul. There is no instant spiritual maturity and there is no instant obedience. There is no progress or spiritual growth that will ever occur without the systematic and progressive intake of Bible doctrine.

The believer in spiritual childhood has basic problems that can be easily solved by basic Bible doctrine. The believer in spiritual adulthood has triple problems that can be easily solved by advance Bible doctrine which will be our point of discussion in the continuation of this study in the other booklet, "The Suffering of Spiritual Adulthood".

People are miserable because of their unrealistic desires:

- They intensely want what they do not have
- They intensely not wanting what they have
- They intensely want what they don't need

There are five categories of suffering for believers:

- Self-induced misery: (spiritual childhood)
- Divine discipline: (spiritual childhood)
- Preventive suffering: (spiritual adulthood)
- Momentum testing: (spiritual adulthood)
- Evidence testing: (spiritual adulthood)

Self induced misery is the most prevalent suffering:

- Unbelievers fully and utterly suffer from it
- Immature believers regularly suffer from it
- Growing believers normally suffers from it
- Mature believers occasionally suffer from it

Types of self made miseries:

- Self-Imposed misery: voluntary assumed
- Self-Induced misery: voluntary acquired
- Self-Indulged misery: voluntary submission
- Self-Incited misery: voluntary provocation
- Self-Inflicted misery: voluntary doing it

Categories of spiritual mindset:

- The renewed mind (Romans 12:1)
- The obedient mind (2 Cor. 8:12)
- The ready mind (2 Cor. 8:19)
- The sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7)
- The sober mind (Titus 2:6)

Animosity or bitterness has:

- Its cause: (Heb. 12:15): inadequate knowledge and understanding of God.
- Its curse: self-made miseries beyond limits
- Its course: around the ocean of unforgiveness
- Its consequences: infinite unbearable sufferings
- Its cure: available in the Bible doctrine

We all have great opportunity to be miserable (Jas. 5:1):

- When you try harder to get what you want
- When you cannot accept your failure or defeat
- When you cannot get what you desire
- When you refuse to give up on something
- When you refuse to surrender to someone
- When you are holding tightly on what you have
- When you are possess by someone or something

The gate ways to bitterness and miserable life:

- Disappointed with yourself (it means that you still believe in yourself)
- Discouraged with yourself (it means that you don't believe God)
- Disheartened with yourself (it means you that you still trust yourself)
- Disillusioned with yourself (it means you still hope to be better by your effort)

Categories of cosmic mindset (1 Peter 1:13)

- The high-minded, arrogant, and egocentric mind (1 Tim. 6:17, 2 Tim. 3:4)
- The worldly and materialistic mind (Romans 8:5-7, 1 Cor. 3:1-4)
- The impulsive, aggressive and easily retreating mind (2 Cor. 9:2)
- The deceived and disillusioned mind (Gal. 5:10)
- The empty and manipulative mind (1 Peter 1:8)
- The earthly focus mind (Col. 3:2b)
- The panic mind (2 Thess. 2:2, Heb. 12:27)
- The defiled mind (Titus 1:15-16)
- The unstable mind (James 1:8, 4:8)
- The undiscerning mind (Romans 1:28)

#### Cause of self-induced miseries:

- Faulty thinking (cosmic mindset)
- No metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul (MBD)
- No spiritual common sense (NSCS)
- Bad decision from position of weakness
- Deceived by cosmic scheming
- No spiritual discernment (NSD)
- Misusing the Word of God
- Not applying the Word of God to life
- Build up of negative mental attitude sins
- Reaction to injustice or ill-treatment
- Not forgiving self and others
- Not forgetting the past (living in the past)
- Sowing discord and hatred
- Rejection of truth, reality and virtues
- Violating divine establishments
- Worrying what man cannot control
- Unrealistic inspirations and expectations
- Unreachable aspirations
- Pushing your own plans for your life

#### Your own plans for your life include:

- Enormous amount of miseries, pains, agony, bitterness, frustrations, heartaches and tears
- Cosmic operating systems of evil
- Divine discipline and curses
- Loss of blessings in time and eternity
- Loss of spiritual capacity and power
- Consider poor, naked and worthless before God
- Guarantee failure in the angelic conflict

What God thinks of me: The Biblical standard of spiritual self-esteem also known as spiritual identity. Spiritual identity is what God thinks of who and what you are.

- Who and what we are in Christ
- What God is doing in us

#### Self-made miseries come whenever the believers:

- Reject the will of God: (that is to follow human or Satanic will)
- Reject the viewpoint will of God: (that is to think human viewpoint)
- Reject the operational will of God: (that is to use human system and solutions)
- Reject the geographical will of God: (that is to choose the cosmic system)
- Reject the directive will of God (that is the direct commands or instructions of God)
- Follow the permissive will of God (that is human will rejecting the warning of God)
- Follow the overruling will of God: (that is to choose human will or satanic will but intervene by God)

#### Timely principles to consider:

- Suffering points to the grace of God and to His sovereign operation of justice (job 41:10-11).
- Your suffering is important to God but you are not exclusive object of His concern (Job 38:26-).
- We have to advance beyond our occupation with our sufferings to know and appreciate the greatness of God. Never allow your suffering to overwhelm you but use the divine solutions.
- No problem catches God by surprise and God has a solution for every problem and difficulty.
- The link between God's solution and your problems and failures is knowledge of the Word. The blessing and the solution are always there.

#### The plan of God controls the will of God for the believer.

- God directs us to operate within the categories of His will.
- God permits us to operate outside these categories.
- God overrules in the sense He makes all things work together for good in our lives.

Misery is always:

- Self-made (you alone are making it to yourself)
- Self-maintained (you feed it with your cosmic mental attitude and human viewpoint)
- Self-multiplied (you make it grow, develop and give birth to more sins through your carnality and continuous rejection of Bible doctrine)

Self-magnified (you alone are releasing it from the bestial zoo of unbelief, lusts and bitterness.

What I think of myself: False standards of human self-esteem also known as human identity. Human identity is what man thinks of who and what you are.

- How we look
- What we have
- What we can do
- Where we are
- Who are with us

Human identity has no place:

- Grace orientation
- Doctrinal orientation
- Volitional orientation

Human identity revolves in self-concept: the fake standard of the approbation lust which seeks the approval of men by issues of false worth. The Christians seek approbation of men through:

- Appearance
- Abilities
- Achievements
- Assets
- authority

Erroneous thinking patterns share some common traits:

- Unstable emotion – use to justify anything
- Irresponsible attitude
- Rationalization
- Ambivalence: no real desire to solve the problem
- Exclusion of self from bible study
- Perfection –not satisfy for the result of doctrine
- Recalcitrance – no real interest of Bible doctrine
- Superiority – deny his problems
- Display – concern for what others think of them
- Resistance resists the continual admission of sin
- Fear of isolation – left by friends
- Disenchantment – gone after hit by doctrine
- Reluctance – to make operational changes
- Substitution – his own for God's plan
- Selective listening – only for what he like
- Lack of receptivity
- Lack of effort and initiative
- Victimization: demanding reward from God
- Blaming others
- Impatience and irritability
- Inflexibility
- Cursing – misery manufacturing machines
- Independence from God
- Disparagement – just façade and pretense
- Blowhard – never learn anything
- Failure to endure adversity
- Anticipation – somebody to fix it for them

(To be continued on "The Suffering of Spiritual Adulthood")

