



Thank you for downloading the
CQ Rewind - Summary Only Version!

Each week, the **Summary Only** version provides you with approximately 4 pages of brief excerpts from the program, along with Scripture citations.

If you would like to receive the
CQ Rewind FULL EDITION at no charge, simply sign up at
www.ChristianQuestions.com.

The **FULL EDITION** of approximately 10-12 pages includes comprehensive excerpts from the program, fully quoted Scriptures, graphics, illustrations, and even extra study points that time prevented us from covering during the live program.



Do I Really Have to Suffer for Christ?

1 Peter 4:12-13: (NASB) ¹²*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing...*

The very definition of "Christian" is one who follows Christ. As Christians, we all know this and we all agree that it is of paramount importance. The big question is what exactly does it mean to follow Christ? What is our life supposed to look like? What does God want FROM us through Christ and what does God want FOR us through Christ? Is it different for everyone? How do we know if we are on track? What role does trouble play? Do we really have to suffer for Christ?

Let's try and figure out how this whole Christian thing works. Matthew 16:24-26

...follow
...deny yourself
...take up your cross
...follow Jesus

these are a *reset* of our personal priorities to the eternal!

How do we know if we are following from the heart or following in name only? James 1:2-4: (NASB) ²*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various **trials**, <3986> ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

Trials/Temptations: Strongs #3986 peirasmov peirasmos pi-ras-mos'; a putting to proof (by experiment [of good], experience [of evil], solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity:

So, there is a mechanism in place to measure our Christianity - the proving is in our daily lives, shown by the tests we go through and our responses.

Elements of Christianity revealed thus far: Self-denial, Self-sacrifice, Jesus' footsteps, Faith to be proven. The result? Endurance!

BECOMING A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS A CHOICE - NOT A REACTION!

What does "proving of faith" look like?

Luke 14:25-33: (NASB) ²⁵*Now large crowds were going along with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶if anyone comes to me, and does not **hate** <3404> his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my **disciple** <3101>.*

Put your life in perspective and your priorities in order.

Hate: Strongs #3404 miseo (mis-eh'-o); by extension, to love less

Disciple: Strongs #3101 mathetes (math-ay-tes'); a learner, i.e. pupil

This choice requires thought as well as acknowledgement of future challenges:

²⁷*Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?... ³¹Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?... ³³So then, none of you can be my disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.*

The tower represents the challenge of building a spiritual life. Can I really complete this after counting the costs? Meeting another king in battle is the challenge of fighting the enemy. The spiritual enemy is big and strong...so think it through in terms of your willingness to dedicate yourself to finding your strength in Christ.

The Lord may give us different experiences based on our stage in Christ. Typically, the more mature Christian experience can be more difficult.



What God wants *from* us: **TO BE A CHRISTIAN IS TO LEARN TO DETECT AND DEFEAT RATIONALIZATION!** Mark 8:31-33: Peter was rationalizing and Jesus immediately corrected him. Our focus must be spiritual, not earthly.

What God wants *for* us: **USE THE FIGHT AGAINST RATIONALIZATION TO FEED OUR SPIRITUAL REALIZATION! We are truly different than those around us!** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: If you have been *bought with a price*, you now belong to whoever bought you. Jesus bought us, so we belong to him if we are Christians. We must realize that spiritual maturity is always being tested. Acknowledge where you are and grow to the next step in your maturity.

Romans 6:15-18: The options presented here are "either/or." Have you made a commitment to step out of sin and into the righteousness of Christ?

What God wants *from* us: **TO STAND FEARLESSLY FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL!**

Matthew 10:26-31: We know that most of us are never *truly* fearless. Being fearless in this sense means you have fear and are acting *in spite of* that fear, using it as a motivation. We need to have faith that God will overrule. Many times our witness to others has nothing to do with what we tell them and more to do with how we spend our extra time, where we go, even what jokes we laugh at. These are all part of the application of standing fearlessly for Christ.

What God wants *for* us: **TO STAND, HAVING BEEN FAITHFUL BEFORE GOD!**

Matthew 10:32: We should be living at a higher, more developed spiritual level. When we stand for Jesus, he stands for us before God. Pay attention to our priorities.

A caller suggests: 2 Corinthians 4:17: (NIV) For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

What God wants *from* us: **TO WITHSTAND PERSECUTION WITH COURAGE!**

What is persecution?

Given: Strongs #1377 diwkw dioko dee-o'-ko; to pursue (literally or figuratively); by implication, to persecute: – ensue, follow (after), given to, (suffer) persecute(-ion), press forward.

We normally see this in a negative way, though it can be actually used positively: Romans 12:13: (KJV) *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given <1377> to hospitality.*

In the same way people can negatively pursue us as Christians, we should pursue (chase after) being hospitable.

We are led by example: John 16:31-33

We all must go through this: 2 Timothy 3:12: (KJV) *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution <1377>.*

Persecution is not always dramatic. It can be the way people talk to you or avoid you. It can even be from other Christians who see things differently. That is surprising but true. Make sure we are not persecuting others.

A specific example of a dramatic persecution: Luke 21:12-19

Saeed Abedini is an Iranian American Christian pastor imprisoned in Iran. He has been detained in Iran since the summer of 2012 and incarcerated in Evin Prison since September 2012. On January 27, 2013, he was sentenced to eight years in prison, reportedly on charges of undermining national security through his Christian evangelical activities in Iran in the early 2000's.



In chains for Christ, Saeed Abedini's letter from prison

- When I heard that empty Christmas settings were placed during Christmas as a reminder of my imprisonment and those imprisoned for Christ, tears of joy filled my eyes. I was able to share about this with other prisoners, and they were shocked by the love and support we have for each other in Jesus. I told them how in the Bible we were all considered brothers and sisters despite race, color, or nationality and we were able to share in each other's pains. This comes from our Lord. The word of God says when we are persecuted for our faith, we are to count it all joy. When I think*



that all of these trials and persecutions are being recorded in heaven for me, my heart is filled with complete joy. The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Without the joy of the Lord, we cannot live. It is this joy in our life that gives us the strength to continue in this life. Without strength, we cannot continue the work of the Lord and without joy there is no strength.

What God wants for us: USE PERSECUTION AS BLESSING AND INSPIRATION TOWARDS PURSUIT!

Paul led by example: Philippians 3:12-14: (NKJV) ¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I **press<1377>** on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³Brethren, 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, ¹⁴I **press<1377>** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

This one thing I do - he was laser-focused on moving forward no matter the circumstance. Persecution can help us become focused. It can bring us down or help us focus. Sometimes our maturity level will determine which outcome we choose.

We are blessed for our endurance: Matthew 5:10-12: At this time in our country, Christian persecution is subtle and could be just the way we are spoken of or treated differently. It is still providing valuable lessons.

What God wants from us: TO UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT SUFFERING!

What is "suffering?"

Suffer: Strongs #3958 pascw pascho pas'-kho;
to experience a sensation or impression (usually painful)

Jesus NEEDED to suffer! Hebrews 5:8: (KJV) *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he **suffered <3958>**.*

Was Jesus ever not going to be obedient? He pleased the Father from the beginning of Creation. But as a man, he had a will of his own. The obedience was him making every aspect of his own will to be in conjunction with the will of his Father to accomplish his mission.

He learned this through experience.

Matthew 16:21: (KJV) *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and **suffer <3958>** many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

Jesus was not "suffering" (feeling pain and turmoil) every day of his life. He was sacrificing his own will every day. In many cases it was a joyful experience - he was experiencing "being offered up" in sacrifice every day of his life!

How are we being offered up every day for Christ? It doesn't have to physically hurt.

Everybody suffers as a result of sin. But if we are true Christians, the reasons we experience suffering should be different, as should our attitudes.

Suffering MUST be for the right reasons and with the right attitude!

Philippians 1:29: (NASB) *For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in him, but also to **suffer <3958>** for his sake.*

1 Peter 2:19-23: (NASB) ¹⁹For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. ²¹For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in his steps, ²²who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth; ²³and while being reviled, he did not revile in return; while suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to Him who judges righteously;



Look at how Jesus was reviled, insulted, mistreated, abused...and he was without sin! That is our model. If Jesus can go through these things, we certainly can get through the little things in our lives.

What God wants *for* us: **TO SUFFER WITH CHRIST FOR A SHORT TIME AND THEREFORE BE GLORIFIED WITH HIM ETERNALLY!**

We must learn to share each other's suffering: 1 Corinthians 12:26

Suffering for Christ is a "family trait" we should share together: Romans 8:14-18: We are called to be children of God, to be joint heirs with Christ, and to suffer for a short time. Romans 6:3-7

What about some real life stories of suffering for Christ?

Special Guest: Leah Ruggirello *Leah is part of the CQ Family and just returned from a trip to Ghana, Africa. In the program she tells the story of three individuals with unbelievable faith under difficult circumstances. Please refer to the CQ Rewind FULL EDITION for more details.*



Radical obedience and urgency, "Radical" (book), by David Platt

- *We have a master who demands radical obedience. A mission that warrants radical urgency, and we do not have time to waste our lives living out a "Christian spin" on the American dream.*

What about reproach and tribulation? ...You mean there's more?

Reproach: Strong's #3679 oneidizo (on-i-did'-zo); to defame, i.e. rail at, chide, taunt:

This is what the Pharisees did to Jesus.

Tribulation: Strong's #2347 thlipsis (thlip'-sis); pressure (literally or figuratively)

What God wants *from* us: **TO WITHSTAND THE ONSLAUGHTS OF REPROACH AND TRIBULATION!**

To be reproached may be one of the hardest tests of faith - after all it is your reputation.

Matthew 5:11: (KJV) *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile <3679> you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

1 Peter 4:12-16: Do we really have to suffer for Christ? Yes, and we should actually look forward to the growth and opportunity that comes if we are suffering for Christ.

On the last night before his crucifixion, Jesus was giving his disciples all the tools they would need so they could have peace, because severe tribulation, pressure and challenges would follow.

John 16:33: (KJV) *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation <2347>: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Acts 14:22: (KJV) *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation <2347> enter into the kingdom of God.*

2 Thessalonians 1:4: (NIV) *Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials <2347> you are enduring.*

Hebrews 10:33: (NIV) *Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution <2347>; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.*

What God wants *for* us: **A TESTED FAITH MORE VALUABLE THAN GOLD, WHICH BRINGS INNER PEACE AND DIRECTION!**

1 Peter 1:4-7:

*So, do I really have to suffer for Christ?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*