



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: (KJV) ²⁴*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. ²⁶For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

...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: Strong's #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!



What does "proving of faith" look like?

Luke 14:25-33: (NASB) ²⁵Now 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: Strong's #3404 *miseo* (mis-eh'-o); by extension, to love less

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

We are always learners, even as mature Christians.

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

²⁷Whoever 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.

 **Worshipping ourselves, "Radical," (book) by David Platt**

- If we form Jesus to look like us and be who we want him to be, then even when we gather together and sing our praises and lift our hands, the reality is that we are not worshipping the Jesus of the Bible; we are worshipping and singing to ourselves.



So, what does God want *from* us?
What does He want *for* us?





What God wants from us:

Mark 8:31-33: (NASB) ³¹And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²And he was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning around and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.

To be a Christian is to learn to detect and defeat rationalization!

Peter was rationalizing and Jesus immediately corrected him. Our focus must be spiritual, not earthly.



What God wants for us:

We are truly different than those around us!

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: (NASB) ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

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: (NASB) ¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! ¹⁶Do 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? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

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:



Matthew 10:26-31: (NASB) ²⁶Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ²⁷What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

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:





Matthew 10:32: (NASB) *Therefore everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven.*

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 does it mean to be persecuted?

What God wants *from* us:



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: (NRSV) ³¹*Jesus answered them, do you now believe?* ³²*The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.* ³³*I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!*



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: (NASB) ¹²*But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. ¹³It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. ¹⁴So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; ¹⁵for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. ¹⁶But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, ¹⁷and you will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸Yet not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your endurance you will gain your lives.*

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:





Paul led by example:

Philippians 3:12-14: (NKJV) ¹²*Not 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.* ¹³*Brethren, 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,* ¹⁴***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: (NASB) ¹⁰*Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* ¹¹*Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.* ¹²*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

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:



What is "suffering?"

Suffer: Strong's #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.*

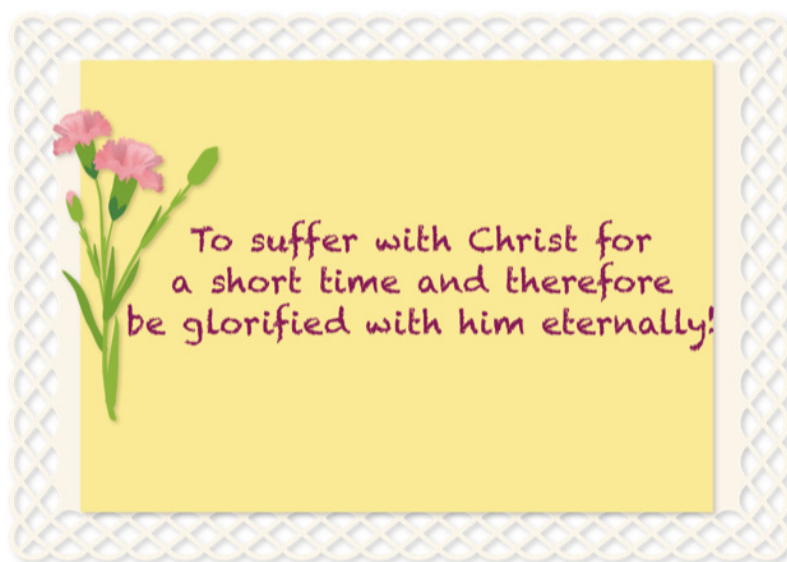
1 Peter 2:19-23: (NASB) ¹⁹*For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.* ²⁰*For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.* ²¹*For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in his steps,* ²²*who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth;* ²³*and 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:



We must learn to share each other's suffering:

1 Corinthians 12:26: (NASB) ²⁶*And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*



Steel under pressure, Saeed Abedini's letter from prison

- I always wanted God to make me a godly man. I did not realize that in order to become a godly man, we need to become like steel under pressure. It is a hard process of warm and cold to make steel. This is the process of my life today. One day I am told I will be freed and allowed to see my family and kids on Christmas, which was a lie, and the next day I am told I will hang for my faith in Jesus. One day there are intense pains after beatings and interrogations. The next day they are nice to you and offer you candy. These hot and cold days only make you a man of steel for moving forward and expanding His kingdom. I'm looking forward to the day when I can see all of you who are behind me with your prayers and to embrace you in my arms. Thank you for the love that you have shown me.*

Suffering for Christ is a "family trait" we should share together:

Romans 8:14-18: (NRSV) ¹⁴*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, Abba! Father! ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.*

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: (NASB) ³*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection, ⁶knowing this, that our old self was crucified with him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷for he who has died is freed from sin.*



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.

Leah's story:



I had the opportunity to travel to Ghana to help out with a leadership seminar. Those who attended were mainly church leaders sponsored by a religious organization to fly from all over Africa and other neighboring countries. They participated in a several day seminar where they were mentored by church leaders from the United States. As a 29-year old female who has no experience in leadership of a church, my role there was simply to help in any way needed, which included anything from creating name tags and being the photographer to spiritual encouragement and discussion with those at the seminar.

I had the very humbling opportunity of experiencing a taste of how the rest of the world lives outside of the United States, particularly some in very poor and very unfortunate circumstances. Many things that I saw and experienced

really helped to open my eyes to some of the physical suffering that takes place in the rest of the world. It has also helped me to be very, very thankful for what I have living in America, as we have so much compared to them.

But what I would really like to talk about are some of the incredible examples of Christian faith of those who I met in Ghana, as they are living examples of what it means to suffer for righteousness' sake.

The first story is about is a man who came to Ghana from the Islam Republic of Pakistan.



He converted to Christianity several years earlier. Pakistan is a country that is 95-97% Muslim, the rest being Hindu and Christian. If you are not Muslim in Pakistan, it is very obvious, (mainly because Muslims openly pray five times a day even when at work) and you are physically persecuted for it. This man has been horribly beaten by mobs of angry Muslims and has also been fired from jobs for being a Christian. His children are ridiculed and picked on at school for being Christian. Most people in Pakistan who convert to Christianity eventually flee the country for Thailand or Sri Lanka to escape the religious persecution. We asked this man why he didn't do the same to protect himself, and his response was, "If I leave, who will preach the gospel of Christ?" I was speechless. This man and his family suffer physically, socially and financially every day and they do it joyfully in the name of Christ. I have never seen that kind of faith before - the kind that's willing to endure those things to help spread the Gospel. We don't see things like that in the United States because we are not persecuted for being Christian. How thankful we should be!



The next example is a man who was not able to be at the seminar but had planned on attending. He is from Tanzania, which is part of eastern Africa just south of Kenya. This man used to be Muslim but converted to Christianity. Tanzania doesn't have nearly the population of Muslims as Pakistan does, but like the gentleman from Pakistan, he has suffered quite a bit for openly converting to Christianity. The reason he wasn't able to make it to the seminar was because members of his own family who are Muslim burned his house down for being a Christian. His own family!

One other amazing example was a man from Ghana, who reminded me of a modern day Apostle Paul. He also used to be Muslim, and in fact, he used to be a high ranking official in his organization that actively participated in and sought ways to persecute Christians. He started researching Christianity more because he wanted to find reasons to persecute and physically harm them. Well, in his quest to expose Christianity, he actually started to believe the teachings and eventually converted! I'm not sure of his experiences afterwards because he didn't wish to discuss them, although I cannot help but assume he went through some of same persecutions that the others did. I thought that was just such an incredible story of how the Lord worked in his life to bring him to Christianity.

There were many others I met who were such wonderful examples of living with gratitude and with joy, even in very unpleasant circumstances. They rejoiced to learn about God's plan for the world of mankind, even though many of them lived in such horrible conditions. So, not only was it a wonderful experience to see the faith and strength of some who suffer daily for righteousness' sake, but also to witness many be happy and joyful even in the worst of circumstances. It makes me realize how little, or nothing, I have to ever complain about.



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 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: (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, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴If you are **reviled** <3679> for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*

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:



1 Peter 1:4-7: (NASB) ⁴*to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,* ⁵*who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* ⁶*In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,* ⁷*so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

The heat of trial makes all of this growth possible. Our experiences as Christians are to have our characters changed into the likeness of Christ, not of ourselves.

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

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*





Part of living our lives and sacrificing as a Christian is the intentional act of growing up spiritually.

This is a choice - no one forces us to do it - but the Scriptures tell us we are expected to do it:

Hebrews 5:12-14: (NRSV) ¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food; ¹³for everyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil.

Hebrews 13:7-9,17: (NRSV) ⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food, which have not benefited those who observe them... ¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing--for that would be harmful to you.

2 Timothy 3:12-17: (NRSV) ¹²Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. ¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

Philippians 1:27-30: (NRSV) ²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Temptation: Strong's #3985 peirazo (pi-rad'-zo); to test (objectively), i.e. endeavor, scrutinize, entice, discipline: KJV-- assay, examine, go about, prove, tempt (-er), try.

1 Corinthians 10:13: (KJV) There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to **be tempted <3985>** above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Galatians 6:1: (KJV) Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be **tempted <3985>**.

James 1:13,14: (KJV) ¹³Let no man say when he is **tempted <3985>**, I am **tempted <3985>** of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴But every man is **tempted <3985>**, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

James 1:12: (KJV) Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.



A second Greek word:

Temptation: Strong's #3986 peirasmos (pi-ras-mos'); discipline or provocation; by implication, adversity

Matthew 26:41: (KJV) *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into **temptation** <3986>: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Acts 20:19: (KJV) *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and **temptations** <3986>, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:*

James 1:2-4: (NIV) ²*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face **trials** <3986> of many kinds,* ³*because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.* ⁴*Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

So, seek to live sacrificially. Focus on those things that provoke Christ-likeness and walk away from those things that provoke worldliness:

Colossians 3:1-11: (NRSV) ¹*So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.* ²*Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth,* ³*for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.* ⁴*When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.* ⁵*Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry).* ⁶*On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.* ⁷*These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.* ⁸*But now you must get rid of all such things--anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth.* ⁹*Do not lie to one another; seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices* ¹⁰*and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.* ¹¹*In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!*