

Sufferings Part 2: Until Christ Be Formed in You

Key Verse: Galatians 4:19 (KJV)

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

I. Review: The Perspective on Suffering & Travail

- **Perspective is everything** — especially in dealing with people.
- Our anchor passage: *Galatians 4:8-29*
- Life-changing focus: *Galatians 4:19*
 - Paul as a spiritual parent, in **travail** until Christ is fully formed in believers.
 - His pain is purposeful — aimed at conformity to God's Word.

Key Truths from Part 1:

- Travail is **ongoing** — not a one-time event.
 - It affects us **mentally, physically, and spiritually**.
 - It happens both **for others** and **within ourselves** as we align with God.
 - Travail ends when God's Word is fulfilled in a situation. (*Goal accomplished*)
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II. What Does It Mean to Be Formed?

- "*Be formed*" = to have a mind and life in complete harmony with Christ.
 - Greek word *morphoō* (Gal. 4:19): shaping until Christ's image is impressed on our hearts.
- If we are not being formed into Christ, we are being formed into *something else*.
- Formation is needed in **every situation** we confront.

III. Modern Analogies: Travail Explained

1. Due Date

- Don't put God on your schedule. (*Hebrews 6:12* — through faith and patience we inherit promises.)

2. Aborting the Process

- Happens through **doubt** — quitting before the promise manifests.

3. Epidural (Pain Relief)

- In natural birth: pain-blocking injection.
- Spiritually: represents a **miracle** or a **heavenly deliverance** where pain is absent. (*Revelation 21:1-4*)

4. Lamaze (Prepared Coping)

- A method that lessens pain through **training and preparation**.
- Spiritually:
 - Learn *God's methods* (Scripture-based strategies).
 - Build *confidence* in God's ability.
 - Respond rather than react in suffering.
 - Increase peace and comfort through the Word.
 - *Practice* spiritual disciplines (faith, prayer, endurance).

Goal: Don't just cope — **overcome!** (*Romans 8:37*)

IV. God's Perspective on Suffering

(*Purpose: To shape us and reveal His glory*)

1. Suffering = Pathway to Glory

- *Romans 8:17-18* — We suffer with Christ to be glorified with Him. Present sufferings are nothing compared to coming glory.

2. Suffering Tests and Purifies Faith

- *1 Peter 1:6-7* — Trials test faith like fire tests gold, leading to praise and glory at Christ's return.

3. Suffering is Our Calling

- 1 Peter 2:21 — Christ suffered and left us an example to follow.

4. Suffering Brings Blessing

- 1 Peter 3:14 — Suffering for righteousness leads to blessing.

5. Suffering Produces Growth

- Romans 5:3-5 — Suffering → Endurance → Character → Hope.

6. Suffering Brings Comfort

- 2 Corinthians 1:5 — As we share in Christ's sufferings, we also share in His comfort.

7. Suffering is Normal for Believers

- 1 Peter 4:12-14 — Trials are not strange; they make us partners with Christ and carriers of God's glory.

V. Application: Our Response to Travail & Suffering

- Embrace travail as part of **spiritual formation**.
- Engage in spiritual "*Lamaze*" — prepare, train, and practice.
- Build endurance through the Word and prayer.
- Remember: *suffering ends when God's promise is fulfilled*.
- Trust God's timing (*no due date pressure*).
- Reject doubt (*avoid spiritual abortion*).
- Rejoice even in trials (*because glory is ahead!*).

Key Declaration:

"I will endure spiritual travail until Christ is fully formed in me and in those I intercede for. I choose not to abort the process, but to overcome, trusting God's promise of glory and comfort."

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