

RESUME VIRTUES VS. FUNERAL VIRTUES

A 5 POINT GUIDE FOR CHRISTIAN SUFFERING

Suffering is:

Not a surprise

Identification with Christ

Blessed

Refinement

Possible because of God's character

SUFFERING IS NOT A SURPRISE VS. 12

1 PETER 4:12-16

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

LUKE 6:26

Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false
prophets.

**SUFFERING IS IDENTIFICATION WITH
CHRIST VS. 13**

1 PETER 4:12-16

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

HENRI BLOCHER, Evil and the Cross

We have no other position then at the foot of the cross. After we have been there, we are given the answer of the wisdom of God, which incenses the advocates of optimistic theodicies or of tragic philosophies.

HENRI BLOCHER, Evil and the Cross

God's answer is evil turned back upon itself, conquered by the ultimate degree of love in the fulfillment of justice. This answer consoles us and summons us. It allows us to wait for the coming of the crucified conqueror. You'll wipe away the tears from every face, soon.

SUFFERING IS BLESSED VS. 14

1 PETER 4:12-16

¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

1 PETER 4:12-16

¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

SUFFERING IS REFINEMENT VS. 17

1 PETER 4: 17-19

For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

**SUFFERING IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF
GOD'S CHARACTER VS. 19**

1 PETER 4: 17-19

¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

SO WHAT?

IDENTIFICATION WITH JESUS

ARMANDO VALLADARES, *Against All Hope:
A Memoir of Life in Castro's Gulag*

*Those cries of the executed patriots—"Long live
Christ the King! Down with Communism!" —
awakened me to a new life as they echoed through
the two-hundred-year-old moats of the fortress.*

ARMANDO VALLADARES, *Against All Hope:
A Memoir of Life in Castro's Gulag*

The cries became such a potent and stirring symbol that by 1963 the men condemned to death were gagged before being carried down to be shot. The jailers feared those shouts. They could not afford to allow even that last courageous cry from those about to die.

ARMANDO VALLADARES, *Against All Hope:
A Memoir of Life in Castro's Gulag*

That rebellious, defiant gesture at the supreme moment, that show of bravery and integrity by those who were about to die, could easily become a bad example for the soldiers. It might even make them think about what they were doing.