***The Suffering of Spiritual Combat, No. 1 - PH29-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:28-30***

Please open your Bibles to the book of Philippians once more as we conclude the first chapter by looking at the last three verses in Philippians 1:28-30. The apostle Paul has been stressing for us the importance of Bible doctrine and the necessity of doctrine for the believer in his soul. Therefore, he has called upon the believers for a unity of spirit and soul. This unity is to be achieved through the intake of doctrine. The purpose of this unity is to enable us to present a true and effective witness to the world as the body of Christ. This witness involves the angelic warfare which surrounds all believers. We live in the age of grace, and the age of grace is characterized by the fact that the demonic host, under Satan's direction, is constantly and continually in warfare against God, seeking to undermine and to frustrate and to neutralize all that the Lord will do for you as an individual, and all that the Lord will do through you for the unbelieving world.

This warfare is against frightening spiritual adversaries who have great power and great guile. Many times we are guilty as believers of not taking our opponents and our adversaries very seriously. The reason for that is because we can't see the demonic world. Therefore, we tend to be inclined to presume that that world does not exist. Occasionally, it comes to our minds, and we remember it, "Oh, yeah. It happens to be out there," but somehow it does not seem to come into the orbit of our lives, and into a practical effect upon what we are doing. The reason for that is because many Christians are so out of it relative to spiritual participation. However, the devil has no interest in what they're doing, and spends no time on them.

However, for believers who are going on in the Word, and for believers who know something about the Word of God, there is also the fact (the condition) that you should be aware of that the demonic host is characterized by a deep guile and a deep deceit, and subtlety is the keynote of the devil's operation. Therefore, he will work in areas of your life in a subtle way, all the while promoting in you a smugness concerning his powers and concerning the reality of the demonic world so that you don't take your enemy seriously. In combat of any kind, that is the first step to personal defeat--just not to take your enemy seriously. Underestimating your enemy is the sure road to defeat. Satan knows this, and he plays this constantly. So it is not unusual for Christians to suddenly wake up one day and find that some area of their lives has collapsed around their ears. They thought they knew so much about the Word of God; they knew so much about living; and, they had advanced so far in their personal experience, and all the while, the devil was playing you for a sucker.

That is what this passage is dealing with--the reality of the angelic conflict that swirls around you 24 hours a day. Our adversaries are frightening. They have great power, and they have great cleverness. Because this warfare does exist, it means that somebody is going to experience suffering. It means that casualties are possible. Some of us had parents who had the experience of coming to a time in their lives where they had to look us in the eye and bid us farewell as they sent us off to war. When they sent us off to war, they realized that some people are going to end up as casualties. They were aware of the fact, if they were realistic, that that might be the last time they might ever see that son that they were sending off. Everybody understands that, and nobody has to explain it. That's very clear when it comes to a military experience during the time of war.

Yet, as believers, we are constantly missing the fact that this is exactly the case that exists for you and me all the time relative to the angelic conflict. We are under fire, and we are prone to get shot down. The Bible says that about the time you think you have it made, particularly if you have been the beneficiary of a spiritual heritage, and you think you can ride on the coattails of that heritage that you have inherited through parents, and through the fact that you were surrounded with a church that was doing its job for you, and you have not realized that unless that heritage becomes a personal possession of your own, that you enter into a positive response, you're going to get shot down, with your heritage and all. When you stand in the debris that surrounds you, you're going to wish that you had done it the easy way, and had gone along with the provisions that God has given, the equipment that God has given for you to protect yourself in the angelic conflict, for you to function in the battle in a victorious way, instead of having to start to rebuild after the defeat, and start all over again.

But thank God that, because grace is the keynote of God's dealing with us, whatever the disaster may be to which you and I on any occasion may fall, grace always gives us a way back to rebuild and to reweave. But it takes a great deal of understanding and of responding to the Word of God to be able to rebuild. It is a long way back. So, we as believers are all in this spiritual combat. The same combat that engaged the apostle Paul; the same one that was hazardous to him spiritually: and, the same one that brought suffering to him, is the one that is hazardous to you and me and will bring suffering to us.

**Philippians 1:28**

So, we begin reading this morning in Philippians 1:28 against that background, where Paul says, "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." Remember that in verse 27, he has called upon the believers to have a conduct which is befitting their role as members of the body of Christ. He has called upon them, whether he is with them or whether he is absent from them, to see to it that they stand fast with one united human spirit and one united soul. And this is only possible as the result of having regularly taken in sound doctrine. The result will be that they would strive together for the faith of the gospel--the beginning of God's revelation with salvation, and all that that connotes beyond that in the Christian life.

Against that background, he continues and says, "In nothing terrified by your adversaries." Our spiritual adversaries are something to be afraid of. The only protection we have is the protection that is supplied for us in the Word of God which we are going to be concentrating on over the next few sessions. The apostle Paul says, "You are to respect the capacities of the enemy to do you injury. But on the other hand, you need not be in terror of them if you have taken the provisions of divine protection." That's what he is presenting in verse 28.

"In nothing," is the Greek word "enmedeis." It means "in the sphere of not anything," or "in the sphere of nothing." There is not one single thing for which you should be in terror concerning an enemy, who by every account you should be scared out of your wits over. The demons are something to be frightened of. Yet, the Word of God says that God has made a grace provision. You need not be in terror that these creatures will be able to make you a casualty in the spiritual warfare. Now you can be, but if you play the game right, you will not be.

So, he says, "In nothing to be terrified." The word "terrified" is "pturo." The word "pturo" is used in the Greek language to describe what a horse does when he is frightened by some unexpected object. He shies off, and he's uneasy. We would say that he is skittish. The word perhaps means to be alarmed. "Do not be alarmed" is what he is saying. To be skittish (to be on edge) is usually the result of the absence of knowledge. It takes training and it takes information for a person to control his fears. This is one of the first things that the military service is always conscious of. It takes training and it takes information in order to make a man capable of entering a situation where his very life is hazarded and on the line, and for him to meet that situation; not to be skittish; and, not to be overcome by the natural fear that is involved there.

So he says, "Do not in any way (under any condition) be alarmed by your enemies." This happens to be a verb ("terrified"). It's in present tense which means that constantly we are regularly not to be alarmed. It is passive. This means that we will not be terrified, not because we say, "I will be afraid." There are plenty of Christians who stand up and say, "I won't be afraid of the devil. I won't be afraid of evil. Thou art with me. Thou will walk with me through the valley of the shadow of death." If you go walking through the valley of the shadow of death without a spiritual maturity structure functioning in your soul, they are going to bury you in that valley of the shadow of death because you're going to get shot down. This is passive. This is telling us that, if we are not going to be alarmed by the demonic enemy, it is because something is working in us above and beyond natural capacities. Unless you see to it that you have put this in your soul above and beyond natural capacities, then you will be alarmed. Yet, the Word of God says you need not be. Just take the proper steps of correction and start moving again. It is participle which simply means a statement of reality.

"Do not in anything be alarmed by your adversaries." The word "by" is the Greek word "hupo." It means under the authority; that is, under the fantastic powers of your adversaries. The word "adversary" is "antikeimai." "Antikeimai" is made up of the word "anti" which means "against," and "keimai" which means "to lie" or "to lean." So, what it says is, "Don't be alarmed by the person who leans on you--the person who is putting pressures against you. The word is present. He's a constant source of threat, and that's what the demonic world is--a constant source of threat. It is middle in that you as a believer receive the opposition. You receive the results of this constant leaning against the believer. You receive the results of the angelic conflict against you. And it is participle. It is a principle which is stated.

The specific adversaries that are leaning against us are the fallen angels. However, this angelic opposition is expressed usually through human beings. Demon possession is a rare thing. Demon opposition against you is a thing that usually is expressed through other human beings. This is sometimes confusing to us because we may tend to think that human beings, consequently, are the source of our problem, and that our opposition are areas of conflict that arise with this person or that person. You have to understand, in the angelic conflict, that it is not people that we are in combat with. If you think it's people, then you start fighting on a human level with carnal human weapons. What we have is opposition of a spiritual nature. It is only expressed through the human instruments. This entrenched opposition seeks to intimidate us in our service. The reason that we're intimidated in the face of such opposition is because we're ignorant of doctrine. Because we're ignorant, we're uncertain of our ground, so we're easily shot down.

So, the translation thus far is: "In no way alarmed by the power of your opponents." In other words, you should be joyfully courageous. The apostle goes on and says, "Concerning these who are the human expression of the demonic conflict, which is to them an evident token of perdition." The word "which is" in the Greek is the word "hostis." When it says "which," it refers back to everything we've had in this immediate context: the call for a conduct befitting the gospel; for standing firm in doctrine; for contending for the Word of truth; and, not to be intimidated by the resistance. The verb with it is "eimi," which is in the present sense, and that is indicating that that which he has referred to is to keep on being--our situation.

This is what he has called us to perform: befitting the gospel; not to be alarmed; and, standing firm. He is to be a witness who has the capacity because he has developed the information and the maturity. He says that this whole thing is the evident token of perdition on the one hand, but of salvation on the other hand. Let's take "perdition" first.

The word "evident token" is "endeixis." "Endeixis" is a Greek legal word. It is one of these legal terms that we have inherited from the Greek world. This is a legal word which means "proof" which is secured by an appeal to the facts. This is the same word that we have used in Romans 3:25-26. We have it also in 2 Corinthians 8:24. In both these places, it means "proof." It is only in these three passages where this word is used in the New Testament. The evidence here is the failure of the adversaries to intimidate the Christians in their testimony. If a person, knowing the hazards which he faces from the demonic host, yet can move through his Christian life with courage and without being alarmed in anything, that Christian has something that is beyond human capacity to produce. It is because someone is giving him that kind of courage. Consequently, it is evident that there is a God out there, and there is a God who is producing powers that the unbeliever does not have. Consequently, this very courage on the part of a believer, Paul says, is a signal to an unbeliever who's got the brains to recognize what he's seeing in this person. It is a signal to this individual of the unbeliever's own personal destruction and his own lost condition.

The word that is used here is "perdition" which is "apoleia." "Apoleia" simply means "destruction," a state of being destroyed. It is the specific reference to eternal death. It is opposite to salvation. It refers to the fact that it signals for the unbeliever that his destiny is the lake of fire ("perdition"). However, it uses the word "de" as a contrast to the condition of perdition. It signals a contrast--the Christian's capacity not to be intimidated. This also signals, in contrast to what it signals to the unbeliever, it signals something to the believer. That is "to you," which is really "of you." It is translated "with respect to them (unbelievers) is a clear sign of destruction, but of your salvation." It refers to "soteria." "Soteria" means the opposite of destruction. It is being preserved for eternal glory instead of the lake of fire. It refers to the fact that we have been rescued, and that we now stand in a resultant state of safety. The Christian need not fear his adversaries because their very acts of opposition to him reveal the fact that they are doomed to the lake of fire, and he is destined for the mansions in heaven. The fact that that is their opposite destinies is why he is receiving the attacks from the angelic world. It is why he is receiving the attacks from the demonic world.

So, consequently, Paul is saying, "We ought not to be alarmed or terrified by these adversaries. Their opposition is a legal proof of their perdition (their destruction) and of our salvation, and that of God." "That" is "touto," referring to the valiant Philippian action of standing and contending for the faith unafraid. It says, "That of." "Of" is "apo." "Apo" means the ultimate source of God. He uses the word God ("theos"). He is referring to your salvation, and that of God. They're standing non-intimidated is of God. The point here is this: The ultimate source of deliverance in the angelic conflict is God. He's the ultimate source of our deliverance. But the immediate source is Bible doctrine. While God has made provision for you not to be afraid of the demonic world in anything, and to be delivered from its attack, the way for that to be achieved is through the intake of the Word of God. So, that's what he means by the phrase "and that of God." It refers to all of this capacity to stand, and thus to indicate the contrast between themselves as believers and those who are lost. All of that is the result of what God is doing for us in His grace.

This message of evidence teaches us several things. One, it indicates to us the proof of salvation that we possess in Jesus Christ. In other words, if you were not born again, then you would not be under attack. If we were not born again, we would crumble under the attack. It is because you are born again that you are capable of standing. If it was not for your new birth, you would not have courage to face such an unnatural enemy.

Secondly, the message of this evidence is that we are tempted sometimes to wonder if God is working because people ignore or oppose our work. We know that they ignore it and oppose the Lord, so we may anticipate that they would us too. Since courage of the heart is something that we may secure through the Word of God, it is available, and when we have it, it's a token that God has performed His work in us.

The third thing to note is that the time of trial and the time of battle is going to pass. While we do have this conflict, it's going to come to an end. It's going to come to an end just as suddenly as death does on a military battlefield, and suddenly the war is over. There's going to be all of eternity in which we will remember the fears and the alarms that threatened us, but also the grace of God that never failed us.

**Philippians 1:29 - Suffering**

In verse 29, the apostle Paul speaks about the gift of suffering. That's how he presents it: suffering as a gift. He says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." I want you to notice that verse 29 establishes a normalcy for suffering. In the Christian life, it is normal for people to suffer. Suffering is never welcomed by any of us, but doctrine gives us the capacity to suffer and to still be happy. The principle of suffering in this passage is suffering relative to the angelic conflict. That's the context here. The adversaries of which we are not to be terrified are the adversaries of the demonic world. Consequently, when verse 29 speaks about our being called as suffering as a normal part of our Christian lives, it is related to the angelic warfare.

Please remember that some suffering is deserved. Some of the things that you and I suffer is self-induced. It is brought on by our own negative volition, and by our rejection of true spiritual advice. It is the suffering in the life of a believer that is the result of reversionism. There are some things that are self-induced. Many of you can think of things that are points of suffering in your life right now. At that time, you would be very much tempted to ask the question, "Why did God let this happen to me?" That is not an uncommon question. I've heard it many many times. I've also noticed that there is something that is almost always true when that question is asked, "Why did God let this happen to me?" The thing that is happening to the individual is the result of something that that person brought on himself. It had nothing to do with what God was doing with that person. It was God permitting your free volition to run its course, and for you to bring suffering upon yourself. That is self-induced misery. That's not the kind of suffering we're talking about here.

So, immediately we have a specialized group of believers. This is undeserved suffering. It is coming to Christians who have taken in the Word of God; who have developed a spiritual maturity structure in the soul; and, who are engaged in divine production. In other words, it is happening to believers who are in the battle. These are believers who are functioning within the angelic conflict. Those are the people who are going to suffer. Those are the people to whom verse 29 refers, and that is undeserved suffering. Christians who are not in the battle and Christians who are not in the angelic warfare are not going to receive undeserved suffering. So, if you're on the carnal level, and if you're on the immature level of your Christian life, most of the suffering that you are experiencing (if not entirely) is the result of what you bring on yourself. It is not suffering that Satan or the demons are wasting their time on bringing against you. The demons attack the spiritual maturity structure of a functioning Christian only. That believer has to meet that attack with doctrine. The attack can be unsuccessful, but the very fact that you have the attack shows that you have come to a place of maturity and you're in the fight.

That's exactly what's going to happen. As you take in the Word of God; you go through a week; you begin on Sunday; you attend the services; and, you receive instruction in the Word of God, principles of God's thinking become clarified to your mind. As you go by the audio recording room and you check out recordings, and during the week you spend time listening to the Word of God, and you start taking in other lines of understanding, and other lines of truth within your soul, that structure of maturity is beginning to evolve and to blossom forth. At the same time that that training program is going on, your service record and your file is coming under closer and closer scrutiny in the headquarters of Satan himself. You are beginning to draw more and more attention to yourself, and as you become ready for battle, Satan, your enemy, now becomes very much concerned about you.

When a general has to lead a battle, he wants to know what kind of troops his opponent has; where those troops are; and, what the status of their training is so that he may know how to prepare for the battle. Obviously the vast majority of Christians never get into the spiritual combat. They are never equipped with the Word of God to do any fighting. That's not because they would not want to get into combat, and not because they would not be ready to be the Lord's witnesses, but many times they never even have a chance to be trained and equipped within the functioning of the local church which they attend. This is widespread.

So, verse 29 says, "For," and the word "for" means "because." He is now drawing a conclusion. It says, "For unto you." This is in the dative case which is called the dative of advantage. It is for your advantage. The class of believers here is those who have erected a spiritual maturity structure in the soul through the intake of doctrine. "For unto you it is given." The word "it is given" in the Greek is "charizomai." This is not the normal word for "give" that you have in the New Testament. The normal word for "give" is the word "didomi."

**Grace**

The first part of this word "charizomai" ("chari") comes from the Greek word "charis" which means "grace." So, in other words, this is a special kind of giving. It is a grace giving. It is specifically something which we do not deserve. In other words, you could translate this as "graced." We could read, "For you our graced in the behalf of Christ." It connotes something that God has bestowed as a gift. You have this illustrated in Romans 8:32 where we have the words "freely given" used. "Charizomai" is in the aorist tense which means at various points in time. It is passive. It is something you receive. Naturally, it's a gift, so it has to be passive. You get it. You don't earn it. You don't secure it. And it's indicative. It's a statement of fact. This grace gift is in behalf of Christ.

"In behalf" is the Greek word "huper" which is a word of substitution. It is a significant word. Who are you substituting for here on earth? You are being given a grace gift because you are substituting for someone. The person you're substituting for during the period of the angelic warfare is the Lord Jesus Christ. While he was on earth, and all the centuries before, during the time that he was coming to this earth, there was constant attack by the demonic hosts against the line through which Christ was to be born, in order to destroy it. While Jesus Christ was here on earth, there were constant attempts to destroy His life; to destroy His testimony; and, to destroy His sinless nature. Finally He ascended to heaven. He is now out of reach of Satan and the demonic attack.

You have become the targets of that attack. You and I as believers are now the substitutes for the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why it uses the Greek preposition "huper" which very clearly means substitution. During your days on earth, you represent the Lord Jesus Christ in the angelic war. Every spiritually operational Christian is a target for Satan and is going to experience suffering--the suffering that Satan would like to impose upon Jesus Christ. Yet God has made such a provision that if we will utilize the provision of doctrine, we will not be alarmed, and we will be able to stand. "In behalf of" connotes for the Lord's glory.

So, we have been graced for the Lord's glory, "Not only." "Not only" introduces the purpose of the Christian's life on earth. That purpose here is twofold. You have been given a gift by God to do two things. One, "Not only to believe on Him, "and the word "believe" is the Greek word "pisteuo". Believing is exhaling faith toward Jesus Christ. You notice that I said, "Exhale." You are not inviting Christ into your heart when you become a believer. That is not a true statement of what takes place. It is not something that you are taking in. The act of faith is your exhaling breathing out faith toward Jesus Christ. That is the first act of salvation. And you have to do it.

The specific object of your belief, it says, is "On Him." The word "on" is the Greek word "eis," and "eis" is a preposition of direction. It is showing the direction of your exhaling your faith. You exhale faith in many ways on many things in every normal day. You exhale faith toward many things that are unworthy of your faith, and you're sorry that you trusted certain people. You're sorry that you believed in certain products you bought. But faith in Jesus Christ is the same thing. It is exhaling toward a specific object. But because of who it is that you have exhaled your faith toward, you find that you are blessed and benefited. Faith is only of value as per the object of that faith. So, it is important when he uses the word "eis" to show you that the direction is toward Christ.

It is in the present active infinitive. Present means that which is constantly the fact of people being saved by believing the gospel. Anybody can be saved at any time by simply believing the gospel. It is active. Each of you must make your own act of faith. Infinitive indicates that it is God's purpose for you in the age of grace to receive this grace gift. Remember that the cross provided all that was necessary for our salvation, and it made it irreversible. This is part of the preparation for your spiritual combat. That's what we're talking about. When a nation sends a soldier off to war, it doesn't call upon that soldier to go to work and earn his equipment, and to get the tuition for his training. The nation provides us training, and it provides all the equipment. It pays for the whole thing. And the Lord Jesus Christ paid for ours on the cross.

"For unto you it is grace given, for the Lord's glory, not only to believe toward Him (toward the Lord Jesus Christ), but," it says, "It is also," and this is a strong addition. This is the second purpose. The first purpose was to believe, "but also to suffer ("pascho"). It is presence active infinitive again. It is another purpose. That's the infinitive. No one can suffer for his sins as Jesus Christ did for forgiveness. Suffering here refers in this context to the demonic attack. Those Christians who are not in the battle do not receive this kind of undeserved suffering. The sufferings that we may attribute to Satan are very often not. It is present. It is a constant combat suffering that we experience. It's a lifestyle for the Christian. It is active. The Christian does the combat, and thus invites Satan's suffering. It is infinitive. It is God's purpose.

The Christians, because they carry the Lord's message, bring this suffering against themselves. Our society is antagonistic to the salvation message. It considers it foolishness, and something for unsophisticated minds (1 Corinthians 1:18-25). Society is opposed to Christianity as a way of life. It is opposed to the grace way of life, separated from Satan's way (1 John 2:16). But suffering in itself (I remind you again) is not an honor or a privilege to seek. The value of suffering is the reason for that suffering.

I can occasionally think of people who are very proud of suffering. I have often noticed that that is suffering that they have brought upon themselves. But there are plenty of gullible Christians who will look on that individual and say, "Oh, what a godly person." Just because a person suffers does not mean that he is serving the Lord and thus receiving blessing through suffering." But the capacity to meet suffering which is undeserved takes the spiritual maturity structure in the soul. Then you can bear it happily and in peace.

So this sums up the believer's full time Christian service. This kind of service is only done if you are prepared with the Word. Christians who are unprepared or incompetent in living and in service are not in the battle with Satan. You may be serving. You may be doing all kinds of things around church. However, you are not in the angelic combat if you are not a prepared Christian. If you do not have a reservoir of doctrine in your human spirit, and a spiritual maturity structure blossoming out in your soul, you are noncombatant as far as the devil is concerned, and he is not interested in you. The unprepared Christian brings plenty of his own sufferings. Satan doesn't have to give you any.

There's no substitute in the Christian life for this positive intake of doctrine and for a life spent in replenishing your spiritual ammunition supply. This is why some Christians begin splendidly. They have grown. They get interested in the Word, and they do grow up spiritually. They go on with the Lord, and pretty soon they're really producing divine good. Now they are under Satan's attack, and for a while, they go along great. They meet the adversary without any fear. But then you begin to find that they have holes shot in them. Gradually you begin to see them beginning to crumble. Why? Because they failed to continue to resupply their spiritual ammunition. There never comes a time in your life when you do not have to listen to a pastor-teacher exercising the authority of instruction in the Word of God, which he doesn't deserve, but which God for some inexplicable reason, says, "I'll take this person and this person and this person, and I now give you the authority to convey and to communicate the Word of God. You have a special gift to do that. And without you, if you do not exercise that gift, Christians will be shot full of holes." There never comes a time when you do not need to take in the Word of God, either by personal face-to-face instruction which is basic, or by some other means--through the printed word or through audio recordings.

This verse tells us that salvation and suffering are both a grace privilege. We have this repeated in Romans 5:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:7-8. "For unto you, it is grace given for the Lord's glory, not only to exhale faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, but also to receive undeserved suffering in the angelic conflict." It says, "For his sake," and again it uses our word "huper," the word of substitution. You are taking the attacks that the demons would like to strike at the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an honor to share in this kind of abuse in behalf of the Lord (John 15:18-21). But 1 Peter 4:12-19 tells us that it is no honor to suffer on your own account. For you to suffer as a believer who is functioning in his Christian life, that is one thing. For you to suffer because you are negative to the Word of God; because you are indifferent; or, because you do not utilize doctrine and function upon it (you learn it, and then you let it lie there dormant), that is no honor to suffer that way. Suffering may be discipline. That's self-induced. Suffering may be for God's divine purpose as it was in the case of Job, and that is rare. That is rare that you would suffer for something of a divine purpose that God is trying to demonstrate or to show. Most of your suffering as a mature believer will be undeserved. But that will be suffering of maximum blessing.

**Philippians 1:30**

In verse 30, the apostle Paul closes this chapter by reminding these believers that what he has been talking about to them, relative to suffering as a result of the angelic conflict, is the suffering that he himself has been going through. He begins verse 30 saying, "Having the same conflict." The word "having" is the Greek word "echo." "Echo" is present. It's a constant lot of the mature believer to have this suffering. It was Paul's constant lot. It is active. He was personally experiencing this suffering. It is participle which means as a statement of a fact of life. He says, "Having constantly the same conflict." The word "conflict" is "agon," and it means what it looks like. It means "agony." When he says, "Having the same agony," he is referring back to this context? What agony? He is using this word for suffering. That's what he means.

"Having the same suffering that I have been discussing with you that you will experience, I have this same suffering." The word "which" means "of what sort" or "of what kind." That is, "Of what kind you saw in me." The word "saw" is "horao." "Horao" is aorist. At certain points in Paul's Christian witnessing and ministry, the Philippians saw suffering. It is active which means that they saw in themselves this suffering as we have described in Acts 16 where he had the experience in the jail at Philippi. It is indicative, so it's a statement of reality.

He says, "Having in the past, at certain points, seen this same suffering in me that I have been describing to you, and now (at the time of writing the Philippian letter) you hear." The word "hear" is "akouo." "Akouo" is present. They were getting constant reports of the situation of Paul's Roman imprisonment. It is active. They were hearing it themselves. Indicative again means a reality. "You now hear to be in me." Paul says, "You have seen me suffering with this kind of undeserved suffering; you have seen me under the attack and under the fire of the angelic host; and, now you're hearing about me receiving the same thing. What I have told you, as believers, that you will experience if you are going on in the Word of God, and thus to move on with the Lord, I too have experienced." Paul says, "I know what I'm talking about. I know what it is to suffer. I know what it is to be treated in the way I shouldn't be treated. I know what it is to have this clever deceitful enemy circling me waiting for a chance to leap upon me. I know what it is to have to lean on the Lord. I know what it is to have to utilize doctrine constantly in order to survive this war. I know what it is to have to use the confession of sin through the day so that I keep the lines of God's power flowing."

You are under attack. Those of you who have gone on into maturity, you're under more attack, but all of you, in some degree, are under attack. Remember that the significance of this final verse is this: The apostle Paul is writing the book of Philippians in order to tell us how to be happy, so that you haven't lost sight of our main theme here. He is writing this book to tell us how to be happy. And here he is writing it in the midst of the most intense kind of suffering. He tells the Philippians, "This is suffering that you saw in me, and now you hear in me, and which you too are going to experience, but I'm telling you, Philippians, that you can be ecstatically happy in the midst of this warfare and this combat."

Eventually, a Christian with any smarts at all begins to say to himself, "How am I going to survive? And the Bible very beautifully spells out what the equipment is; the nature of our enemy; and, how to go about dealing with him, and we will take that up over the next few sessions.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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