

**WEIRD SERIES PART 6**  
**EMBRACING SUFFERING AND SACRIFICE AS A PATHWAY TO VICTORY**  
**3/7/2021**

**I. Introduction**

A. In this series we have learned that if we're going to be different and make a difference, we're going to have to think completely about everything. We will have to learn to \_\_\_\_\_ in a way that the world may think is weird.

B. One area this is true is in how we think about sacrifice and suffering. In a culture of consumerism and entitlement, it is normal to think of what the Bible teaches about sacrifice and suffering as \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Some examples of contrasting beliefs

- Find the easy way. The road is narrow and hard that leads to life.
- Take up your rights. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself and take up your cross.
- You should have it your way. Deny yourself; you must \_\_\_\_\_ your life to find it.

2. Scriptures that might be hard for people from our culture to grasp

- *"The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name." (Acts 5:41)*
- *"Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8 NIV)*
- *"And because I preach the Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained. So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen. This is a trustworthy saying, 'If we die with him, we will also live with him. If we endure hardship, we will reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us.'" (2 Tim. 2:9-12 NLT)*

3. **Thesis:** The weird thing we believe is that suffering and sacrifice are not only inevitable but are a pivotal part of the journey to \_\_\_\_\_. We believe God can bring out the best when we go through our \_\_\_\_\_. We believe we receive the most when we \_\_\_\_\_ the most.

C. Some reasons this message is so important right now

1. We've been going through really hard times.

2. It is true that what ruins one person \_\_\_\_\_ another person.

a. In every hard season some sink, some survive, and some \_\_\_\_\_.

b. God means to use hard seasons to raise up the \_\_\_\_\_ in all of us.

"Some of the greatest miracles are not just miracles of God delivering us out of hard times but God developing His character and making us more like Jesus through the hard times."

c. Throughout history when God's people suffered the most, the church has grown and impacted the world \_\_\_\_\_

*"But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites..." (Exodus 1:12 NIV)*

We shouldn't fear persecution; we should fear the church being accepted because it has \_\_\_\_\_ like the world.

D. \_\_\_\_\_ is the ultimate example of the one who suffered the greatest but rose up the \_\_\_\_\_.

**II. Things we can learn from Jesus about turning our adversities into our advantages, our sufferings into our victories, our crosses into our crowns.**

A. We have the power to \_\_\_\_\_ our response to suffering and adversity. *“I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in me.” (John 14:30 NKJV)*

1. What happens to us and what happens \_\_\_\_\_ don't have to be the same thing. We can't control what happens to us; we can choose what happens in us. Freedom is not perfect circumstances; it is refusing to be a victim and a slave of the negative influences of this world.

“When we were no longer able to change our situation, we could still change ourselves. We are proof that there is a freedom that none can take away, the freedom to choose our attitude to any given set of circumstances.” (Viktor Frankl-Holocaust survivor)

2. Instead of responding to Satan, sin, lies, and circumstances on the outside, we can respond to the Word and the Spirit on the \_\_\_\_\_. We can claim Jesus' victory that gives us the power to count ourselves dead to the world and free to live in the Spirit.

What is inside of us is \_\_\_\_\_ than what is in the world. (I John 4:4)  
*“Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what the sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.” (Rom. 8:12-13 NLT)*

B. In suffering we can choose to believe in a higher power that can take any evil that is coming against us and determine a way for its outcome to be to our \_\_\_\_\_ and God's glory.

- *“Then Jesus said, “You would have no power over me at all unless it were given to you from above.” (John 19:11 NLT)*
- *“But Jesus said to Peter, ‘Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?’ (John 18:11 NLT)*
- *“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” (Romans 8:28 NLT)*

C. We turn adversity into victory when we commit to choose and \_\_\_\_\_ to God's will no matter what. Victory doesn't come from easy times but \_\_\_\_\_ decisions. It is in times of suffering we decide if we are going to pay the full price, and make the total commitment.

You only see full victory when you are willing to pay whatever price is \_\_\_\_\_ to have it.  
“Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.” (Luke 22:42 NLT)

D. God turns adversity into victory when we choose the higher \_\_\_\_\_, prize, and power that God makes available to us as we're going through suffering.

- *“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.” (Hebrews 12:2 NLT)*
- *“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness...” (2 Cor. 12:9 NIV)*
- *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:15-16 NIV)*

(Answers: I. A. think B. weird, Deny, lose, victory, worst, sacrifice C. raises, soar, champion, the most, become D. Jesus, highest II. A. choose, in us, inside, greater B. advantage C. surrender, hard, necessary D. purpose)