

In the mercies of God, the Lord has taught me that **if I am not open for His working through suffering then God will leave me in the place where I want to be.** If you are not open for His workings, He will let you remain in a place where life is elementary and easy going. You can have your happy times. God will not compel or force you to choose His way: He will leave you in the place of your desires, though it be just a fundamental and basic place. This is an important principle to grasp—God will leave you in a place of ease and in a place where you desire to be, if you do not remain open to His way of suffering and trial. **The Lord rarely will do anything corrective and stringent to change you. Saints, let me tell you that this will not be a compliment to your spiritual life! It may just mean that the Lord is not able to do all that He would do if He could! He will not interfere with our choices if we are not open to Him.** He will not make a way for us to grow and know more of Him without our cooperation. **And remember, if God leaves you in the place of your choosing, it is not an admirable commentary or compliment of your spiritual life.** If you insist on doing your ‘own thing’, to have your own way, to stay away from making any commitments to the Lord, then you are surely limiting the Lord from bringing growth and maturity in your life. He will not be able to do all that He wants to do in your life because you have not allowed Him to do so. May we hear the Lord carefully!

The usefulness of a vessel is always linked to suffering! The idea of “being mightily used of God” is very common among believers. Many believers want to be great evangelists, teachers, pastors, prophets and apostles. **The truth is that those who serve the Lord must truly go through the deepest sufferings.** Today many want an easy-going ministry. Several give up the ministry and decide to take up lesser responsibilities because of the hurt and the wounds they receive in the ministry. We are called to suffer in His will and for His Name, in whatever way they may come. Please consider the Apostle Paul and think of him giving up and taking the back seat because of all those hurts and wounds that came upon him from churches and believers. I am sure that you are grateful that Paul did not give in under such pressure. He knew that he was called to partake of the sufferings of Christ whether they came from the world, from the religious or spiritual realm or even from people he loved and cared for.

We must be prepared to suffer for His will and for His Name no matter where they come from. Even if people who are dear to you turn away from you and cast you out, thinking you to be evil, let them not deter you. If we want to serve God in the way that He desires then we must be prepared to go through many sufferings and bear the heat of trials and testing. **Saints, the ‘balances’ are truly kept by God! The Lord knows how to keep the right balance! If there is extra suffering then there will also be extra usefulness; little suffering will bring little usefulness. And remember, His balances are never false. If we suffer in greater measures than others, then we will also be used in greater proportion.** This is God’s precious principle. If we are called to suffer for His name’s sake, and not for our own, then we have a righteous Judge and His balance will never tip incongruously. That is why Peter said in his epistle *“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”* (1 Peter 4:19).

Several people want to be like Paul in the matter of usefulness, but do not want to be like him when it comes to suffering. Many a time God is not able to do what He wants to do in our lives because we do not let Him do whatever He wants to do. **How long will you close the door in His face and walk away to easier and painless ways of your own? How long? It will turn out to your loss and not the Lord’s!** May the Holy Spirit help you!

Beloved saints, God has a definite purpose for your life. He has drawn you to Himself to fulfill that purpose; He has called you to be a part of His remnant today with that purpose in mind. You might be leading a life which hasn't experienced much suffering for your faith in the Lord; or maybe you have chosen easy paths in your life. I do not want to dishearten you by saying it may not be always be so. It is a matter of when God wants you to be a vessel of usefulness to Him in this generation and in this hour. God will bring you to deeper places of discipline in the Lord, if you choose to forsake your own ways and commit yourself to His ways. If your easy times are brought to an end, it may not be too long before God will come in, if you are open.