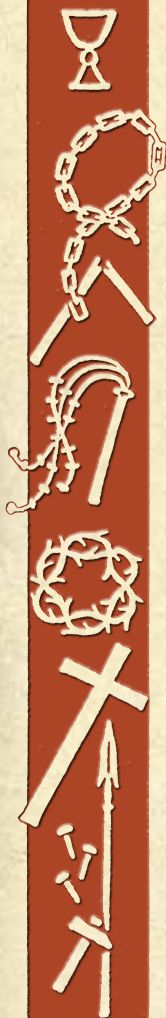


M. Basilea
Schlink



WHERE
CAN
WE FIND
JESUS?



**IF ANYONE
SERVES ME,
LET HIM
FOLLOW ME;
AND WHERE
I AM,
THERE MY
SERVANT WILL
BE ALSO.**

JOHN 12:26 NKJV

Jesus' sufferings –

a vague childhood memory, perhaps from Sunday school or religious education, but with little relevance to our lives now? Or is Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, real to us? Do we know His power to transform and set us free?

So much – in fact, everything – in our lives depends on what the sufferings of Jesus mean to us.

When Jesus is referred to as the Man of Sorrows, this is not just a figure of speech. We are talking about something that actually happened. Here is Someone who bore pain and agony, and triumphed over sin and tragedy. Here is the One whom the Bible calls the fairest of the sons of men, radiating love and dignity in the face of untold pain, humiliation and disappointment. His love is the greatest force in heaven and on earth, helping us in all our troubles and inspiring us with love for God and for others.

As we spend time meditating on Jesus, the Man of Sorrows and Son of God, our lives will be renewed.



JESUS IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus agonizes in prayer but resists the temptation to take the easy way out. He fights to the end – and wins. And now He can bring you through to victory over your own temptations. He will show you the way.

The first step is to fight temptation and focus on God. Know that behind temptation lurks an enemy bent on driving you to despair. So keep your eyes on Jesus, who won the victory. One glance at Him, one short prayer – ‘Jesus, You are stronger!’ – will drive the enemy away.

The second step is to accept God’s leading and say, ‘Yes, Father,’ whenever life seems difficult or even unbearable.

When you accept the will of God, suffering will lose its power to oppress you. New strength and peace will fill your heart, and you will be victorious.



JESUS ARRESTED

Jesus is bound and led off to the judges like a sheep driven to the slaughter. Today He invites us:



Come and take your place beside Me, the Prisoner, when your heart is torn with anguish. Come to Me when you have no peace and are in despair because you cannot understand God. The disciples despaired when I was taken prisoner. If you want to know My peace and My sustaining power, then surrender your will and desires to God. Submit yourself to the will of God in your present circumstances, however hard they may be: the places and people you want to get away from, the marriage you find so restrictive, the job you dislike, the responsibilities which seem so burdensome.

In these situations Jesus reminds us: God's will is good and His heart is all-loving; He is leading you the right way and has only the best of intentions for you.

Do you hear Jesus calling?—Take My yoke upon you and be united with Me, the Prisoner. As you walk closely with Me, I will fill your heart with peace and comfort.

JESUS ON TRIAL

Hands roped together, Jesus stands trial before one judge after the other. Insults and false accusations are heaped upon Him. But, instead of retaliating, He is silent like a lamb led to the slaughter.

Jesus is alive today. He knows every detail of your life. He sees the reproaches, injustice and slander that you may have to bear, and He calls you to His side:

Come to Me – to the place of judgment, where I was unjustly accused. Here you will find Me. Don't be like My disciples, who ran away rather than face judgment. Listen quietly to your critics. Don't lash out in words as you try to clear your reputation. Don't fight for your rights. If you hit back by accusing, judging and condemning others, you take the side of the evil one, who is the accuser. He will draw you into his realm of strife and bitterness.

But if you listen to what others have to say, without rushing to justify yourself, you will know My love and the sense of My presence.



Those who bear unjust rebukes are close to Me and will have a foretaste of heavenly peace and joy even in this life.

JESUS BOUND TO THE WHIPPING POST

Jesus – bound to the
whipping post, mercilessly
beaten, blood streaming
from countless wounds.



Do we hear Him say:

Look at Me, My back
scourged and torn, My body
disfigured. The sight would move
a stone to tears. What terrible suffering was
necessary to save human beings from their sin!

Does not the sight of Me at the whipping post fill
you with revulsion for the sins committed in the
body: lust, greed, violence?

In My wounds there is healing and redemption
for all who truly repent. You can choose to come
to Me for forgiveness – and for all eternity reflect
My glory.

JESUS CROWNED WITH THORNS

The sight of Jesus crowned with thorns is strangely compelling. In His suffering He radiates a beauty that pierces the heart. A ray of His compassion falls upon us as He reaches out in love.



Hear His voice speaking to your heart:

Come to Me when you feel humiliated, put down, overlooked or despised. We belong together. Share My life of lowliness and you will begin to reflect My radiance.

Yes, Jesus, the Son of God, looks to you in His deep humiliation. He bore ridicule and scorn, and now He is asking you:

Will you stand with Me when people hurt and insult you? Will you respond with forgiving love, as I have forgiven you? Then you will be blessed as My true disciple.

If you love Jesus,
you will choose, like Him,
the place of lowliness.

JESUS CARRYING HIS CROSS

What a sight – Jesus, the Son of God, weak and helpless, bent low beneath the burden of our sins. Stumbling and struggling under the massive weight of the cross, He makes His way through the streets of Jerusalem to Calvary.

If we would be His disciples today, let us hear His challenge:

Come, take up your cross and follow Me. Power, glory and overwhelming victory lie hidden in the cross. Embrace your cross. It comes from My hands and is laden with blessing.

Take it up willingly. You will find that you are holding a priceless treasure.

Take it as a gift from Me, uniting you with Me and causing you to reflect My nature, which is perfect love.

If the weight of your cross is great, the blessing hidden within is also great.



JESUS CRUCIFIED

In unspeakable agony Jesus hangs on the cross of Calvary. Shocked silence would be the normal response. But down through the centuries His dying love has been celebrated in song. What made the crucified Lord so beautiful?



The answer is love – love so wonderful that it completely transformed a hideous and brutal death.

Calvary – in that arena of suffering, love triumphed. Confronted with the full force of hate, Jesus refused to be goaded into retaliating. Though wounded in body, soul and spirit, He responded with love. At Calvary the evil one did his worst, but overreached himself. Love prevailed. With a shout of triumph Jesus proclaimed, 'It is finished!'

Now Jesus is asking you:

Would you like Me to win this victory in your life too? I have redeemed you to reflect My love – love that is greater than all and victorious even over the strongest forces of evil and hatred.

Have faith in the power of My redemption.

THE END OF JESUS' PASSION IS VICTORY AND RESURRECTION

What is the outcome of Jesus' death? An empty grave – victory, resurrection and Easter joy. With God, suffering is never the final outcome. Good Friday is followed by Easter morning; from death comes life; from sorrow comes joy. Easter is the assurance that suffering will not have the last word in our lives either.

Jesus Christ is alive and victorious! All power is His in heaven and on earth. Jesus has defeated death itself. Jesus has overcome Satan and sin.

We honour Jesus with our response of faith. Turn to Him now in thanks and praise, even if this doesn't come easily to you. Don't wait until you feel ready, but join in the triumphant songs of praise for His mighty victory at Easter. Jesus, the Lamb of God, has overcome the tyranny of death. Sin's hold on our lives is broken and Satan loses his power as we exalt Jesus, bringing Him the praise and glory that are His due.



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Daily readings 416 pages

MY ALL FOR HIM

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