

Philippians 1:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Analysis

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake (ὅτι ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεύειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν, hoti hymin echaristhē to hyper Christou, ou monon to eis auton pisteuein alla kai to hyper autou paschein)—Echaristhē ("it was graciously given," aorist passive of charizomai) derives from charis ("grace"). Suffering is gift, not accident. To hyper Christou ("in the behalf of Christ, for Christ's sake") elevates suffering to christological significance.

Not only to believe...but also to suffer (οὐ μόνον...πιστεύειν ἀλλὰ καὶ...πάσχειν, ou monon...pisteuein alla kai...paschein)—faith and suffering are coordinate gifts. This is radical: suffering for Christ is privilege, not misfortune; grace, not tragedy. Paul democratizes apostolic suffering—all believers share this 'gift.' The passive voice (echaristhē) emphasizes divine sovereignty: God grants both faith and suffering according to His gracious purposes.

Historical Context

Philippian Christians faced hostility from Roman authorities and neighbors. Paul's theology reframes persecution: not random tribulation but divinely appointed participation in Christ's sufferings. This echoes Jesus's beatitudes (Matt 5:10-12) and His warnings about persecution (John 15:18-21). Early Christian martyrologies celebrated suffering as grace-gift, not fate.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Do you view suffering for Christ as grace-gift (echaristhē) or unfortunate circumstance?
2. How does recognizing suffering as 'given' by God change your response to it?
3. In what ways are faith and suffering coordinate realities in genuine Christian discipleship?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	ὑμῖν	ἐχαρίσθη	τὸ	ὑπὲρ	Χριστοῦ	οὐ	μόνον	τὸ
For	unto you	it is given	G3588	for	of Christ	not	only	G3588
G3754	G5213	G5483		G5228	G5547	G3756	G3440	
εἰς	αὐτοῦ	πιστεύειν	ἀλλὰ	καὶ	τὸ	ὑπὲρ	αὐτοῦ	πάσχειν
on	him	to believe	but	also	G3588	for	him	to suffer
G1519	G846	G4100	G235	G2532		G5228	G846	G3958

Additional Cross-References

James 1:2 (Parallel theme): My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

Acts 5:41 (Parallel theme): And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

1 Peter 4:13 (References Christ): But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Romans 5:3 (Parallel theme): And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Acts 14:22 (Faith): Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2:8 (Faith): For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Colossians 2:12 (Faith): Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

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