

CHARITY & ITS FRUITS

Sermon 11- Undergoing Sufferings A Duty to Christ

“Love bears all things” 1 Cor. 13:7

Edwards understand this phrase “love bears all things” to be focused on a different aspect of love than the earlier phrase “love is patient”. Paul’s first phrase “love is longsuffering” refers to the general suffering that we are called to endure but this phrase, “Love bears all things” refers to those specific sufferings that we endure for the sake of _____.

The reasons Edwards gives for his understanding here are:

1. He does not think the apostle would repeat himself like this here
2. He saw the last verse as a conclusion of sorts to the previous section, so the Apostle seems to be moving on to another element here
3. Paul commonly refers to suffering for Christ’s sake as a fruit of love so it only makes sense that he would mention that here in this great chapter on Christian love
4. The following phrases also seem to imply that we have moved out of the realm of love toward our neighbor and are now dealing with love toward God

Doctrine- “They who are truly gracious have a spirit for Christ’s sake to undergo all _____ to which they may be exposed in the way of their duty.”

“That those who are truly _____ have a spirit not only to do, but to suffer for Christ. Hypocrites may and often do make a great show of religion in profession and words which are cheap, and in those actions in which there is no great difficulty of suffering; but they have not a suffering spirit.”

“They have a spirit to undergo sufferings of all _____, which are in the way of their duty.” This could include having one’s good name smeared, one’s possessions impacted, being ill-treated and hated by others, pain of body, or even death. Those who truly love God are willing to bear all kinds of things for His sake.

“They have a spirit to undergo sufferings of all _____, which are in the way of their duty.” Their love of Christ is to such a degree that they would forsake all to follow Him. Those who love Christ bear even afflictions that are cruel for the sake of Christ.

Now Edwards is going to show why it is that love of God leads to this bearing of all things for His sake

1. **The saints belong to Christ-** “If we have not such a spirit, it is an argument that we never gave ourselves to Christ without reserve. It is _____ in order to our being Christ’s true followers that we should give ourselves to Him, that we should give ourselves to Him to be His wholly and His only...But they who have not a spirit to suffer all things for Christ show that they do not give themselves wholly to Christ, because they make a reserve of such cases of suffering as they are not willing to bear for Christ.”

“If God be truly loved, He is loved as God; and to love Him as God is to love Him as the _____
_____. But he who loves God as the Supreme Good is ready to make all other good give place to that...”

2. **The saints fear God-** “They who are truly gracious fear that Being whose wrath is far more terrible than all temporal afflictions...They know that His _____ is far more dreadful than the wrath and cruelty of men, or the worst torments they can inflict. And therefore they have a spirit rather to suffer all which they can inflict than to forsake God and sin against Him, which He has threatened with His eternal wrath.” (Matthew 10:28)
3. **The saints believe that what awaits the godly is far greater than temporary pleasures now-** “They see that the _____ which God has promises those who suffer for His sake, that ‘far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory’ which those sufferings mark out, in comparison with which the greatest of them are but light afflictions.”

4. **The saints know to count the cost of following Christ-** “The sufferings which are in the way of our duty come of the difficulties which attend religion. This is the cost of being religious...He who does not receive the gospel with its difficulties does not receive it as it is _____. They who do not receive Christ with His cross as well as crown do not truly receive Him...They who accept the gospel crown without the gospel cross, or who would have Christ’s rest without Christ’s yoke, accept what was never offered; for God never offered one of these without the other. They who receive only the easy part of Christianity, and not the difficult, at most are but almost Christians; for they are wholly Christians receive the whole of Christianity and not only the easy part of it.”
5. **The saints are compared to those who sell all for Christ-** Here Edwards uses the parables of “the pearl of a great price” and “the treasure in a field” (Matthew 13:44-46) to show that the saints are _____ to give all for Christ.
6. **The saints know that God calls us to deny ourselves and follow Christ-** “The Scriptures teach us that it is absolutely necessary to deny ourselves in order to being Christ’s _____.”
7. **The saints follow Christ wherever He goes-** “They who are willing to follow Christ only to the crown and not to the _____, or who follow Him only through prosperity and not through adversity, or who have a spirit to follow Him only through some sufferings and not through all, cannot be said to follow Him whithersoever He goes.”
8. **The saints are said to overcome the world-** “The sufferings and difficulties of the world are its _____; and if there be any of these which a believer has not a spirit to encounter for Christ’s sake, then by these weapons or sufferings the world has them in subjection and has the victory. But Christ gives His soldiers the victory over the world; yea, they are more than conquerors through Christ, who hath loved them.”
9. **The saints know that God uses trials and temptations to test-** “The sufferings which are in the way of duty are often in Scripture called temptations, or trials, because by them God tries the _____ of men’s grace.”

Application

1. **Self-examination-** “It behooves persons very strictly to examine themselves whether they are of a suffering spirit or not, seeing such great weight is laid on it in Scripture. Though you have never had the trial of having such great and extreme suffering laid in the way of your duty as many others have had, yet you have trials enough in the course of God’s providence to show what your spirit is, whether you are of a disposition to suffer, and to _____ your own carnal inclinations and temporal interests rather than to forsake Christ.”
2. **Exhortation-** Edwards calls us to consider three things:
 - “Here consider how _____ such persons are represented in Scripture, as have a spirit to suffer, and do actually suffer for Christ.”
 - “Consider what glorious _____ are promised to be hereafter bestowed on those who do willingly suffer for Christ.”
 - Consider “how the Scriptures abound with blessed _____ of those who have suffered for Christ’s sake.”