

purpose for us in developing ~~m~~ in us, the fruits of the Spirit. Often in order to do this it is necessary for us to go through suffering.

I think perhaps we don't realize just how important the fellowship of His suffering is in the Scripture. In the book of Hebrews, we have two references I'd like to call your attention to. Heb. 2:10, "In bringing many sons into glory it is fitting that God for whom and through whom everything exists should make the Author of their Salvation perfect through suffering. This is not referring to the suffering of Christ on the cross. That was not what made him perfect thru suffering. This is referring to what He did in coming down from heaven and submitting Himself to the limitations of human life, going through the pains and sufferings He went through during His life, as He humiliated himself for our sakes, and thus was made perfect thru suffering.

In ch. 5 of the book of Hebrews we read in v. 8, "Although he was a son he learned obedience from what he suffered. Jesus Christ learned obedience from what he suffered. It is hard for us to conceive how Jesus Christ learned anything. He was God. He knew all things. Yet He was also man. He had to be trained as man.

He lived here in the power of ~~m~~ the Spirit. He learned obedience through suffering. The great English poet, John Milton, wrote Paradise Lost. He wrote many great poems. He was Secretary of State for Oliver Cromwell when the Christians took over the government of England for a few years as long as Cromwell lived. Milton's writing were very imporant important and effective during those years. Then he was stricken with blindness. There was this man of ability, this man of great knowledge, blind! What could he do? How could he serve the Lord? Well, Milson wrote a very fine sonnet on his blindness that I think is worth all of us knowing.

Milton said: When I consider how my light is spent. Ere half my days in this dark world and wide and that one talent which is death to hide lodged with me useless though my soul more fit to serve there with my Maker and present my true account lest He returning chide. Doth God exact day laborer light denied? I fondly asked. But patience to prevent that murmer soon replied: God does not need either man's work or his own gifts. Who best bears his mild yoke they serve the best. His state is kingdly, thousands at his bidding speed, and post ~~m~~ o're land and ocean without rest. They also serve who only stand and wait.

I believe this has reference to this second aspect which we find stressed also in these vv. in Philippians we looked at. "The fellowship of sharing ~~m~~ His sufferings, and of becoming like Him in His death. Verse 12, Not that I have already attained already, ~~m~~ or have already been made perfect but I press on to takehold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Our salvation is complete in Christ. Jesus did it all, yet we are to press on ~~m~~ and takehold of that for which he took hold of us.