A close-up photograph of a soldier in a camouflage uniform. The soldier's name tag reads "MILLER" and the branch tag reads "U.S. ARMY". The soldier is holding a dark brown leather-bound Bible with "HOLY BIBLE" embossed in gold on the cover. The background shows a portion of the American flag. The title text is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif font.

**THE BELIEVER'S
FIELD MANUAL
ON
SUFFERING**

PETE DAUGHTRY

THE BELIEVER'S FIELD MANUAL ON SUFFERING

by

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This booklet is edited from the lectures of W. W. "Pete" Daughtry.

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Preface

Before you begin your Bible study, you should be sure that you are in fellowship, under the control of God the Holy Spirit, so that He can make spiritual truth understandable to you. You can do this by naming any known sins to God the Father and accepting the forgiveness provided by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."¹

If you have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, the issue for you is faith in Him. The Lord Jesus Christ made perfect provision for your salvation and eternal security. You need only tell God the Father that you accept the accomplished work of Christ on your behalf.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

2 Cor. 5:21 "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Eph. 2:8, 9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Acts 16:31 "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."

¹ This and subsequent quotations from Scripture are taken from the New American Standard Bible.

Introduction

The Bible employs many military metaphors that depict the believer in Jesus Christ as a soldier. One of these is 2 Timothy 2:3, which says, "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." The believer is, indeed, involved in a conflict, a spiritual warfare, and suffering will be a part of that conflict. Everyone, believer and unbeliever alike, faces suffering at various times. The Bible tells us that "man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward." (Job 5:7) However, God can use the believer's suffering for the purpose of blessing in his life. The soldier enlisted in active duty under the Lord's command must learn how to correctly handle suffering when it comes into his life, following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that it results in blessing for him and glorification of God. The following study is your field manual on suffering "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

PARAGRAPH 1

The believer has been given the opportunity to suffer as Jesus Christ did.

This refers to undeserved suffering, NOT to suffering as a result of our own bad decisions.

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Phil. 3:8-11)

No one wants to suffer, but undeserved suffering becomes a means of suffering for blessing.

God has designed this kind of suffering to be an important factor in spiritual growth.

Undeserved suffering forces the believer to utilize the two power options of the spiritual life, the problem-solving devices, such as the faith-rest technique, and other Biblical principles learned from the word of God to solve the problems of life. Self-induced misery, on the other hand, is suffering that results from our own bad decisions, and it should be avoided at all costs.

PARAGRAPH 2

Suffering, consequently, has become an indispensable part of the Christian way of life.

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory ... (1 Peter 1:6-8)

When God brings pressure into the believer's life and tests his faith, He also provides the solutions needed to overcome those problems. This pressure and suffering are more important than gold that perishes (the details of life) because the result can lead to praise, honor, and glory. Suffering tests the believer's faith in God and in His ability to provide.

PARAGRAPH 3

Suffering, just like our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is related to the believer's privilege of living in time.

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake ... (Phil. 1:29)

PARAGRAPH 4

God has designed suffering to be a means of sharing the happiness of God while living in time.

These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (John 15:11)

Suffering produces endurance and consistency. When this is achieved, the believer has the potential to be complete, that is, spiritually mature, and lacking in nothing by utilizing God's provision and strength, not his own.

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence [integrity]. (2 Peter 1:2-3)

Suffering is designed to produce endurance and consistency in the believer's life. Again, the objective is to be complete and lacking in nothing, knowing and using the problem-solving devices.

PARAGRAPH 5

Suffering becomes a means of the believer's receiving rewards in eternity. It provides him an opportunity to share in the glory of Christ.

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Rom. 8:16-18)

If we endure, we will also reign with Him ... (2 Tim. 2:12)

PARAGRAPH 6

The Lord Jesus Christ left us His perfect example of how to suffer for blessing.

Grace is always present to support the believer in ANY situation. Whenever the believer comes under undeserved suffering, God has made perfect provision in eternity past. This is part of the Divine Initiative of Grace. We have an example in the ultimate undeserved suffering that Jesus Christ endured on the cross for every person.

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously ... (1 Peter 2:21-23)

Note also:

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin ... (1 Peter 4:1)

PARAGRAPH 7

Suffering offers the believer a unique opportunity to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in time by applying Bible doctrine and, consequently, experiencing spiritual growth.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. (1 Peter 4:12-14)

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. (1 Peter 5:8-10)

1 Peter 5:10 reveals four results of suffering:

1. Perfect
2. Confirm / establish
3. Strengthen
4. Establish/settle

Perfect: “Perfect” is the Greek word KATARTIZO. It means to equip or furnish an athlete with everything necessary for competition. It was also used for the equipping of a soldier for combat. In the context of this passage, it refers to the fact that God equips the believer with everything necessary to execute His plan and accomplish His desire for the believer, which is for him to reach spiritual maturity. (Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 1:28; James 1:4)

Confirm: “Confirm” is the Greek word STERIZO. This word means “to fix,” or “to make fast;” “to set in place, to confirm, to establish,” i.e. to fulfill God’s purpose in life. The secret to accomplishing this is two-fold.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past ... (Rom. 16:25)

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:3-4)

These passages tell us the first part of fulfilling God’s plan is to believe the gospel, which results in salvation.

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

After salvation, the believer must begin to gain a knowledge of the mystery doctrines² of the Church Age. Without knowledge and application of doctrine, there can be no stability in the believer's life.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matt. 11: 28-30)

First, salvation; after salvation, every person has the opportunity to fulfill God's plan for his life. In the Church Age, God's plan is revealed exclusively through Bible doctrine and the filling of the Spirit.

Strengthen: “Strengthen” is the Greek word STHENO. This word means to make strong. It is God's objective to make the believer spiritually strong (2 Cor. 12:9-10). The key to spiritual strength is weakness. When we recognize our human weakness and inadequacy, God is able to demonstrate His grace and strength through us.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
(Eph. 6:10)

The position of strength is in the Lord, and this should be the believer's position for every circumstance of his life. The procedure for spiritual strength is found in Isa. 40:29-31.

He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous young men stumble badly,
Yet those who wait for the LORD
Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary.

The Bible reveals many ways to obtain spiritual strength:

1. Take in the strong meat (advanced doctrine) of the Word. (Heb. 5:12-14)

² Doctrines hidden, not revealed, in the Old Testament but revealed in the New Testament for the benefit and function of the church until the Rapture. Rom. 16:25-27; Eph. 3:1-6; Col. 1:25-27; 2:1-3. The Mystery Doctrines are taught in *Suffering 101*, lessons 75-77 of the *Joseph* series, which may be ordered on mp3 CD free of charge from Albany Bible Church.

2. Apply the faith approach to life. (Rom. 4:20)
3. Orient to grace. (2 Tim. 2:1; 2 Cor. 12:9)
4. Utilize God's weaponry that has been provided to all believers. (2 Cor. 10:4)

The result of spiritual strength is the ability to stand firm against the devil and his schemes. (1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:11; 1Peter 5:8) Spiritual strength also enables the believer to help bear the weaknesses of others. (Rom. 15:1)

Establish: This is the Greek word THEMELIO. This word means to establish on an unwavering foundation; to set up or establish a way of life or a lifestyle.

For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. (2 Tim. 1:7)

In 1 Cor. 13:13 we are given the three primary approaches to life that are essential in developing a correct spiritual lifestyle: faith, hope, and love. And James 1:6 describes the believer who does not become settled and has not developed the faith approach to life:

But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

If the believer is not on a solid foundation produced through application of doctrine, he will be tossed here and there by waves of false doctrine and the trickery of men, as described in Eph. 4:14-15:

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ ...

The believer who does not learn to deal with the adversity of life, who fails to utilize God's problem-solving devices, fragments his own life and manufactures crisis. He reacts and intensifies his problems, causing more misery, more difficulty, and more pressure for himself and all those in his periphery.

PARAGRAPH 8

Suffering can accomplish the following three things in the believer's life:

A. Suffering insulates the believer from involvement in the arrogance complex.

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor. 12:7-10)

Wrong solutions to the believer's suffering will worsen the situation, and the abuse of prayer is a wrong solution. Prayer is the channel through which the problem-solving devices are deployed. It is not the means of gaining leverage with God, nor is it a means of manipulating Him. The focus in prayer is to be on the will of God. When we are walking in His fellowship, obedient to His Word, He puts within us a desire to do His will. Therefore, when we pray in His will, we do not have to try and manipulate God because our desire is for His will to be done. Prayer should not be used to try to persuade God to give us things which may not line up with His will for us.

Grace orientation is the proper approach to suffering.

- Weakness in suffering demands the application of grace orientation, and the recognition of weakness *is* grace orientation.
- Suffering is never converted into blessing apart from the function of grace orientation.
- Suffering does not transmit or bear its meaning in itself, but rather becomes a spotlight for focusing attention on the Divine Initiative of Grace, mentioned in Paragraph 6.

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. (1 Cor. 10:13)

- The issue in adversity is not the suffering; it is the divine solution to that suffering. This solution is found through the deployment of the problem-solving devices on the Front Line of Thought of the believer's soul, i.e., application of Bible doctrine to the problem.
- If the suffering, which demands a divine solution, is removed, then the blessing which comes as a result of the suffering is also removed. The blessing is found in the solution, not in the suffering. When the believer becomes occupied with the suffering, at the same time he becomes occupied with himself.
- The existence of suffering is the challenge to apply the divine solution. Therefore, when a believer prays for the suffering to be removed, he is praying for the solution to be removed also. As a result, the blessing is also removed.

SUFFERING → SOLUTION → BLESSING

- No believer ever reaches spiritual maturity without advancing through the barrage of suffering for blessing.
- Be aware of trying to manipulate God through prayer. This is blasphemy. God cannot be manipulated.
- Paul's "thorn in the flesh" incident is a case where prayer became a form of legalism. Paul tried to use prayer as leverage for seeking what he wanted.
- Paul did reach the point where he realized that God's grace is all we need in any situation of suffering.

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. (2 Cor. 12:9)

- Success and victory come from deployment and effective utilization of the problem-solving devices. Victory is determined by how well God's solutions are applied. The Divine Initiative of Grace permits suffering and provides the solution which, in turn, glorifies God. Divine solutions do not glorify man but God. We saw in 2 Cor. 12:9-10 that God's solutions are grace solutions. They exclude human solutions such as the misuse of prayer (asking God to take away the suffering when that is not the answer), legalism, psychology, defense mechanisms, and manipulation, all of which reflect lack of faith in God's ability to provide, and they exclude mental attitude sins such as

bitterness. Paul's conclusion emphasizes the fact that deployment of God's problem-solving devices on the Front Line of Thought of the soul provides the believer with:

1. Divine solutions;
 2. Momentum in the spiritual life;
 3. Blessing in the spiritual life;
 4. Glorification of God;
 5. Dynamics of spiritual worship.
- This conclusion presents the right answers in suffering: grace orientation, the correct use of prayer, and faith in the ability of God to provide in trying circumstances. These are all divine viewpoint solutions. Bitterness, the misuse of prayer, and lack of faith in God's ability to provide blessing in the situation are several results of human viewpoint reactions which result in the application of wrong answers to the problem. The right answer is divine grace and God's problem-solving devices. The wrong answer is human solutions. In this context of undeserved suffering, prayer was misused; however, Paul oriented to God's provision, recognizing that whether God took the problem away or not, His grace was sufficient. Consequently, Paul could boast in his weakness. In 2 Cor. 12:9, he states his understanding that the solution to his problem of the thorn in the flesh is orientation to grace. He would have to accept the thorn and rely on God's provision of divine strength, the "way of escape" mentioned in 1 Cor. 10:13. As a result, Paul was able to experience God's power in his life and continue in God's happiness rather than in human bitterness and the lack of spiritual power.
 - Heb. 12:11-15 tells us that human viewpoint bitterness results in much trouble. God's provision deals with the elimination of trouble, not the manufacture of it.

All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled ...

God's purpose in undeserved suffering is not to make you suffer because He doesn't like you; He merely wants you to become a winner in your spiritual life. He wants you to win the battle of stress in your soul, the battle of sin in your life. He wants you to be free from the bondage of false doctrine and legalism, and He wants you to use the right solutions to your problems rather than the wrong ones, which lead to defeat and self-induced misery. *God's ultimate purpose and desire for you is that you share His happiness.*

B. Suffering allows the believer in spiritual self-esteem (the believer who has confidence in God because he uses God's problem-solving devices in his life) the option to express his cognitive self-confidence. Cognitive self-confidence is the believer's unwavering confidence in the provision, the purpose, and the plan of God, no matter the circumstance.

Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. (Job 13:15)

C. Suffering becomes instrumental in helping the believer establish correct values and priorities in life.

You have dealt well with Your servant,
O LORD, according to Your word.
Teach me good discernment and knowledge,
For I believe in Your commandments.
Before I was afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.
You are good and do good;
Teach me Your statutes.
The arrogant have forged a lie against me;
With all my heart I will observe Your precepts.
Their heart is covered with fat,
But I delight in Your law.
It is good for me that I was afflicted,
That I may learn Your statutes.
The law of Your mouth is better to me
Than thousands of gold and silver pieces. (Ps. 119:65-72)

PARAGRAPH 9

The Lord's promise in suffering: He will never put on the believer more than he can bear.

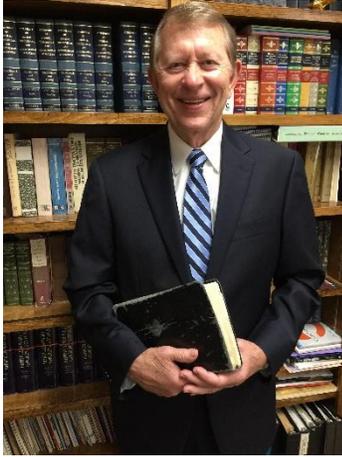
No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man;
and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond

what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (1 Cor. 10:13)

Therefore, in any aspect of suffering for blessing, the Lord remains faithful, and the only opposition to God's solutions is our own arrogance. The great conflict in the believer's soul is between divine grace and human arrogance. The Divine Initiative of Grace represents God's solutions to the difficulties we face, while the human initiative of arrogance represents man's solutions, which inevitably factor out God's GRACE and the emphasis of FAITH.

- What God does not remove, He intends for us to bear, using His provisions, of course.
- Suffering for blessing = Grace solutions = Divine blessing. This is the Grace Order of Battle for the believer living in time.
- The blessing is in the solution, not in the suffering. Remove the suffering, and you remove the solution. Remove the solution, and you remove the blessing designed by God for you, the opportunity to share the perfect happiness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (John 15:11)



Albany native, W. W. "Pete" Daughtry was called to be the pastor-teacher of Albany Bible Church shortly after the church was formed in 1974. He attended Emmaus Bible College in Chicago, Illinois, and has studied intensively for over 40 years under the teaching of R. B. Thieme, Jr., of Berachah church in Houston. The principle focus of Pete's teaching pastorate has been to clearly present the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the procedures for living the unique spiritual life provided for believers in the Church Age. Pete has authored a number of publications, including Little Faiths, The Shield of Faith, Mothers are Human Too, and others, all available through Albany Bible Church.



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