

The Inner Man- Trials part 6

- I.** There is a difference between punishment and trials.
1. Punishment is designed by God to change behavior (Heb. 12:11).
 - 1) Punishment is preceded by the Holy Spirit's grieving (Eph. 4:30).
 - 2) Punishment increases in degree until God's goal is met (1 Cor. 11:30).
 2. Trials are designed by God to strengthen the believer's faith (Rom. 5:3-4).
 - 1) The Holy Spirit provides enabling in the inner man (2 Cor. 4:16).
 - 2) The Holy Spirit provides comfort and joy (2 Cor. 7:4).
 3. Trials are different from temptation, although if the Christian's thoughts stray to a negative lust, then temptation may follow.
- II.** Persecution as a trial.
1. Basic meaning *to follow, to pursue with the intent of physical or mental harm.*
 2. Paul pursued the Church (Acts 8:1; 9:4; 22:4; 1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13, 23; Phil. 3:6).
 3. The Jews pursued Paul and Barnabus (Acts 13:50).
 4. "Christian" legalists pursue those who teach and practice grace (Gal. 4:29-5:11).
 5. Persecution can be used so Christians demonstrated patience and faith (2 Thes. 1:4).
 6. Persecution provides the opportunity for the Christian to appreciate divine enabling (2 Cor. 12:10).