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### The Hard Journey Home

While we're passing through this present world,  
we should expect to suffer for being a Christian!

1 Peter 4:12, NIV

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

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### The Hard Journey Home

If you find the godless world is hating you, remember it got its start hating me...in this godless world, you will continue to experience difficulties...anyone signing up for the Kingdom of God has got to go through plenty of hard times...anyone who wants to live all out for Christ is in for a lot of trouble.

John 15:18 & 16:33, Acts 14:22, 2 Timothy 3:12, MSG

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### The Heat Test

God puts us in the furnace of suffering to prove and improve our faith!

1 Peter 4:12, NIV

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

1 Peter 1:7, NLT

These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold.

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### What A Privilege!

Christian suffering is a special blessing. It is an honor to be dishonored on account of Christ's name!

1 Peter 4:13-14 & 16, NIV

But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ... If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed... if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

Acts 5:41, NLT

The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus.

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### Glory Up Ahead—Around The Bend!

When we suffer as a Christian, it confirms that we are on the right road!

1 Peter 4:13-14, NIV

But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Matthew 5:11-12, NIV

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven...

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### Some "Persecution" Is Deserved!

Not all suffering as a Christian is actual Christian suffering.

1 Peter 4:15-16, NIV

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed...

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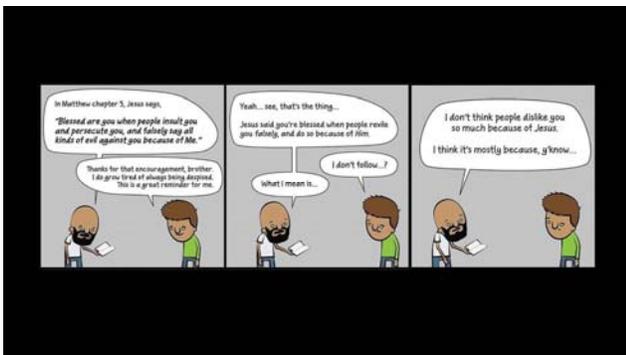
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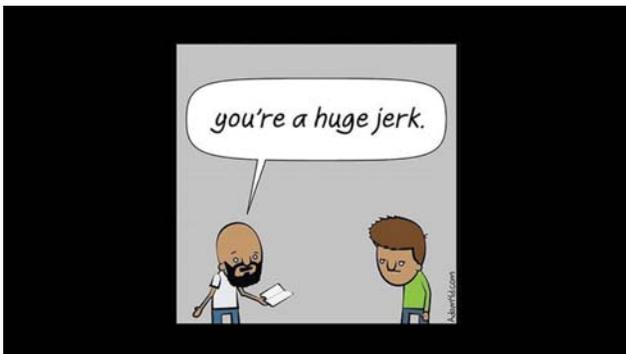
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### The Only Journey That Ends Well

Better to experience God's *purifying* judgment now for awhile than his *punishing* judgment later and forever!

1 Peter 4:17-18, NIV

For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

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### For YOU—Will Life Finally Get Better Or Worse?

*For Christians,  
this present life is the closest they will come to hell.*

*For unbelievers,  
this present life is the closest they will come to heaven.*

Randy Alcorn: Heaven

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### The Bottom Line On Christian Suffering

**You're on the right road! Keep walking!**

**No matter how hard things get along the journey—  
God will see to it that you arrive home!**

1 Peter 4:19, NIV

So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

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