

**Who is the Bride? – Part 8
Sharing His Sufferings**

Phil 3:9-10

–Who enjoys pain?

•Paul says *he is willing to suffer any pain necessary to come into deeper intimacy with the Lord.*

•*We will never fully know Him until we are willing to suffer with Him.*

–The apostle was so captured by God’s love that it led him to death, but he did not care!

•*Who desires to know the Lord so intimately, like Paul that we would willingly suffer with Him and not just wave banners in a nice air-conditioned room?*

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Phil 3:9-10

–He identified with us completely to redeem us, and He longs for an eternal partner to identify completely with Himself, with whom He’s able to share everything!

•*He invites us to know Him so deeply that we respond to His love by voluntarily taking up our cross.*

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Luke 14:26-27: *“If anyone comes after Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”*

–Taking up the cross and voluntarily suffering is an opportunity to love Jesus the same way He has loved us.

•*Nothing touches the Lord’s heart or draws His presence as a life laid down in suffering love.*

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Heb. 5:8-9: "...though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him."

- **Obedience to the Lord always brings the cross.**
 - **This is the main reason we walk in disobedience!**
- **"Obedience" means "to hear under."**
 - It literally means to *hear with a submissive attitude.*
 - **Love never fails, and love always submits to the Father's will.**

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Maturing Love in the Bridal Soul:

- "...it is wonderful to see the throng of those who throughout history have loved this true Lover, and the unprecedented fervor and perfection with which He is loved... They have left their country, they have rid themselves of their possessions, they have renounced the love of flesh and blood and, greater still, have renounced their love of themselves... they chose to die to all things and even strip themselves of everything... so that the love of Jesus might be the form, the life, the

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Maturing Love in the Bridal Soul:

- **Love of the "fair" maiden:**
 - **Song 2:16:** "My beloved is mine, and I am his."
 - **The bridal soul loves Him for what He's done or does.**
- **Love of the "immature" bride:**
 - **Song 6:3:** "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."
 - **The bridal soul loves Him for WHO He is.**
- **Love of the "mature" bride:**
 - **Song 7:10:** "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."
 - **The bridal soul voluntarily loves Him AND loves what He loves, even if it brings loss and suffering.**

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Maturing Love in the Bridal Soul:

~~–The more we pursue, love and obey Him, the more hurt we will experience.~~

~~•The closer we come to Him, the more we will be hated and abused.~~

~~•But, the inward life will find the “shadow of the Most High.”~~

~~–Obedience produces the greatest intimacy, but at the same time the greatest persecution.~~

~~•With greater intimacy and greater glory, comes pain.~~

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Maturing Love in the Bridal Soul:

~~–He’s looking for a Bride with which to share intimacy including His joys and pain.~~

~~•Experiencing the same pain makes the joy even more joyous!~~

~~–He’s looking for a Bride who will willingly suffer the same sufferings, just because she loves Him.~~

~~•Anything less is immaturity, not qualifying for bridehood, or, worse, a harlot....~~

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Maturing Love in the Bridal Soul:

~~–The Father promised the Son a bride who would love Him like He loved her.~~

~~–She will be like Him so He will be able to relate to her, and she will be His partner for all eternity.~~

~~–This means being conformed to His death and knowing the fellowship of HIS sufferings, willing to suffer for His name and purposes.~~

~~–When the Father sees the heart of this bride willingly suffering to please Him, JUST LIKE THE SON DID, then it will be time for the Son to come get her.~~
