**Suffering for the Glory of God**

**Week 1: The Problem of Suffering and the Bible’s Answer**

 *The wisdom of God and a call to trust*

**Week 2: God’s Revealed Purposes for Suffering**

 *How God can use suffering for our good and His glory*

**Week 3: The Future of Suffering**

 *The importance of heaven and hell for a suffering Christian*

**Week 4: God’s Grief over Suffering**

 *The empathy of a suffering God*

**Week 5: Unbiblical Reactions to Suffering**

 *Temptations to find hope in what is passing away*

**Week 6: Fighting for faith, Part 1**

 *Struggling for faith in God’s sovereignty and goodness*

**Week 7: Fighting for faith, Part 2**

 *Helping others fight for faith in the local church*

**Week 8: Sharing Their Burdens**

 *A biblical perspective on the relief of physical suffering*

**Week 9: Suffering as Witness**

 *Making the most of your suffering for the glory of God*

**Week 10: Applying the Framework**

 *Suffering through illness*

 **Week 11: Suffering for the gospel**

 *Biblical wisdom for the persecuted*

**Week 12: The Secret of Contentment**

 *Finding joy in Christ in any and every situation*

**Week 13: Panel Discussion**

**Questions?** Email

***Core Seminars—Suffering for God’s Glory***

**Class 12: The Secret of Contentment**

*Finding joy in Christ in any and every situation*

**Introduction**

1. **Contentment – *What it is…***

**Philippians 4:10-12** “I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.”

* 1. *What it is –*
	2. *What it is not –*
		1. *It is not anti-ambition*
			1. *Paul had ambition*
			2. *Paul attacked selfish ambition*
		2. *It is not indifference to circumstances*

**Acts 16:37-39** “…They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens…Let them come themselves and take us out.”

**1 Corinthians 7:20-21** “Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called...But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.”

1. **Contentment – *How to find it…***
	1. *By experience*

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10** “To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness…”

* 1. *By doing the work in front of you*

**Philippians 2:12-13** “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

* 1. *By listening to truth rather than emotions*

* 1. *By being truly satisfied in Christ*

**Philippians 4:12-13** “…I have learned the secret of being content…I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

**Philippians 3:8** “What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.”

**John 7:37-38** “…If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”