

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

June 30, 2019

“Discipleship 601”

8:00 ~ Service - Communion is for all Christians

9:30 ~ Fellowship & Adult Sunday school

10:30 ~ Service with the King's Kid's - Communion is for all Christians

NEWS

Potluck Next Sunday at 12:00

Church Camp August 23rd to the 25th

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ www.myaetheia.com ~ Hear a sermon at

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- 1) What is the full meaning of “Confesses”?
- 2) Shouldn't we judge ourselves and others based upon performance?
- 3) Why must we hate our family members, if God is love?

MATTHEW 10:32&33 ~ ³²NASB“Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. ³³“But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

You resolutely swear the oath _____, you wear the uniform _____, you go where they say _____, you do what they say _____ and you live as they say _____, even if it means you lose your life.

“Confess” is ὁμολογέω (hō-mō-lō-gě-ō). It means to _____ externally the _____ as what is true internally.

Jesus doesn't merely vouch for the faithful disciple. If Jesus confesses you, you are _____ by the Father as well. (Revelation 3:5).

Anyone denying Jesus, in any way, to any degree, would certainly be _____ forever.

Yet... Peter denied Jesus ___ times _____ & _____. (Matthew 26:70-74 Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:55-62, John 18:16-27).

Yet, Peter was _____ & _____ (John 21:15-19, Acts 2).

If confession is an endurance to the end, so then is _____.

God will judge righteously by seeing, searching, testing and trying each person's heart and mind (Jeremiah 11:20, 17:10, 20:12, Psalm 7:9, Revelation 2:23).

Righteousness isn't found in people - righteousness worthy of God is only found in _____.

God is bigger than the human _____ of His children.

If my performance is good, I think well of myself, which means I think _____ of Jesus. If my performance is poor, I think poorly of myself, which means I think _____ of Jesus. Why insist on making it about our performance to the detriment of Jesus and His performance?

Jesus doesn't _____ those who are His, just because they are weak.

II Peter 1:10&11, "Practice these things," is to diligently, intentionally, yield to the Holy Spirit within, to conform you to Christ... Focus on Jesus.

Peter was ready for a fight, just not _____ fight (John 18:10). In Luke 22:32, Jesus told Peter "I have prayed for you" and "Once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

The relationship metaphorically seen as Father-Son, is the Word of God voluntarily _____ to the Will of God. They, along with the Breath of God exist in a perfectly harmonious, internal and eternal relationship. The certainty of their relationship makes for the _____ of ours.

MATTHEW 10:34-39 ~ ³⁴NASB“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵“For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household. ³⁷“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸“And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹“He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

The sword Jesus brings is not a sword of war, it is a knife to cut. It divides. The Message of peace requires a _____ between two opposite positions. The peace that Jesus brings is the choice that divides.

Three times Jesus used the verb ἔρχομαι (ĕř-ĉhŏ-mī). To come. Here He is talking about His _____.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

Verse 36 reuses the term "Household." Jesus implied that His disciples are part of His household. All, even those within your own earthly _____ who oppose Him, will likewise oppose your connection to Him.

Now we see the true _____ of these difficult verses where it seems we must hate our parents and our children in order to be good Christians.

His point was that if you _____ your human family, who oppose Him, more than you _____ Him, you will deny, not confess Him.

If the choice is them or Jesus, always choose _____.

Jesus demonstrated it in His Own earthy life (Mark 3:6-35). Even when family opposition to your Christianity is driven by fear for your _____ and _____, it is still opposition to Christ and cannot be countenanced.

Always seek Jesus _____ - always put Him ahead of all else.

Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

_____ I want to talk with the pastor about _____

_____ I want prayer for _____

_____ I want to volunteer to _____

_____ I want more information about _____

_____ Other _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 10f ~ 063019

Welcome Friends

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW
A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

Matthew 10:32&33 ~

32“Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33“But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.



You resolutely swear the oath publicly, you wear the uniform proudly, you go where they say go, you do what they say do and you live as they say live... even if it means you lose your physical life. That's why we celebrate veterans - why we should celebrate veterans. Whether they did anything noteworthy or not - they travelled the road that could lead to noteworthy events including physical death.

This young lieutenant is confessing the Marine Corps. Not just once in a public ceremony, but every day. Not just with his words, but with his whole being. "Confess" is ὁμολογέω (hō-mō-lō-gě-ō). It is ὁμο, in English, homo, meaning the same, plus λογέω, related to

Logos, meaning to speak. The Logos being the content of what was spoken.

It is literally to speak externally the same as what is true internally. Speak takes on the idea of all physical reality and so it is to externally be what one is internally. It is a fundamental agreement between the mind and the words - the heart and the actions - the soul and the life. Not only is it not saying what is false or duplicitous, it is also not just saying what is harmoniously true - it is living what is harmoniously true with mind and body - the two agree - they are the same.

Our young Lieutenant here is a believer, and His voice, his conduct, his life, reflect that reality.

Trust me when I say, if you were to try him in a court of law, seeking to convict him of being a Marine, it would be easiest case win imaginable. He is obviously guilty to the most casual observer and would be convicted by even the most intractable juror. The ample evidence against him along with the sworn testimony of countless witnesses would be unnecessary, because He would proudly and boldly declare his guilt on the witness stand.



Now, if you were on trial for being a Christian?

So, as you can see, true Biblical Confession, by its very definition, cannot be hidden. Jesus added the phrase, “Before men,” because the immediate context is giving a testimony, not because He was saying the confession must be public... That the confession must be public is a linguistic given.

The 12, potentially being brought before religious and secular courts were required to Confess Jesus publicly with the actions and with their words. Beyond that, not only were they were to plead guilty to being in league

with Him, they were to use their right to testify as an opportunity to preach His Message to the court.

If they overcame their natural fear of man and what he could do, with Trust in Jesus and what their Heavenly Father could do, then Jesus would likewise confess them, testifying on their behalf, in the Court of God.

That's the symmetry of the argument. But, please note that while the human judges may or may not be moved by the disciple's testimony, the Father will agree with Jesus' testimony. Note the tenor of the discourse. Nothing is left to mere potentiality or probability... This positive future is certain.

Because Jesus doesn't merely vouch for the faithful disciple and the Father then deliberates, making His decision weighing all the available evidence along with Jesus' character reference. The clear implication is that if Jesus confesses you, you are unequivocally accepted and embraced by the Father as well.

Jesus is recorded in Revelation 3:5 saying to John in his apocalyptic vision that the person "Who overcomes," or endures until the end, is the person that Jesus "Will confess" to the "Father." That person is said

to have their name in the Lamb's "Book of Life" and to be "Clothed in white garments" indicating their status as being "Worthy."

Jesus is more than our attorney, more than our star witness, more than a character reference. Jesus and the Father are in perfect accord. Jesus will either say, "Well done, enter the Kingdom," and you will, or Jesus will say, "Away from Me - I never knew you," and you will be lost forever.



There are only two possible outcomes and so there are only two possible paths - the path of confession or the

path of denial. You are presently on one of those roads. Why doesn't everyone choose the sunny path?

Unlike the unity of the whole person implied in the word confess, the word deny requires no such harmony. Whereas Biblical confession is a whole person agreement to a proposition, denial can be any part of the person disagreeing.

A person can deny with their heart, their head, their words, or with their actions - any of it will suffice - internal-external agreement is unnecessary for denial to be effective. A person can deny Jesus with any part of themselves and it will work.

Jesus clearly stated that anyone confessing Him in the way we've discussed will be eternally secure, but anyone denying Him would just as certainly be condemned forever.

The same word deny is used near the end of this Gospel. Matthew 26:70-74 records the Apostle Peter responding to a claim that he was with Jesus, 70NLTBut Peter denied it in front of everyone. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said. A little later another person made the claim. 72NLTAgain Peter

denied it, this time with an oath. “I don’t even know the man,” he said. A third time the claim was made.

74NIVThen he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!” Of course, we know that, “Immediately a rooster crowed,” and that “The Lord turned and looked at Peter” and that Peter “Went out and wept bitterly” (Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:55-62, John 18:16-27).

We also know that not only was Peter restored by Jesus, He was commissioned as the first leader of the fledgling Christian Community. It is no coincidence that it was Peter who stood up, took the reins and publicly preached that amazing sermon on the Day of Pentecost that resulted in 3,000 new Christians (Acts 2).

Peter clearly denied Jesus. He denied Him multiple times, he did it publicly and he did it vehemently. His denial of Jesus came when Jesus needed him most. It wasn’t like things were going well for Jesus and Peter simply unfriended Him on Facebook. Jesus was literally on trial for His life and Peter did everything humanly possible to refuse any tie with Him whatsoever. It doesn’t get much worse than that!

Yet... Not only didn't Jesus deny Peter. Not only did Jesus restore him, Jesus made Peter His under-shepherd to "Feed" and "Tend," Jesus' "Lambs" and "Sheep" (John 21:15-19). What gives?

If confession is an endurance to the end, so then is denial.

It has to do, not with events, but with the true heart. It has to do with the path you're on and the trajectory of that path. It is conceivable to be on the broad road paved with good intentions that leads to the fiery Gehenna and do something noble, kind a good. That doesn't mean you switched roads. More than a possibility, it is a certainty that if you are on the narrow road marked with suffering that leads to Heaven, you will stumble and fall - that does not mean you switched roads.



The Lord Restores His Own

While Jesus is still talking to the 12, He is also still using universally applicable language. It applied to them and it applies to us as well. The lesson for every person is that God will judge righteously by “Seeing,” “Searching,” “Testing” and “Trying” each person’s “Heart and mind” (Jeremiah 11:20, 17:10, 20:12, Psalm 7:9, Revelation 2:23).

Righteousness isn’t found in people - in their hearts, or their minds - righteousness worthy of Almighty God is only found in Jesus. It is our confession of Jesus that activates His righteousness. No one is righteous apart from confessing Jesus. That true confession puts us on

the confession path and while we may fail at times, by His grace we are still on the path.

The subject of denial before confession is super easy. Before confession a person is dead in their sins and bound for eternal separation. They deny, because that's the road they're on.

Denial after the fact seems far more complicated, but it really isn't. If a person has confessed and therefore been regenerated as a Holy Spirit filled Child of God, it is possible for them to deny Christ in times of great anguish, despair, pain and disillusionment... At the end of the day, it is denying Christ because of human weakness.

God is bigger than human weakness in His children. I know many of us want to take full responsibility for our failures... But if you think about it what that really means is, we want to take full credit for our performance.

If my performance is good, I think well of myself, which means I think less of Jesus. If my performance is poor, I think poorly of myself, which means I think less of Jesus. If His blood saved me and it is His righteous

robe I wear, then why do I insist on making it about me and my performance to the detriment of Jesus and His performance?

If a genuine Child of God denies Jesus it is nothing more than their humanness getting the better of them and Jesus will still save that lost lamb because their denial isn't real. They're still on the road of confession even though they have stumbled greatly.

Like Peter it is a weakness of the flesh in the moment. It is a failure that is wept over bitterly and one that spurs the person to love the Lord even more as they realize that Jesus isn't fickle in His friendship.

Jesus doesn't abandon those who are His just because they are weak. There will be some discipline involved and there may even be some punishment in the form of dealing with the consequences, but the person will be restored.

If a person who was fully engaged in Christianity were to truly deny Christ, it means that they never had the Holy Spirit dwelling within and the righteousness of Jesus covering them. Even though it seemed so, they were never on the road of confession in the first place -

maybe their words and deeds were there, but their true heart never was.

The problem for us is we may at times be tempted to question our status. That is why the Bible exhorts us over and over to “Stay the course, finish the race, fight the good fight, endure to the end, never deny Jesus in any way, shape or form, work out your salvation in fear and trembling.

As Peter Himself said in II Peter 1:10&11,
10NASBTherefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

“Practice these things,” is to diligently, intentionally work to yield to the Holy Spirit within to conform you to Christ so that your confession of Him is visible in your life and conduct... Focus on Jesus and the finish line, don't get distracted by this world and all your cares and concerns - trust Him and “You will never stumble,” but will enter “The eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Peter denied Jesus because he was caught off guard even though Jesus told him he would deny Him just a few hours earlier. Peter was ready for a fight - he had a sword and actually used it to hack a guy's ear off (John 18:10). What he wasn't prepared for was the reality of being led to slaughter without a fight (Mark 14:27-31, John 13:37&38). We can never be ready for everything, but we can prepare. Pray for the Holy Spirit strength to see you through - pray for one another that your faith will not fail. We get a final bit of insight from Luke 22:31&32, where Jesus told Peter, 31NASB“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; 32but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

Failure is part of being human, Jesus is much bigger than that. Do your best, pray always, when you fall, get up, acknowledge the error, turn away from it by turning towards Jesus and keep moving forward knowing that He's got you.



Back to our verses... The underlying Greek word for “Everyone,” literally means everyone without exception. “Everyone,” regardless of time, age, location, vocation, or any other factor... “Everyone,” who lives Christ out loud in conformity to the Christ within, will likewise be assured of entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus had just said that the unimaginably powerful and fiercely just God is “Your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32), and now He uses the title in relation to Himself. The Father is His Father as well, but Biblically there is a difference. The difference is their relationship is an intimate, eternal reality, metaphorically seen as a

Father-Son relationship as the Word of God voluntarily submitted to the Will of God.

They, along with the Breath of God have been in perfect harmonious internal relationship for time without beginning and without end.

The certainty of their relationship makes for the certainty of ours. If Jesus confesses you - you're in, period. There is nothing to fear in Christ.



Matthew 10:34-39 ~ 34“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35“For I came to set a man against

his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; 36and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. 37"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38"And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39"He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

I spent so much time talking about what it is to "Confess," because once we have a firm grasp on that the rest just fleshes it out. Jesus told the guys to go out and be men of peace and offer peace to those you meet. The entire goal is to bring peace - that's the mission.

The problem is that anyone who brings true peace does so by bringing Truth and Light. There cannot be actual peace otherwise. Under dictatorial rule the diverse people of the former Yugoslavia got along famously.

As soon as the authoritarian control was broken the "peaceful" people descended into civil war resulting in mass genocide and war crimes and a country divided

into 7 countries today. Peace is not merely the absence of war.

Peace is also not a feeling - it is a reality that can result in a feeling. The ultimate peace is peace with God. When a person grasps, accepts, embraces and lives out the peace they have with God through Christ they can finally come to peace with themselves. Once the peace is established internally it can manifest externally as peace with all others.

Peace is impossible without forgiveness... Guess what? Most people do not want peace with God, or with themselves, or with others. It seems strange, but it is too uncomfortable, too raw, too much effort, too much Truth and definitely too much light.

Most humans would far rather wallow in war to keep the status quo, than to change in order to forgive and receive forgiveness in order to make peace.

As Jesus has been saying all along - people will resist to the point of open warfare if you try to shine the Light of God's Truth into their pitiful little lives.

There is a massive mistake that Christians make in reference to this idea that Jesus came to bring a sword and that we are at war with the opponents of the Light of Truth.

We take that to mean that we are at war with them. We're not! We are at peace with them - that's why they are at war with us. Please see the difference... Please.

The sword Jesus brings is not a sword of war, it is a knife to cut. It divides.

The Message of hope was a Message of repentance and so it was an uncomfortable Message. A Message requiring self-evaluation and change. A different Message than the one they held dear and most of all a Message that requires a choice between two polar opposite positions.

We can have a lot of different views on a lot of different topics, but as Jesus just made clear, when it comes to Him there are only two possible positions.

People must choose a side or a path - delaying the decision is a decision to stay on the side of resistance - on the path of denial. For them then it was a choice

between Rabbinical Judaism or Jesus as Messiah. That choice divided families.

The choice itself, is the knife, that Jesus brings. Three times in these verses Jesus used the verb ἔρχομαι (ěř-čĥŏ-mī). To come. Here He is talking about His preexistence... Jesus, unlike any creature who has ever lived, came down to earth from Heaven - from the Father.

Even though His mission in coming to humanity was to establish peace - it inevitably creates division as not everyone wants the peace He offers, in the way He offers it.



The family divisions Jesus mentioned make the universal nature even more obvious by coupling both genders.

Verse 36 reuses the term “Household.” We last saw that when Jesus indicated that His disciples are part of His “Household.” The idea is obvious. If you confess Christ with your life you are part of His household - His family. As such all those, even those within your own earthly family, who oppose Him and are His enemies will likewise oppose you and be your enemies.

The fact is, you are either fully devoted to your new family, or you are held back from true confession by

your old one. Your human associations either help you on the Confession road, or they hinder you from walking that path. Don't allow anyone - even your dearest human relative or friend hold you back from being a member of God's eternal family.

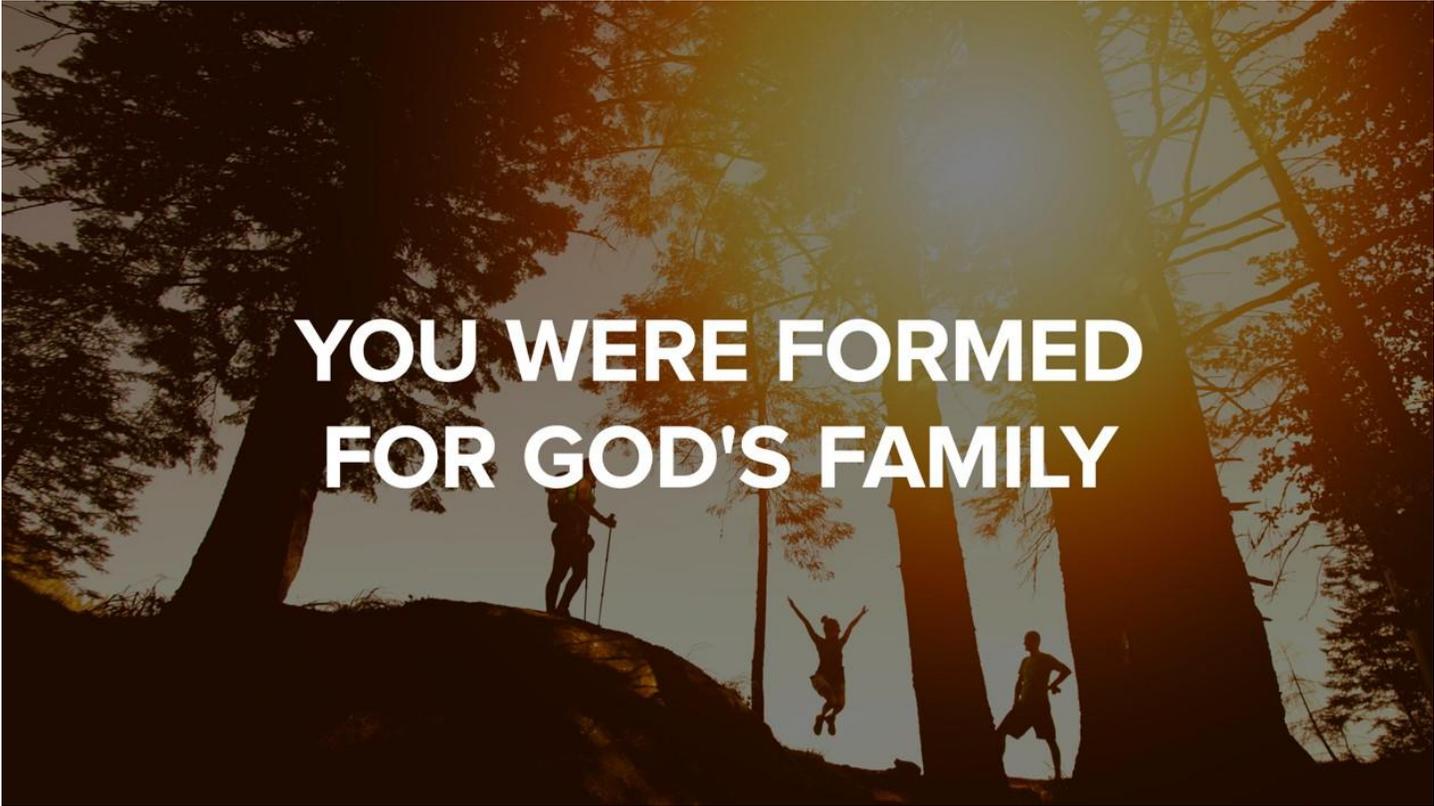
Now we see the true context of these difficult verses where it seems we must hate our parents and our children in order to be good Christians.

Jesus' point was that if you love your human family who oppose Him more than you love Him, you will deny, not confess Him.

There is a choice, but it isn't just whether you choose Christ or not, it is that you choose Christ above all else that stands in the way of your full confession of Him.

Lose your life in this world that opposes the Savior and you will gain eternal life in Him.

Be willing to give up your relationship with anyone, no matter who they are to you physically and emotionally, if the choice is them or Jesus. Always choose Jesus over people who insist that you choose them instead of Him. That's the point.



YOU WERE FORMED FOR GOD'S FAMILY

Jesus demonstrated it in His Own earthy life. Mark 3:6, talking about Jesus says, 6NASBThe Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him. Dropping down to verse 21 talking about Jesus' family's response says, 21When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses." Now, dropping down to verse 31, 31Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him. 32A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." 33Answering

them, He said, “Who are My mother and My brothers?”
34 Looking about at those who were sitting around Him,
He said, “Behold My mother and My brothers! 35 “For
whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and
sister and mother.”

Now we have the context of those startling verses.
Even when family opposition to your Christianity is
driven by fear for your safety and well-being, it is still
opposition to Christ and cannot be countenanced.

I knew a gentleman in his mid-eighties who was dying.
One of his greatest traumas in life was losing a 12-
year-old sister while he was away in the military during
WWII. He deeply regretted not being there for her as
she passed.

On his deathbed he was preoccupied with the notion
that he would see her and somehow make up for his
absence. He was focused on seeking her out first.

I was quite frankly worried and told him over and over,
that he just needed to focus on Jesus and seek Him
out first and then everything else would be fine.

No matter how much love or guilt you bear. No matter how wonderful or needy your family and friends are... Always seek Jesus first - always put Him ahead of all else and it will be fine.

We'll talk a bit about carrying your own cross and losing your life next time - Lord willing. Let me leave you with this thought... Would the original audience seen either thing as metaphorical for suffering? If so, what kind of suffering?

