Can a woman give birth without experiencing labor pains? That would be a strange and unnatural thing. Why? Because labor pains are part of the divine design for bringing forth life.

Even the Bible acknowledges this divine pattern:

Isaiah 66:7–8 (NKJV)

> *“Before she was in labor, she gave birth;*
> *Before her pain came,*
> *She delivered a male child.*
> *Who has heard such a thing?*
> *Who has seen such things?*
> *Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?*
> *Or shall a nation be born at once?*
> *For as soon as Zion was in labor,*
> *She gave birth to her children.”*

This prophetic imagery refers not only to Israel’s restoration but also illustrates a spiritual principle: for new life to be born

whether physical or spiritual there must be pain, labor, and sacrifice. No one comes into this world without someone else suffering for them. And the same is true in the spiritual realm.

The Theology of Spiritual Travail

This principle is mirrored in salvation history. Christ Himself labored in Gethsemane, sweating drops of blood (Luke 22:44), and suffered on the cross to give birth to the Church (Acts 20:28). So, it follows that anyone brought into Christ must also come through spiritual labor someone paying a price in prayer, tears, and discipleship.

Paul's Example: Birthing Spiritual Children

The Apostle Paul understood this deeply:

Galatians 4:19 (NKJV)

> *"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you."*

The Greek word used here for "labor in birth" is *ōdinō* (ὠδίνω),

which literally means to feel the pains of childbirth. Paul is not just expressing emotion he’s pointing to the spiritual agony and intercession required to disciple others into maturity in Christ (cf. Colossians 1:28-29).

These Galatian believers had received the gospel but were turning back to the Law. Paul, like a spiritual mother, says he must go through the pain again to see them restored to the image of Christ. This is not just evangelism this is spiritual formation.

Three Characteristics of Spiritual Labor

Just like in natural childbirth, spiritual travail has defining traits:

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1. Travail Involves Weeping and Intercession

Spiritual birthing always begins with tears. Before revival or repentance comes to a person, a family, or a nation, there must be deep intercession.

Acts 20:31 (NKJV)

> *“Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.”*

This wasn’t mere preaching. It was preaching with weeping the fruit of burdened prayer. Paul’s tears were an extension of Christ’s heart for the lost (cf. Matthew 9:36). Today, many want to see transformation in their homes or churches but are not willing to pray through the night, fast, and weep over lost souls.

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2. Travail Invites Spiritual Warfare

Natural childbirth carries risks pain, bleeding, even death. Likewise, spiritual travail draws the attention of the enemy. Satan resists the birth of new life because every soul delivered from sin is a soul snatched from his dominion (Colossians 1:13).

Revelation 12:1–4 (NKJV)

> *“...The woman, clothed with the sun...*
> *Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to*

> *give birth...*
> *And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth,*
> *to devour her Child as soon as it was born."*

This imagery shows the constant battle between the Church (the woman) and the devil (the dragon). Whenever you intercede for someone's salvation, don't be surprised if opposition comes emotional discouragement, strange delays, health challenges, or relational conflicts. These are often strategic distractions from the enemy.

But the power within you is greater:

1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

> *"He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."*

Don't be discouraged when the person you're praying for seems unresponsive. Don't stop just because they start resisting. Spiritual birth is a battle, and perseverance is part of the process.

3. Travail Ends in Great Joy

Labor is painful but the result is pure joy.

John 16:21 (NKJV)

> *“A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come;*
> *but as soon as she has given birth to the child,*
> *she no longer remembers the anguish,*
> *for joy that a human being has been born into the world.”*

This is what happens when someone truly comes to Christ not just emotionally moved, but spiritually reborn. That’s when every tear, every prayer, and every sacrifice feels worth it. The burden is replaced by rejoicing, and even heaven celebrates:

Luke 15:10 (NKJV)

> *“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”*

A Challenge for You

So I ask: Where is your labor?

Can you look at anyone today and say, “This is my spiritual child. I travailed for them in prayer. I discipled them in Christ”? Or have you simply passed by, said “Jesus loves you,” and led them in a short prayer then left them to figure it out?

Too many claim to have “accepted Christ,” but show no evidence of new life. Why? Because they were never spiritually born, only emotionally influenced.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

> *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

True conversion produces transformation a new life, a new heart,

a new direction.

Conclusion: Let’s Labor Until Christ Is Formed in Them

Spiritual parenting is not casual it is costly. It means teaching, praying, following up, fasting, and loving consistently. It means refusing to give up until Christ is formed in them.

This is what Jesus did for us. This is what Paul modeled for the Church. And this is what we are called to do for others.

May the Lord give you gracefully.

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