

1 Peter 4:12-19 Christian Suffering-A Biblical Perspective

All Bible Verses are in the ESV Version
© 2001-2012 Crossway.
All rights reserved.
All emphasis added/insertions are mine

1

Consider the words of Jesus & apostles regarding the Christian life

Matthew 10:22 *And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*

John 15:18-20 *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*

Acts 14:22 *Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."*

2

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

1 Peter 4:12-19

We (must) walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor 5:7)

**The Christian life is a battle of faith
(A battle to see with the eyes of our heart)**

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

What is faith according to scripture?

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*

1 Peter 4:7-11

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. 17 For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. Context of v12-19 is Christian suffering for Christ sake (persecution)

Beloved-What we are going through is only true for the Christian

Do not be surprised at the fiery trial:

- We should not be surprised when we are persecuted for Christ-sake
- **John 15:20** Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you
- **2 Timothy 3:12** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

– As you grow in Christ-likeness, your persecution will grow

– It is Christ living in and through you that they hate (Galatians 2:20)

– Peter has already mentioned suffering throughout this epistle (1 Peter 1:4-7, 2:11-12, 2:19, 3:8-9, 14, 17)

– As the world is going "from bad to worse" (2 Tim 3:13) persecution will increase

What would happen if in the midst of your suffering you set your mind on these realities? (Stop complaining and start rejoicing?)

- **Matthew 5:11-12** Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
- **Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
- **2 Corinthians 4:17** For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison

That you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed

- **Acts 5:40-41** And when they called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name
- **Acts 5:40-41** And when they called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name

Insofar as you share Christ's sufferings: Suffering for Christ sake

gives evidence that you are an heir with Him (Rom 8:17) but in light of that we must "rejoice"

Here Peter commands us to not only realize that we are being tested,

also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may

When, by God's grace, we stand the testing of our faith (in suffering/fiery trials), our faith is proved to be true.

- **James 1:2** Count it all joy my brothers when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect & complete lacking in nothing.
 - **Luke 8:13** And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.
 - **1 Peter 1:6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire-may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - **James 1:2** Count it all joy my brothers when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect & complete lacking in nothing.
 - **Luke 8:13** And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.
 - **1 Peter 1:6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire-may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- **How does suffering/fiery trials test us?** It tests our faith to prove if it is genuine or not.
- Often we struggle to believe this because we can't see the good in our suffering (This is one aspect of the battle of faith)
- **Fiery Trial (ordeal) to test you**-The purpose of the fiery trial is to test you (faith)

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

- 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.**
- If you suffer reproach for the name of Christ, do not be ashamed
 - Rather praise God for the privilege to suffer for Christ sake
 - **Philippians 1:29** For it has been **granted** to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him but also suffer for His sake

- 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.**
- We must make sure when we suffer, that we are not suffering for our sin.
- Don't be arrogant or rude and then claim the response of others as persecution

- Example of this in scripture:**
- Stephen Acts 6-7 (6:15, 7:54-60)**
- Hebrews 4:15-16** For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- Praise the Lord, this truth brings such hope
 - This too requires faith because we want the grace now for future persecution
 - **Hebrews 4:15-16** For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- When you are persecuted for the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you
- 14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.**

— We must realize we are sanctified in our suffering/persecution

God.
**“Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of
 encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying,
 • Acts 14:22 Strengthening the souls of the disciples,**

— The reiteration that the Christian life is one of suffering

more the wicked and the sinner!
 — **Proverbs 11:31** *If the righteous is repaid on earth, how much*

become of the godless man and the sinner?
NASB *And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will*

***18 And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what
 will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”***

11

obey the gospel)

Main point of this verse is comparing the purifying judgment of the
 Christian with the eternal judgment of the lost (Those who do not

— God is purifying His church preparing her for the return of Christ

so that we may not be condemned along with the world.
 — **1 Corinthians 11:32** *But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined*

judgment (Purifying)

- The judgment regarding the “household of God” is a refining
 - Peter deals with that thought here (Possibly a reference to Mal 3:1-5)
- disobedience?”

suffering for doing good and they are seemingly being blessed for
 can sometimes look at the world and begin to wonder “Why am I

As we strive to obey God and suffer persecution for doing good, we

do not obey the gospel of God?

***17 For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God,
 and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who***

**19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will
entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.**

Two important truths in this verse:

- Our suffering is "according to God's will"
- It is never going to be more than we can bear (with His grace v14 Spirit, 1 Cor 10:13)
- It is always in love for our good (Romans 8:28, Hebrews 12:7-8, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
- Even when sin is involved, God is sovereign over it (Acts 4:27)
- Knowing its God's (good/perfect) will, we should "entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good"
- This is the battle (When the suffering seems too much, or we can't see the good in it, in faith entrusting our soul to God (the faithful Creator))
- Even to the point of death: Jesus demonstrated this perfectly **Luke 23:46** *Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.*

13

- **Summary v12-18-In the midst of Christian suffering**
- The Christian life is one of suffering (Do not be surprised)
- Suffering has a purpose (to test your faith)
- When our faith stands the test of time it builds assurance and purifies us
- Therefore rejoice in it
- Recognize the privilege of suffering for Christ
- Be glad about the future glory you will inherit
- God will grant His Spirit when needed (Call out for it)
- Make sure your suffering is not because of sin
- It is better to suffer for Christ than to be accepted by the world
- Our judgment is a purging and purifying suffering (sanctifying)
- The world's judgment is eternal damnation (Remember the gospel & preach it)
- All suffering is according to God's will (He is good & love us)
- Continually entrust yourself unto Him, He is faithful

14