

I. Verses 12-14

- A. "Fiery ordeal" here referring to ongoing low-grade suffering for Christian commitment.
- B. Suffering is to test us.
- C. Suffering is sharing in Christ's sufferings. We are to greet suffering with joy.
- D. V. 14 refers to Isaiah 11:2
- E. The same glorious Spirit ...

II. Verses 15-16

- A. It could be that the biblical church is a bit rough around the edges.
- B. When people suffer for their own wrongdoing, it's not okay for them to play Jesus.
- C. V. 16, again, "when" anyone suffers as a Christian, etc.
- D. Let your suffering be blameless.

III. Verses 17-19

- A. God's judgment starts with his own house
 - i. The suffering that Christians go through for serving Christ is the beginning of God's judgment of the world. (Isaiah 10:11-12; Zechariah 13:7-9)
 - ii. "Obeying the gospel of God" means receiving and believing the good news of Jesus' triumph.
- B. Even the righteous can barely be saved. (Proverbs 11:31; Phil. 3:10-11; Acts 14:22; Romans 5:7-8)
- C. Those that suffer according to God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator.

IV. Can you handle suffering the right way?

- A. Do you greet suffering with joy?
- B. Do you feel like the Holy Spirit rests on you, giving power and blessing? (Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 59:21)
- C. Do you suffer blamelessly?
- D. Does it comfort you that our suffering is the beginning of God's judgment of the world? or are you filled with disgust that God judges? (John 2:19)
- E. Do you understand how difficult salvation is?
- F. Are you willing to suffer if God wants you to?
- G. Do you entrust yourself to God? or do you cling to your life?