

God's Saving Judgement
I Peter 4:12-19

1:1 - Peter is writing to "elect exiles of the Dispersion"

1:2 – He reminds them that

- a) God is overseeing their suffering -
- b) It is for their sanctification – holiness
- c) It will render obedience – conformity to Christ

That's the point of this letter.

- a) God oversees all suffering
- b) He allows us to suffer for our godliness
- c) Godliness is good for us in every way

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. 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.

First: Trials are Common to Life. 12a – *"Do not be surprised at the fiery trials when it comes upon you..."*

- a) The Fall (a single verse) explains all the trials of life –

Genesis 3:15 - *I [God] will put enmity (hostility) between you [Eve] and the woman [Eve]*

- b) Ever since Adam and Eve -

Job 14:1 - Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.

- c) Jesus confirmed

John 16:33 – In the world you will have tribulation...

Our first reaction to trials is, "What did I do wrong," and we do often cause our own trouble, but the fallenness of the world also explains sorrow.

Second: Trials are Tests. 12b – “...when it comes upon you to test you.”

Why?

a) God knows our hearts

Psalm 139:23-24 - *Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

b) We need to know our hearts

c) Psalm 26:2 - *Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind*

d) Faith is the steppingstone to God/godliness

Examples:

a) Abraham

Genesis 22:16b-17a - *...because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,¹⁷ I will surely bless you...*

b) *The Parable of the Sower*

Mark 4:3-9 - *Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.*

#1 - ⁴ *And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.*

#2 - ⁵ *Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.*

#3 - ⁷ *Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.*

#4 - ⁸ *And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”*

We are not #1. We want to be #4. How do we know we are? The sun (#2) and thorns (#3) show us.

Here’s what we must ask ourselves – “*Is eternity worth suffering now?*” The answer is “Yes.”

But the only way we know we are going to heaven is if we are tested and proven true now.

1 Peter 1:6-7 - *In this [eternal inheritance/Heaven] you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ 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.*

- a) Trials are for a 'little while.'
- b) Trials are 'various.'
- c) Trials are 'grievous.'
- d) Trials test the 'genuineness of your faith.'
- e) This 'genuineness' is worth more than gold.
- f) Gold is proven gold by 'fire.'
- g) Golden faith, i.e., tested faith honors Christ at his 'revelation.'

This is exactly what Peter has said in our text –

V 13 - ¹³ *But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed*

Third: Life is Hard, Don't Trouble Yourself. 15 – *“But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evil doer or as a meddler.”*

The Scripture teaches us that humanity can be its worst enemy.

Christ has come to save us not only from his wrath but ourselves.

Fourth: Salvation & Damnation are all about Judgement. 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?*

We tend to think of judgment as something between God and unbelievers but –

No one goes to Heaven without judgement.

- a) Christ was judged for our sins

1 Corinthians 3:18 - *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God*

- b) We are regularly judged by the Holy Spirit

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

Fifth: God is Trustworthy Through Suffering – 19 - *Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.*

In the words, “faithful Creator,” Peter takes us all the way back to Genesis 1 and asks us to contemplate God’s track record.

Genesis 8:22 - *While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.*

Conclusion:

- a) God oversees all suffering
- b) He allows us to suffer for our godliness
- c) Godliness is good for us in every way

By judging us, sending us trials that prove us faithful, God saves us.

Community Groups:

- 1 – Why did Peter write this first epistle?
- 2 – What message does he share with his readers in 1:1-2?
- 3 – Why should we not be surprised by trials?
- 4 – According to 12b, what is another word for trials?
- 5 – Why does God send us trials?
- 6 – How is Abraham an example of someone who endured trials?
- 7 – What encouragement/hope does the parable of the sower offer in Mark 4?
- 8 – Read 1 Peter 1:6-7 and break down Peter’s message (exegete the passage)
- 9 – What is your application of those verses?
- 10 – What does Peter warn against in verse 15?
- 11 – How does God bring salvation by judgement? Provide OT and NT examples.
- 12 – Talk about a time when the Holy Spirit judged/convicted you?
- 13 – Why should we be glad about the Holy Spirit’s conviction?
- 14 – Why does Peter refer to God as a “faithful Creator” in verse 19?
- 15 – What is your primary take-a-way from this text?
- 16 – How can the group pray for you at this time?