

Why Must We Suffer?
Sunday, September 11, 2022
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1 Peter 1:1-7

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

We have heard and even witnessed the stories and testimonies of brothers and sisters who have suffered great loss; even the loss of loved ones, the loss of health, the loss of fortune and much more.

We have also witnessed examples of how God used their suffering for great gain and for His glory.

So, why must we suffer? We have three categories of Christians here today in regard to this issue of suffering.

We have those who are suffering right now; we have some who have suffered in the past and the rest are those who are going to suffer in time to come.

I want to remind you that life itself brings suffering. We are all sinners and we all bear the curse of Adam's sin; the wages of sin is death.

Because of our sin, every one of us is dying from the moment we are conceived. The process of life that takes us from the cradle to the grave is, without exception, filled with suffering and pain; especially the last half for most of us who make it that far.

Don't get it in your head that if you avoid becoming a Christian you will avoid suffering; it is just the opposite. We who believe suffer with the grace of a loving Heavenly Father

helping us and strengthening us and bearing it along with us. Then on the other side we will suffer no more; not ever again!

Without Christ, you will suffer alone without God and without hope; and then on the other side you will suffer the flames of hell and regret what you have chosen; and you will experience that regret for eternity without any hope of relieve.

Today, an overview of our Christian life reveals a life filled with more joy than ever before and also a life, at times, with more suffering than ever before.

Our Christian life always begins with great joy:

1 Peter 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, **ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:**

We all share in that great joy. When have you ever seen a greater spontaneous outburst of genuine joy than when a new believer comes up out of the water of baptism?

When that new believer comes up out of the water, he is proclaiming to God and everybody that he has trusted in Jesus, and Him alone, to save him from his sins.

All the other believers know what that is like and we cannot help but to rejoice with him!

Our salvation also begins with an overwhelming sense of peace.

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I. What is ours in Christ brings mostly peace and joy.

A. These are the facts:

1. We are "**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God**"; knowing before the foundation of the world that you would put your trust in Jesus, our Heavenly Father has chosen - predestinated, if you will, many wonderful things for you.

2. He chose the place and position through which you would serve Him;

1 Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

3. He chose you to live a life of hope!

4. Because of the resurrection, we have a living, confident expectation that everything that Jesus promised will come to pass.

5. We have guaranteed to us in writing from God an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for us in heaven!

B. We know that we are going to heaven, no matter what!

1. Because we are **Vs. 5, kept by the power of God** through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

2. You may do a great job of glorifying Christ with your life or you may do lousy job; but if you have trusted Jesus to save you, nothing, and I mean nothing, can take away your inheritance; which IS your place in heaven with Jesus!

3. **Romans 8:29-39**

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Yet in the midst of all that peace and joy, there will also come:

II. A Season of Suffering.

A. Suffering is promised to all believers.

1. **Romans 8:15-18**

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2. If we are children, then we are also heirs;
3. If we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified together!
4. If you knew what your suffering is ultimately going to bring, even your suffering would cause you to rejoice!

Next, we see that:

III. There are reasons Christian suffering is necessary.

1 Peter 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, **if need be**, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

A. It may help to take a closer look at this verse.

1. Let's look up some of these words:

a. season;

oligos *ol-ee'-gos*

puny, short, a while. Puny? Just a short while by comparison.

b. heaviness;

lupeō *loo-neh'-o*

sorrow, be (make) sorry. Sorrow.

c. Manifold;

poikilos *poy-kee'-los*

divers, manifold.

Many various kinds of.

d. Temptations;

peirasmos *pi-ras-mos'*

a putting to proof adversity: - temptation, Proving.

2. Now read it with the definitions inserted: *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a short while, as needed, ye are in sorrow through many various provings:*

B. What is it that we need to prove? If you have been through Basic Bible Truths classes, you know the value of proving that the Bible really is the very Word of God.

1. It is our job to prove many things to many different individuals; although not to God, because He already knows everything.

2. When we endure suffering; especially for righteousness' sake, and at the same time we praise God openly and we are genuinely thankful; we influence those around us to the point that they want to know what we've got!

1 Peter 3:14-15

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*:

3. Praising God causes others to ask what we've got, especially when we praise Him in the face of suffering!

C. Suffering allows us to prove our love, even to the Angels; even to the Devil:

1. 1 Peter 1:7-12

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; **which things the angels desire to look into.**

2. All of that business about Job suffering and losing everything and then being restored when He remained faithful to love God was about one thing: Job was able to prove to Satan that he loved the Lord, no matter what.

D. Suffering allows us to prove our love for the Lord to each other.

1. One of the ways we prove our love is with faithful tithing and giving and helping others.

2. Church members throughout Macedonia who were in deep poverty gave liberally to the work of the Lord:

2 Corinthians 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3. God called it the proof of their love:

2 Corinthians 8:24 Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

4. When does God first challenge us to tithe and to give? It's usually when resources are at their lowest.

5. This short-lived and very puny financial suffering is usually the first and certainly the easiest of the **provings** that are to come.

6. Through suffering we prove what IS God's will:

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may **prove** what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

7. We must prove; especially to new Christians and those who will be new Christians, that what we have in Christ is real and that with Him, we can indeed go through anything.

8. Leaders and servants must be proven:

1 Timothy 3:10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

Next, we see that suffering prepares us for:

IV. The final result of our faith.

1 Peter 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

A. What will be the value of endured suffering when we see Jesus?

1. Worth more than gold:

1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

2. **Romans 8:18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy to be *compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

3. **2 Timothy 2:12** If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*...

B. When we go through suffering; maybe cancer or some other very close call in life; what do we usually say later down the road?

1. "I sure don't want to go through it again, but If I had it to do over, I wouldn't change anything."

2. "I wouldn't take anything for the experience."

3. "It brought me closer to God."

4. "I learned so much."

5. For me, having Cancer and being near the point of death, changed my life in many ways. All of them good.

6. The things we learn, the closeness of fellowship with the Lord, the confidence we have in Him are always magnified when we suffer.

Conclusion:

For some things to be accomplished there is only one way and no other.

Strong mature Christians are created only through suffering.

Romans 5:1-5

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

For you and me to be saved, there was no other way but that Jesus suffer and die in our place.

We see Jesus in the garden:

Matthew 26:38-39

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

There are many other necessary things that can only be accomplished through suffering.

1 Peter 4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

Hebrews 5:8-9

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

If this be true for Jesus, how can we think it should be different for us?