

SHARE IN CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

Sunday, March 22 -- 1 PETER series -- msg 29B -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1 PETER 4:12-19

English Standard Version (ESV)

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. **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.

1. Do not be surprised by suffering — it is part of God's design . vs 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.

- Many ARE surprised by suffering.
- Suffering is **not strange** for the Christian life.
- Fits the whole letter: "*exiles*" (1:1), "*grieved by various trials*" (1:6)
- God is **not absent**—He is **confirming, building, refining your faith**.
- **Jesus** had a lot to say about the reality that His followers would suffer:
 - MATTHEW 16:24–25 *"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me..."*
 - LUKE 14:27–33 *"Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."*
 - 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. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."*

Also see John 16:1-3; Matthew 5:10-12; 10:16-18; 10:21-22; 10:34-36;

Human Assumption	Biblical Reality
Suffering = God is <u>against</u> you	Suffering (for righteousness) = God is <u>with you</u>
Ease = <u>favor</u>	Faithful suffering often = <u>deeper favor</u>
Hardship = <u>punishment</u>	Refinement, <u>sonship</u> , and participation in Christ

2. Rejoice in suffering — it means you share in Christ . vs13–14

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.

- Suffering = **participation, not punishment** vs 13
- Present reality: **the Spirit rests on you** vs 14
- Future promise: **greater joy at Christ's return** vs 13

- Suffering is actually a gift of grace.
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,*

- Suffering is actually a path to glory.
ROMANS 8:17 *[we are] heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*

- Suffering in persecution is actually blessing, not rejection.
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. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

3. Make sure your suffering is for righteousness, not sin. vs 15–16

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.

- Not all suffering is equal.
- Distinction:
Suffering for sin → deserved (and shameful).
Suffering for Christ → honorable.

- Our Response: **No reason for shame, instead, glorify God.**

1 PETER 3:17 *"For it is better to suffer for doing good... than for doing evil."*

ACTS 5:40-42 *and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. 42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.*

1 PETER 2:20

"...if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God."

→ God is pleased with righteous suffering.

4. Understand suffering as God's refining judgment on His people. vs 17–18

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, (quoted from Proverbs 11:31) what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

- "Judgment" here = **purifying, not condemning**
- God refines His own **first** — See Ezekiel 9:1-6 and Malachi 3:1-4
- Argument:
 - If believers are refined through suffering
 - How much more serious for the unbelieving.
- vs 18 **scarcely saved** (greek *molis*) means 'with great difficulty'
 - The righteous are saved through the great work of the **Godhead (Trinity)**:
 - God the Father** — orchestrates the plan, sends the Son and calls out his chosen ones.
 - God the Son** — becomes a man, suffers, lays down His perfect life dying in our place
 - God the Spirit** — convicts and empowers us to believe and seals us in God's salvation

HEBREWS 12:6-7 "For the Lord disciplines those He loves..."

MALACHI 3:2-3 "Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire..."

5. Entrust yourself to God and keep doing good. vs 19

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

- Suffering is "**according to God's will**"
- Two responses:
 - ◇ **Trust God** → "a faithful Creator"
 - ◇ **Keep obeying** → "while doing good"
- This ties back to:
 - 1 Peter 2:23 — "...he continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly."
 - 1 Peter 3:17 — "suffer for doing good"

PSALM 31:5 "Into your hands I commit my spirit..." (Luke 23:46 — Jesus)

REFLECTIONS / MEDITATION / APPLICATION:

1) When you think about the idea of suffering for Christ...

What are your thoughts? _____

What are your emotions? _____

2) In light of this passage how should you pray about your willingness to identify with Christ, even in His sufferings? _____

3) What can you begin doing now to grow in your maturity of faith and honoring Christ? _____