

Cornerstone Church

April 30, 2017

**Sermon Series: Practicing Our Readiness Drills for  
Christ's Return - Seeking God's Guidance from 1st and  
2nd Peter**

Today's Sermon: Rejoicing as We Share in Christ's  
Sufferings

Today's Passage: 1 Peter 4:12-19

**[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. (ESV)**

Introduction:

Main Point: In preparation for the persecution coming our way, believers need to learn how to trust God for everything (vindication, provision, courage, fortitude) while we continue to bless those and do good to those who intend to hurt us.

How can we prepare?

1. By not being surprised when we go through fiery trials. **[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.**

- We will not be surprised if we plan for its arrival in the same way we plan for unexpected budget busters.
    - i. We expect that they will occur.
    - ii. We expect that they will be costly.
    - iii. Since we have budgeted for the big-ticket items, it is not nearly as painful as if we had not. Therefore,
  - Put spiritual capital in your bank by imagining now how you would react if:
    - You are shunned from social gatherings you once were invited to.
    - People laughed at you for believing in Scriptural absolutes.
    - You were falsely accused.
    - You can no longer home school your children but must enroll them in government schools
    - You were fired from your job for religious reasons
    - You were sued for no reason but religious hatred.
    - Your children turned against you.
    - Your spouse was actually murdered for their faith.
  - Failure to prepare will cripple us spiritually, resulting in depression, loss of hope, anger at God.
2. By rejoicing when we are insulted, falsely accused, targeted. **[13] But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.**
    - **Acts 5:41-42 [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. (ESV)**
- If we choose to rejoice now while suffering and think it a small thing to endure mistreatment because we are

Christians, we will be thrilled to be counted as part of Jesus' team when He comes again to conquer His enemies and reward His saints.

3. By practicing our skills on small sufferings. - **[14] If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.** "Do-gooder", "Holier than Thou" "Judgmental" "Bigoted" "Homophobe" "Simple Minded" are all common insults hurled at believers even when they are none of the above. **Matthew 3:16-17 [16] And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; [17] and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."** (ESV)
  
4. By not ruining our testimony - **[15] But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.**
  
5. By not being ashamed **[16] Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.**
  - There is no shame in being tested and refined by God. God can even use the scorn of this world to test His saints and toughen them up for future reward and responsibilities. Knowing this is from God makes it easier to endure. **[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?"**

6. By entrusting our souls to a faithful God. **[19] Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.** Learn how by following Jesus' example **1 Peter 2:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. (ESV)**

(Which title for God gives you greater confidence: God, or Creator?)