

Crystallization Study of 1 & 2 Peter - Week 3
The Christian Life and Its Sufferings

Jun. 1- Jun. 7, 2020

Morning Watch

Monday 6/1

Related Verses

1 Peter 2:21-23

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

22 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;

23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;

Matt. 11:29

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Mark 1:35

35 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still night, He went out and went away to a deserted place, and there He prayed.

Luke 5:16

16 But He Himself often withdrew in the wilderness and prayed.

John 10:30

30 I and the Father are one.

John 8:29

29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

Eph. 4:20-21

20 But you did not so learn Christ,

21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

Suggested Reading

The Lord lived as a man of prayer. He did not live as a common man praying common prayers to God, as a pious man, a so-called godly man, praying to God in a religious way, or as a God-seeking man praying to God for the divine attainments and obtainments... Instead, He was a man in the flesh praying to the mysterious God in the divine, mystical realm. The Gospels tell us that He often went to the mountain or withdrew to a private place to pray (Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28).

He was a man of prayer, a man who is one with God (John 10:30). We may be a Christ-seeker, desperately praying to gain Christ, yet we may not be one with God. He was also a man living in the presence of God without ceasing (Acts 10:38c; John 8:29; 16:32). He said that He was never alone, but the Father was with Him. Every moment He saw His Father's face. We may seek Christ, yet not live in the presence of God so closely and continuously without ceasing. Also, He trusted in God and not in Himself, under any kind of suffering and persecution. First Peter 2:23b says that in the midst of His suffering He did not speak threatening words but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously. Luke 23:46 says that at the time He was dying on the cross, He prayed, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." In our daily life, do we trust in God when trouble comes? Maybe we do to a small extent, but not absolutely. (*The God-man Living*, pp. 89-90)

In John 14:30 the Lord said, "The ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing." This means that in the Lord Jesus, Satan as the ruler of the world had no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything. If we are enlightened, we will admit that Satan has too many things in us. He has the ground, the chance, the hope, and the possibility in many things. But here was a man of prayer who said that Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing in Him. This is a particular sentence in the whole Bible. Thus, Christ was a man of prayer, a man who was one with God, lived in the presence of God continuously, trusted in God in His suffering and persecution, and in whom Satan had nothing.

The believers copy the Lord in their spirit by taking His yoke—God's will—and toiling for God's economy according to His model (Matt. 11:29a; 1 Pet. 2:21). The Lord told us to learn from Him. To learn from Him is to copy Him, not to imitate Him outwardly. In this way we become His duplication and mass production. The first requirement in learning from Him is to take His yoke, which is God's will. God's will has to yoke us, and we have to put our neck into this yoke. Seventy years ago as a young man, I took the yoke of Jesus. That yoke has protected me for the past seventy years.

We also need to be those who toil for God's economy. All the worldly people are toiling and are

burdened in many things. They are very busy. The Lord is calling those who are toiling, who are burdened, and who have no rest or satisfaction to come to Him so that He can give them the real rest with satisfaction. The rest without satisfaction is not the real rest. We take His yoke and toil for God's economy according to His model, following Him in His footsteps.

The hardest thing is to rest in our soul. People lose sleep because their soul is bothered. The rest that we find by taking the Lord's yoke and learning from Him is for our soul. We share in our soul His rest in satisfaction (Matt. 11:28b, 29b, 30). (*The God-man Living*, pp. 90, 119-120)

Further Reading: The God-man Living, msgs. 10, 12-13; *The Practical Way to Live a Life according to the High Peak of the Diving Revelation in the Holy Scriptures*, ch. 2

Corporate Reading of "The Overcoming Life" Chapter 2 – Sections: Failure to Render to God What He Requires; Regarding Iniquity and Refusing; to Repent of Sins That Should Be Confessed; Overcoming Is Necessary And Possible; Being Honest And Not Deceiving Ourselves

Tuesday 6/2

Related Verses

1 Peter 2:24-25

24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Rom. 3:21-22

21 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, witness being borne to it by the Law and the Prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;

Rom. 8:4, 6

4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Morning Watch

6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Psa. 80:1

1 O Shepherd of Israel, give ear, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who sit between the cherubim, shine forth.

Psa. 23:1-3

1 Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside waters of rest.

3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Suggested Reading

Christ was our Redeemer in His death on the tree [1 Peter 2:24]. Now He is our soul's Shepherd and Overseer in the resurrection life within us [v.25]. Therefore, He is able to guide us and supply us with life that we may follow His model in His steps of suffering (v. 21)...Our soul is our inner being, our real person. Our Lord, as the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person.

A shepherd takes care of the physical needs of his flock, and Christ our Shepherd takes care of the needs of our soul. He is not the Shepherd of our body; He is the Shepherd of our soul, our inner being. We all have a spirit, and the spirit is our inward organ. But our being is a soul. Therefore, Christ mainly shepherds us by taking care of our soul. He takes care of our mind, emotion, and will.

Our mind, emotion, and will all have problems. Unbelievers are wanderers in the soul, and they do not have a shepherd to take care of them. But our situation is different in that we have a Shepherd who takes care of our soul. Not only do we have the Lord's life within us, but we also have Him as our Shepherd. He is now shepherding us in our soul. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 190-191)

Many times we speak of turning to the spirit, perhaps expecting that when we turn to the spirit everything will be all right. Actually, even after we turn to the spirit,

many things may not be all right. From experience Peter knew to say that Christ is the Shepherd of our souls. Therefore, Peter does not tell us in verse 25 that Christ is the Shepherd of our spirit or of our body; He clearly says that He is the Shepherd of our souls.

This Epistle was written to Jewish Christians who were suffering much persecution. Apparently persecution is related to our body outwardly. Actually, persecution is aimed at the soul. Because it is our soul that suffers, it is our soul that needs the Lord's shepherding. It is not our body that needs this kind of care, nor is it mainly our spirit. It is our soul—our mind, our emotion, and our will—that needs the Lord as the Shepherd.

In our experience sometimes we just do not know what to think about. We do not know where to direct our thoughts. This is an indication that our mind needs the Lord Jesus as the Shepherd. I can testify that many times in this kind of situation the Lord Jesus has been a Shepherd to me. As a result of His shepherding our mind is directed and set in the right way.

Our emotion, being complicated, is easily upset. This is especially true of the sisters' emotion. Therefore, we need the Lord Jesus to shepherd us in our emotion. His shepherding comforts our emotion.

Our will also needs the Lord's shepherding. As human beings, we often find it difficult to make the right decision. Sometimes the hardest thing to do is to make a decision. Unbelievers have no one to lead them and guide them in making decisions. But we have a Shepherd to lead us and guide us. The Lord's leading and guiding is primarily related to our will. As the living Shepherd, the Lord continually directs our will. I cannot tell you how many times I have experienced this. The Lord is truly the Shepherd of our soul. He directs our mind, comforts our emotion, and leads and guides our will.

In the Bible some verses speak of the Lord's leading, and others, of His guiding. On the one hand, the Lord will lead His people to the holy land. But once He has led them there, He will guide them to Mount Zion.

As our Shepherd, the Lord leads us first and then guides us. He leads us to the right place, and He guides us to the exact spot. This is Christ, our Shepherd. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 191-192)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Peter, msg. 21-22; *The Vital Groups*, msg. 4, 7, 10; *Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John*, msg. 13

Corporate Reading of "The Overcoming Life" Chapter 2 – Sections: The Christian Life As Revealed In The Bible; The Experience Of Failure

Wednesday 6/3

Related Verses

1 Peter 1:15

15 But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life;

1 Peter 2:12, 25

12 Having your manner of life excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the matter concerning which they speak against you as evildoers they may, by your good works, as they see them with their own eyes, glorify God in the day of His visitation.

25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Heb. 12:1-2, 5-7, 14

1 Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,

2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

5 And you have completely forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when reproved by Him;

6 For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom the father does not discipline?

14 Pursue peace with all men and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord;

James 3:13

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good manner of life his works in meekness of wisdom.

Morning Watch

Col. 1:24

24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

Suggested Reading

In order to be our living Shepherd, it is necessary for Christ to dwell within us. If Christ today were not the life-giving Spirit in us, if He were only the exalted Lord in an objective way in the third heaven, how could He be our Shepherd? For Christ to be our Shepherd, He must be with us, even in us. Many times He goes along with us in order to turn us back. Consider how the Lord was the Shepherd to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. These disciples were going in one direction, but the Lord went with them in order to turn them to go in another direction. Luke 24:15 says, "And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them."...After walking a while together, they constrained the Lord to stay with them (v. 29). Then, as He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, "their eyes were opened, and they knew Him" (vv. 30-31). This is an example of the Lord's shepherding. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 192-193)

Christ is also the Overseer of our souls. I wonder how many Christians have experienced Christ as an Overseer, as an Elder....According to our experience, the Lord as the Overseer is One who cares for us. For Him to oversee us means that He takes care of us. As the Overseer, the Lord does not govern us or rule over us. Rather, He cares for us as a mother cares for her child. A mother oversees her child with the purpose of caring for the child. She wants to take care of every need. The same is true of Christ as our Overseer.

The manner of life [spoken of in 1 Peter 2:12] must be the holy manner of life (1:15) and the good manner of life in Christ (3:16), a life not only for God but filled and saturated with God. This manner of life is versus the vain manner of life of the unbelievers (1:18). The believers' manner of life should be excellent; that is, it should be beautiful in its virtues. We need to have such a life among the nations, among the Gentiles.

According to verse 12, if we have an excellent manner of life among the nations, they, by observing our

good works, will glorify God in the day of visitation....The day of visitation is the day when God will look upon His pilgrim people, as a shepherd over his wandering sheep. He will look upon them and will become the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls (2:25). Hence, the day of visitation is the time of God's overseeing care.

Concerning the understanding of the day of visitation mentioned in verse 12, there are different schools of interpretation. One school says that the day of visitation is the day of judgment. However, if we look into the meaning of the Greek word, we shall find that it does not convey the thought of judgment. As we have pointed out, the basic meaning is to observe, inspect, oversee, look upon. (In the New Testament elders are called overseers, those who oversee.) The root of the Greek word for visitation is the same as that of the Greek word for overseers. Peter's thought here is that the day of visitation is the time when God will look upon His pilgrim people as a shepherd looking upon his sheep. Then God will become to them the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls. With this understanding of the word visitation as our basis, we may go on to say that the day of visitation is the time of God's overseeing care. To make the matter simple, we may say that the day of God's visitation is the day God comes to visit us. When God pays us a visit, that is the day of visitation. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 193-194, 167-168)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Peter, msg. 19, 21, 32

Corporate Reading of "The Overcoming Life" Chapter 2 – Sections: *The God-Ordained Christian Life; A Life That Is Free from All Sins; A Life That Is in Intimate Fellowship with God; A Life That Is Fully Satisfied in the Lord*

Thursday 6/4

Related Verses

1 Peter 4:1

1 Since Christ therefore has suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same mind (because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin),

Eph. 6:13

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Phil. 2:5-8

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
6 Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped,
7 But emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men;
8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.

Rom. 12:2

2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Eph. 5:16-17

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Rom. 8:5-6

5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Suggested Reading

In 4:1-6 Peter comes to the matter of the believers arming themselves with the mind of Christ for suffering....The word "arm" [in verse 1] indicates that the Christian life is a life of battle.

One main purpose of this book is to encourage and exhort the believers to follow the footsteps of Christ in their persecution (1:6-7; 2:18-25; 3:8-17; 4:12-19). They should have the same mind Christ had in His suffering (3:18-22). The main function of our mind is to understand and realize. To live a life that follows the footsteps of Christ, we need a renewed mind (Rom. 12:2) to understand and realize the way Christ lived to fulfill God's purpose.

Morning Watch

In our practical daily life, the strongest part of our being is our mind. Whatever we do in our living is directed by our mind. It is not the will but the mind that directs our life. All our activities are under the direction of our mind.

Because the mind directs our living, the preaching of the Word must change a person's thoughts. One goal of preaching and teaching is to change people's mind. If we think in a certain way, we shall be directed in that way. But if we change our mind and think in another way, our living will then have a different direction. What we think governs what we do, say, and practice. For this reason, Peter charges the believers in 4:1 to arm themselves with the mind of Christ. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, p. 229)

To arm ourselves with the mind of Christ is to be armed with the thought and concept of Christ...It is common for Christians to have the concept that those who love the Lord should not expect suffering. But consider the life of Christ...Christ loved God to the uttermost, and He did God's will fully and absolutely...[Yet] it seems that throughout His life on earth there was not any blessing, but only suffering. He was born into a poor family, a family not considered of a high class...Furthermore, this family did not live in Jerusalem, but in the despised town of Nazareth in Galilee...At the beginning of His life, He was put into a manger, and at the end of His life, He was put on the cross...He endured suffering upon suffering. He did not have a good name, and He did not have a place to lay His head. This is the way the Lord Jesus lived when He was on earth. His life was a life of suffering.

The concept that the Christian life is a life of suffering is versus the natural, religious mentality, especially the natural mentality of many Christians. A great many Christians think that as long as we belong to God, are the people of God, love God, and do God's will, everything concerning us will be fine. According to this concept, we shall be blessed and may have a good job, a nice house, and an excellent family life.

This concept of a Christian life is altogether contrary to Peter's teaching in this Epistle...The more we love the Lord, the more we shall be deprived of things...The more we do the will of God, the more trouble we may have.

If we have the mind of Christ, we shall realize that we are living in a rebellious age and in a crooked, perverted generation... [Therefore], the more we love God and do His will, the more we shall suffer...The will of God is absolutely contrary to the trend or tide of this age...If we love the Lord and do God's will, we are bound to suffer. This will be our outlook if we have the mind of Christ.

We need to arm ourselves, equip ourselves, with the mind of Christ. This indicates that the mind of Christ is a weapon, a part of the armor needed in fighting the battle for God's kingdom.

God has not appointed us to material blessing; He has appointed us to suffering [1 Thes. 3:3-4]. Therefore, knowing that Christ suffered in the flesh, we also need to arm ourselves with the same mind. We should not have the mind to pray for material blessing. That is to have the wrong kind of mind. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 230-231)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Peter, msg. 26-27; *The Character of the Lord's Worker*, ch. 3

Corporate Reading of "The Overcoming Life" Chapter 2 – Sections: A Life That Affects Others; A Life That Is Free from the Power of Sin

Friday 6/5

Related Verses

1 Peter 3:14-16

14 But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not be afraid with fear from them, nor be troubled,

15 But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, being always ready for a defense to everyone who asks of you an account concerning the hope which is in you,

16 Yet with meekness and fear, having a good conscience, so that in the matter in which you are spoken against, those who revile your good manner of life in Christ may be put to shame.

1 Pet. 1:6-7

6 In which time you exult, though for a little while at present, if it must be, you have been made sorrowful by various trials,

7 So that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes though it is proved by fire,

may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Thes. 3:3-4

3 That no one would be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed for this.

4 For even when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to be afflicted, even as it also came to pass and you know.

1 Pet. 4:12-13

12 Beloved, do not think that the fiery ordeal among you, coming to you for a trial, is strange, as if it were a strange thing happening to you;

13 But inasmuch as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice exultingly.

Acts 24:15-16

15 Having hope toward God, which these themselves also look for, that there is to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.

16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

Suggested Reading

[According to 1 Peter 3:14 and 15], if we are terrified and troubled by persecutors, it will appear that we do not have the Lord in our hearts. Therefore, in suffering persecution we should show others that we have Christ within us as Lord. This is to sanctify Him, to separate Him, from the false gods, not degrading Him to be as the lifeless idols.

The hope spoken of in verse 15 is the living hope of the inheritance of eternal life. This is a hope in our pilgrimage today for the future, not a hope of objective things, but a hope of life, even eternal life, with all the endless divine blessings. The fear mentioned by Peter in verse 15 is a pious fear, a holy fear. Peter speaks of fear a number of times in this Epistle because the teaching of this book concerns the government of God. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 213-214)

In sufferings that come from opposition and persecution, we should sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts...In our suffering of persecution, we should make Christ particular; we should show that He is magnificent,

Morning Watch

absolutely different from idols. Sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts is not a matter of outward activity to set Him apart from what is common. It is an inward matter...[It] means that when we are under persecution, we have the Lord in our hearts. If we allow the Lord to be the Lord in our hearts when we suffer persecution, we shall express Him. This expression spontaneously will sanctify Christ and set Him apart from idols.

Whenever we suffer persecution, others must realize that we have Christ within us as Lord. But if we are timid and fearful, others will think that we do not have anything within us. They will have the impression that we do not have the living Lord in us. But if we are bold, sanctifying the Lord in our hearts and expressing Him in our faces, others will realize that we do have something within us. This is to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts.

[In 1 Peter 3:16 Peter speaks of our "having a good conscience."] Since the conscience is a part of our human spirit (Rom. 9:1; 8:16), to care for our conscience is to care for our spirit before God.

The Christian good manner of life should be one that is in Christ. It is a living, a daily life, in our spirit. This is higher than a life which is merely ethical and moral.

If we would have a good manner of life and sanctify the Lord in our daily life, we must take care of our conscience. It is not sufficient for us to be justified by others. We need to be justified by our own conscience. We should not be satisfied that we are justified by the community, by the brothers, or even by the entire church. No one knows us as thoroughly as our conscience does. This is especially true of the enlightened conscience of the regenerated spirit. A renewed conscience enlightened by the indwelling Spirit is trustworthy in its testimony and accurate in its judgment.

The enlightened conscience of our regenerated spirit is an inner judge. This inner judge, our conscience, cooperates with the indwelling God....Therefore, we must take care of our conscience.

A brother, for example, should take care of his conscience in his relationship with his wife. In the sight of man, it may appear that he is not wrong with his wife in any way. But his enlightened conscience may tell him that he has been wrong with her in many ways. Likewise, in the church life apparently we may be honest and faithful. However, our conscience may know that in

certain things we have not been altogether honest and faithful to the church. Therefore, it is very important that we take care of our conscience. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 214-216)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Peter, msg. 24, 31

Corporate Reading of "The Overcoming Life" Chapter 2 – Sections: *A Life That Overcomes All Environments; A Life with the Ability to Do Good; A Life Filled with Light; A Life That Is Wholly Sanctified; The Need To Experience God's Full Deliverance*

Saturday 6/6

Related Verses

1 Peter 4:14-16

14 If you are reproached in the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others' affairs;

16 But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name.

Matt. 5:11-12

11 Blessed are you when they reproach and persecute you, and while speaking lies, say every evil thing against you because of Me.

12 Rejoice and exult, for your reward is great in the heavens; for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Phil. 1:19-21

19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

2 Cor. 4:7

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

1 Pet. 4:11

11 If anyone speaks, as speaking oracles of God; if anyone ministers, as ministering out of the strength which God supplies; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

Suggested Reading

[The phrase] "in the name of Christ" [in 1 Peter 4:14] is actually in the person of Christ, in Christ Himself, because the name denotes the person. The believers, having believed into Christ (John 3:15), and having been baptized into His name (Acts 19:5), that is, into Himself (Gal. 3:27), are in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30) and one with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). When they are reproached in His name, they are reproached with Him, sharing His sufferings, in the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

The reason the persecutions we suffer are the sufferings of Christ is that we suffer in the name of Christ. According to Peter's word in verse 14, we are blessed if we are reproached in the name of Christ. Do not think that it is a curse to be reproached in the name of Christ. This is to be blessed. However, it may be a curse if people appreciate us too highly. Regarding this matter, we need to have a change of concept.

Today the opposers spread rumors concerning us and accuse us of teaching heresy. I can testify that I am a fundamental Christian and that I love the holy Word very much. I do not teach anything except the Bible with Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, I am accused of teaching heresy. In a sense, I welcome this kind of reproach, for it is actually a blessing, not a curse. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, p. 250)

Peter tells us in verse 14 that if we are reproached in the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us....The Spirit of glory is the One through whom Christ was glorified in His resurrection (Rom. 8:11). This very Spirit of glory, being the Spirit of God Himself, rests upon the suffering believers in their persecution for the glorification of the resurrected and exalted Christ, who is now in glory.

The more we suffer and are persecuted, the more glory there will be upon us. This is truly a blessing....Therefore, we should rejoice when we are

Morning Watch

reproached in the name of Christ, because the Spirit of glory is resting upon us.

Literally, “a meddler into others’ affairs” [in verse 15] is an overseer of others’ affairs. This denotes one who causes trouble by interfering in others’ business. If we are careless in the church life, we may interfere, meddle, with the affairs of others. To gossip about the saints is to interfere with others’ affairs. If we suffer because we do such things, that kind of suffering does not mean anything. It is part of the vain manner of life.

In verses 14 and 16 we have two names. The first name is Christ, and the second name is Christian. If we suffer because of these two names, that is glorious. This kind of suffering is a glory to God. It glorifies God because, when we suffer in the name of Christ and as Christians, the Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of glory, rests upon us. When we suffer for Christ, glory rests upon us, and that glory is actually the Spirit of glory Himself.

At Antioch (Acts 11:26), they began to call the followers of Christ *Christianos* (Christians), adherents of Christ, as a nickname, a term of reproach. Hence, . . . if any believer suffers from the persecutors who contemptuously call him a Christian, he should not feel ashamed but glorify God in this name.

Today the term Christian should bear a positive significance, that is, a man of Christ, one who is one with Christ, not only belonging to Him, but having His life and nature in an organic union with Him, and who is living by Him, even living Him, in his daily life. If we suffer for being such a person, we should not feel ashamed, but be bold to magnify Christ in our confession by our holy and excellent manner of life to glorify, express, God in this name. To glorify God is to express Him in glory. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 250-252)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Peter, msg. 28

Hymns, #1210

1

Through God’s word, my hope at His returning
Is that all my being be redeemed;
Yet in times of grief and tribulation,
Doubt and fear arise, no hope is seen.
In those hours, when prayer cannot be uttered,

Only groaning from my breast is heard.
Then the Spirit, in like manner, helps me,
Praying in my weakness unto God.

2

Lord, my prayer is not for deeper suffering,
But that from each trial I’d be free.
Let the cup of bitterness be taken;
Yet, Thy will, not mine, dear Lord, must be.
Even now, though trials sore surround me,
Still within my heart there is a peace,
For the love of God outpoured within me
Floods my heart and bids my doubting cease.

3

Blest assurance! God has fully ordered
Every matter by His sovereign hand;
Every person (though we see so dimly),
Every thing’s according to His plan.
Every trial is but the Father’s answer
To the groaning of the Spirit’s prayer;
May He gain in every tribulation,
Until we Christ’s glory fully share.

4

How could God from all His dealings spare us,
After He spared not His only Son?
Could the Potter’s hand upon the vessel
Ever leave the shaping work undone?
For the center of God’s heart’s desire
Is that many brethren we will be
Unto Christ, His precious First-begotten,
And to Him, conformed we’ll fully be.

5

Heirs of God! Joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus!
What a hope of glory this for us!
Though the suff’rings presently seem grievous,
Greater far the glory then for us!
Yea, in all these things we more than conquer,
Through the One whose love has us possessed;
Soon the day for which waits all creation,
When the sons of God are manifest!

Lord’s Day 6/7

2 Cor. 12:7-10

7 And because of the transcendence of the revelations, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up.

8 Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.

10 Therefore I am well pleased in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions and distresses, on behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am powerful.

2 Cor. 4:8-10, 15-18

8 We are pressed on every side but not constricted; unable to find a way out but not utterly without a way out; 9 Persecuted but not abandoned; cast down but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

15 For all things are for your sakes that the grace which has abounded through the greater number may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our momentary lightness of affliction works out for us, more and more surpassingly, an eternal weight of glory,

18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Life Study Messages

Life-Study of 1 Peter, msgs. 21-22, 26-28

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