

SOME TRUTHS ABOUT TRIALS

I Peter 4:12-19

Suffering is God's gateway to successful Christian living

I. HAVE THESE ATTITUDES (12-13)

A. DON'T BE SURPRISED BY TRIALS (12)

1. Fiery ordeals will come
2. Fiery ordeals will reveal
3. Fiery ordeals are not weird
 - a. They are not something strange or unusual and should be expected
 - b. Those astonished by trials are usually shallow and/or selfish

B. DO BE REJOICING AMID TRIALS

1. Currently (13a)
 - a. By suffering we identify with Christ's sufferings
 - b. Suffering comes before celebration
2. Eventually (13b)
 - a. You'll really celebrate when Christ is revealed
 - b. By persevering now, you can really praise later!

II. HOLD TO THIS ASSURANCE (14)

A. THE SITUATION: You're reviled

1. Reviled: Publicly ridiculed and criticized
2. Reason: For Christ's sake
3. Reality: Because you don't smoke, drink, swear or tell smutty stories

B. THE REALIZATION: You're blessed!

1. Jesus says you're blessed - See Matt. 5:10-12
2. You are the object of God's favor!
 - You, the lonely and left behind ... are loved and lifted up by the Lord!

C. THE CONDITION: You're empowered!

1. The Spirit of glory and of God rests on you
2. You have not grieved nor quenched the Holy Spirit by participating in sin
3. The Holy Spirit comfortably rests on you
4. Demonstrated at Stephen's martyrdom in Acts 7:55-56

III. **HEED THIS ADVICE** (15-16)

A. BE CORRECT (15)

1. Don't suffer as a sinner
2. Don't sin against the community

B. BE CONFIDENT (16)

1. Not ashamed to suffer as a Christian
 - See the examples of Peter in Acts 4:10-12 and 5:27-32
2. Glorifying God in Christ's name
 - Note Paul's examples in Phil. 1:12-14 and II Tim. 4:16-17

IV. **HEAR GOD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** (17-19)

A. ABOUT HIS EVALUATION (17-18)

1. God's timing: For it is time ...
 - He chooses when, where and how
2. God's task: Judging
 - a. Refining the church
 - b. Refusing the lost

B. ABOUT HIS EXPECTATION (19)

1. Sufferers should submit to their faithful Creator
 - As Christ did on the cross - Luke 23:46
2. Sufferers should continue doing right

CONCLUSION:

Suffering is God's gateway to successful Christian living

Read II Corinthians 4:16-18