



# FRANKLIN ROAD

baptist church

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## AN ORDEAL



AN ORDEAL IS A VERY DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE. WE KNOW WHAT ITS LIKE TO AGONIZE OVER BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS, EXPERIENCE DEBILITATING DISEASES OR STRUGGLE WITH THE LOSS OF A JOB. THOSE ARE ALL STRESSFUL, BUT SUFFERING FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SEEMS ESPECIALLY UNFAIR. WITH THE EVER INCREASING PAGANIZING OF AMERICA AND A POLARIZING DISREGARD, DISRESPECT AND DISAPPROVAL OF CHRISTIANS AND THEIR VALUES,

YOU AND I STAND AS POTENTIAL TARGETS FOR ABUSE AND ACCUSATIONS. PETER REMINDS US “BELOVED, DO NOT BE SURPRISED AT THE FIERY ORDEAL AMONG YOU, WHICH COMES UPON YOU FOR YOUR TESTING, AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE THING WERE HAPPENING TO YOU.” (1 PETER 4:12). AS WE REVIEW THE PARAGRAPH OF 1 PETER 4:12-19 CONSIDER SOME PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER WHEN DEALING WITH ORDEALS FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE.

1 PETER 4:12 INDICATES THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED BY INTENSE DIFFICULTY. WE SHOULD ANTICIPATE THESE EXTREME TRIALS KNOWING THAT THE OUTCOME WILL BE GOOD, FOR IT WILL REVEAL THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF OUR CHARACTER. TO SUFFER IN SUCH A WAY SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED UNUSUAL OR STRANGE.

EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW THAT DIFFICULTIES ARE LIKELY WE SHOULD NOT BE PESSIMISTIC. 1 PETER 4:13 TELLS US TO KEEP ON REJOICING WHEN WE SHARE IN THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST. WE DO NOT SUFFER IN THE SAME WAY AS CHRIST BUT DUE TO OUR ALLEGIANCE TO CHRIST WE WILL SUFFER. ANOTHER CAUSE FOR REJOICING IS THAT WE HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO, KNOWING WE WILL ONE DAY CELEBRATE CHRIST’S RETURN. WHILE AWAITING HIS RETURN, VERSE FOURTEEN INDICATES WE ARE BLESSED WHEN REVILED FOR THE NAME OF CHRIST.

WE ARE CAUTIONED AGAINST CARELESSNESS IN VERSE FIFTEEN OF OUR TEXT. WE ARE TO BEWARE THAT WE DO NOT SUFFER FOR SINFUL BEHAVIOR. WE MUST DO NOTHING THAT PROVIDES OUR ACCUSERS WITH LEGITIMATE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST US. EVEN IF WE DON’T MURDER, TO MEDDLE IN ANOTHER’S BUSINESS MAKES US GUILTY AND WORTHY OF JUDGEMENT. WE MUST AVOID BAD BEHAVIOR!

AMID SUFFERING WE CAN GLORIFY GOD KNOWING THAT THROUGH THE DIFFICULTIES WE ARE BEING PURGED AND PURIFIED AND THEREFORE MADE BETTER BELIEVERS. AS SUCH WE SHOULD SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH UNBELIEVERS WHO WILL FACE FINAL JUDGEMENT WITHOUT MERCY IF THEY FAIL TO RECEIVE CHRIST.

(SEE VS. 16-18).

WHEN FACING FIERY TRIALS MIGHT EACH OF US “ENTRUST OUR SOULS TO A FAITHFUL CREATOR” (1 PETER 4:19) AND CONTINUE TO DO RIGHT.

LOOKING UP,  
PASTOR CHUCK CIRCLE