

**Refuge City Church — March 7, 2021**  
**“Hope-Filled Life” (1 Peter 4:12-19)**

**Scripture Reading (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.

**Verses 12-16**

- What are the **trials** that Peter refers to?
  - **1 Peter 1:6**, "In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,"
  - **James 1:2**, "Count it all joy...when you meet trials of various kinds,"
  - Peter's response to the suffering and trials that Jesus would face
    - **[Peter's rebuke of Jesus' suffering] Mark 8:34-38**, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."
- Trials come in all shapes, sizes, and severity.
- God will provide direction and/or instruction, a 'situation' will present itself **[test, trial, temptation]**, and your response follows.
  - **Adam & Eve:**
    - God instructed, "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat..." **[Genesis 2:17]**
    - They both ate, and sin entered the world.
  - **Cain:**
    - Cain presented a sacrifice to the Lord, and it was not accepted.
    - God, by His grace, presented to Cain the opportunity to redo his sacrifice.
      - "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." **[Genesis 4:7]**
    - Cain accepted not the Lord, but his anger, and murdered his brother Abel.
  - **Noah:**
    - God instructed Noah to build an ark.
    - Noah accepted the offer and obeyed... despite not knowing the full results.

- He and his family were saved and blessed.
- Trials may be physical, mental, and/or emotional, but every single one will be spiritual!
  - Every test has a purpose to draw near to the Lord and His instruction.
  - **QUESTION:** How often will those tests and trials come your way?
    - So how dependent do we need to be on God, His grace, and His Word?
    - If we are not to be surprised by them, there's your sign they are going to be a part of your life... period.
- We share in Christ's sufferings. Why? What does this do for us?
  - **Hebrews 5:7-8**, "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered."
    - It is how we grow and mature in righteousness.
  - **2 Corinthians 4:16-17**, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,"
- **REMINDER:** We don't count our blessings and rejoice when we bring suffering upon ourselves, due to our own sins.
  - You can not claim 'Christian suffering' because of your own foolishness.
  - Judas Iscariot did not suffer for Christ in the end. He is suffering for lack of Christ.
- Our ultimate example is Jesus
  - **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. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
  - The majority of His ministry was marred by reviling, suffering, and persecution.
  - Even His impending death did not stop some from mocking Him while on the cross.
- Christians have suffered everywhere ever since!
  - STEPHEN: stoned to death.
  - JAMES: Brother of John beheaded.
  - PHILLIP: beaten, imprisoned and crucified.
  - MATTHEW: killed by spear.
  - JAMES: beaten, stoned, and had his head bashed in.
  - MATTIAS: replaced Judas; stoned and beheaded.
  - ANDREW: crucified.
  - MARK: dragged to death.
  - PETER: crucified upside down.
  - PAUL: beheaded.
  - BARTHOLOMEW: beaten and crucified.
  - THOMAS: killed by spear.
  - LUKE: hanged.
  - JOHN: boiled in oil, survived, and then banished to Patmos.

- For over 2,000 years, Christians have been insulted, suffered, and killed for their association with Jesus.
  - **Hebrews 11:36-37**, “Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—”
- **REMEMBER:** There is victory in Jesus!

### Verses 17-19

- **Proverbs 11:31**, “If the righteous is repaid on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!”
  - Suffering as a Christian, and in the name of Christianity, is counted as a ‘purifying’ judgement, and will *end* at the judgement seat of God.
    - The beauty of gold only shines bright after it has endured the fire.
  - Suffering as an unbeliever will only *begin* at the judgement seat of God, and will be far worse than what we may endure here and now.
- You know why we can ‘count it all joy’ when we go through tests and trials?
  - As a follower of Jesus, you’ve committed your soul to a faithful God.
  - **Psalm 31:3-5**, “For you are my rock and my fortress; and for your name’s sake you lead me and guide me; you take me out of the net they have hidden for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.”
    - This is a prayer for salvation! A prayer not to avoid suffering, but an appeal to the Lord for His help in the midst of it.
  - **2 Timothy 1:7, 12**, “For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control... which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.”
    - Our soul has been committed to Him. He has given us His Spirit. Who are we to fear?

### Response/Prayer

- **2 Corinthians 1:3-6**, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer.”
  - **John 16:33 NLT**, “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”
1. What enables you to rejoice in the midst of your trials?
  2. How can you commit yourself to God when you’re suffering?