

## Faithful Living Part 2 – Share in Christ's Sufferings

### 1 Peter 4:12-19

Emmanuel Baptist Church – PM Service – August 2, 2026

#### Introduction:

Peter wrote his first letter to dispersed and persecuted believers who were suffering because of their faith in Christ. As such, the topic of suffering comes up frequently in his letter. In fact, if you read through the entire book of 1 Peter, you will find that the topic of suffering comes up in every chapter (1 Peter 1:6-7; 1 Peter 2:20-21; 1 Peter 3:13-17; 1 Peter 4:1-2, 12-19; 1 Peter 5:10).

So, it is clear that suffering as a believer in Christ is a major theme in Peter's first letter. If you search God's word, you will not find a promise for believers that they will not suffer for their faith. In fact, quite the opposite is true. In John 15:20 Jesus said,

<sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

Now, in the context of suffering, I want to go on a quick rabbit trail, for just a moment, and talk about godliness.

In 1 Timothy 2:1-2 we are exhorted to pray for all people and for those in high positions. Why, "that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."

And Titus 2:11-12 teaches us that

<sup>11</sup> the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

1 Timothy 4:8 tells us that "godliness is of value in every way as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

Clearly, in these passages, Paul is teaching us the importance and value of living a godly, upright and self-controlled life. He says that "godliness is of value in every way." There is no question that we should be seeking to live godly lives that are upright and dignified. I don't think any believer in Christ would argue about that.

How does godliness relate to our discussion about suffering for Christ? In 2 Timothy 3:12 Paul connects both together. He says,

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

Not only is there no promise found in God's word that says believers will not suffer for their faith, but there is also a promise that says they will. We are commanded in

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scripture to live a godly life and told that it is of value in every way, but living a godly life does not mean we will not suffer for our faith. In fact, the absolute opposite is true. Paul said “all,” that means every believer desiring to live a godly life in Christ, “will be persecuted.”

This is why our text for today begins with, “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” (1 Peter 4:12).

Today's message is the second of four messages on the topic of Faithful Living, based on 1 Peter 4:1 to 5:14. Last time we said that Faithful Living means to Live for God. Our main points were that living for God means:

- Living for the Will of God 4:1-6
- Living for the Glory of God 4:7-11

Today we will see that Faithful Living means to Share in Christ's Sufferings. Peter is going to teach us that if we are going to suffer to:

- Suffer in the Will of God 4:12-14
- Suffer for the Glory of God 4:15-19

### Suffer in the Will of God 4:12-14

It's clear that it is God's will that we live godly lives, that is, lives that seek to be more and more like Christ. It's also clear from 2 Timothy 3:12 that “all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” It is not too big of a stretch, therefore, to conclude that suffering is part of the will of God. This does not mean that you will be continuously suffering, but when you do suffer for the sake of Christ, it is not outside of God's will for you. Why else would Peter say in 1 Peter 3:17

<sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

And also, in 1 Peter 4:19

<sup>19</sup> Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

It is one thing to suffer because of your sin; bearing either the consequences of sin or the discipline of God in your life because of sin, but it is quite another thing to suffer for doing good, for living a godly life. However, if you are going to suffer, “it is better to suffer for doing good...than for doing evil,” says Peter in 1 Peter 3:17.

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This is why I have titled 1 Peter 4:12-14, Suffer in the Will of God. Peter says,

<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. <sup>14</sup> If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

The Greek word for “fiery trial” in verse 12 is purósis (poo'-ro-sis). It means a burning or refining. It is like the smelting process used to refine metals. Here it is talking about calamities or trials that come into our lives that test character.

The word translated “test” in verse 12 is the same word we saw all the way back in 1 Peter 1:6, where it was translated “trial.” The Greek word is peirasmos (pi-ras-mos') and depending on the context, means trial, testing or temptation. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defined peirasmos (pi-ras-mos') as “a putting to proof. The idea is adversity, affliction, trouble (that is trial) sent by God and serving to test or prove one's faith, holiness, character.” (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance 3986 peirasmos)

So yes, we may suffer in the will of God, but it is for a specific purpose. God is using trials in your life to refine you and to purify you. Therefore, Paul says in Romans 5:3-5,

<sup>3</sup>...we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

I think it is safe to say that generally you do not necessarily rejoice in the midst of your suffering, but as you look at the big picture and what your suffering produces in you, there is reason to rejoice; “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.”

So, God's purpose in bringing trials into your life is intentional and leads you to maturity in Christ. This is not something you should be surprised at as “as though something strange were happening to you.” Suffering is what God uses in your life to mature you to produce endurance, character and hope. This is why James says,

<sup>2</sup> Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4).

And Peter says, as we move on to 1 Peter 4:13,

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<sup>13</sup> But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

You can rejoice that you share in the same suffering that Christ did. Why? That you may also rejoice when his glory is revealed, that is, upon the day of judgment. Though, in Christ, your sins are fully and completely paid for by the death and resurrection of Christ, and you are assured of eternal life, that is, you will not face judgment for your sin, since Christ already dealt with that; there will still be a day of judgment for all of us.

In Matthew 16:27 Jesus said,

<sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Since I am going to be dealing with this more fully when we get to verses 15 to 19, I will leave it at that for now. However, suffice it to say that though a day of judgment is coming for all, you can rejoice and be glad because of what your sharing in the suffering of Christ produces in you. Therefore, says Peter in verse 14,

<sup>14</sup> If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

Peter says it is a blessing to be insulted or persecuted for the name of Christ because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. Clearly, Peter is referring to the Holy Spirit here. In the midst of your suffering, believers, you are blessed because you have the Spirit of God in you. In fact, says Paul in Romans 8:16-17,

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

As we suffer for the name of Christ, the Holy Spirit within us bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Our suffering in Christ then, reinforces our assurance of salvation and the sure hope that we will be glorified with Christ, as fellow heirs and heirs of God. In this you are blessed and can rejoice. This is why your suffering produces endurance, character and hope; that, as James tells us in James 1:4, “you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

So, when you suffer for Christ, you suffer in the will of God. But you can rejoice in this, knowing what it produces in you and that it prepares you for the day of judgment to come, “so that you may rejoice when his [i.e. Christ's] glory is revealed” (1 Peter 4:13).

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What does this look like in your daily life? To rejoice in times of testing and trials is not likely the first response that would come to mind. This is a choice you need to make. In God's grace and in his strength, you choose to adopt an attitude of rejoicing and contentment in difficult times.

As a result "of the surpassing greatness of the revelations" given to Paul by God, he was given a thorn in the flesh to keep him from becoming conceited (2 Corinthians 12:7). He prayed three times and pleaded with God to take away the thorn, but rather than remove it, God said to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9a,

<sup>9a</sup> My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.

Now Paul had a choice as to how he was going to respond to God. This was a choice he had to make. How was he going to go forward with this trial in his life? Here is Paul's response in 2 Corinthians 12:9b-10, he said,

<sup>9b</sup> Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul chose to rejoice, or as he puts it, to boast all the more gladly in his weaknesses. Why? So that the power of Christ may rest upon him. When you choose to rejoice, even in the hard times, and trust in God, it is the power of Christ that takes you through whatever hardship you are experiencing. Further, Paul chose to be content in his hardships (2 Corinthians 12:10). He was content to go through whatever God would bring into his life for the sake of Christ.

In the context of God's provision in his life, Paul said in Philippians 4:11b-13

<sup>11b</sup> I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup> I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Contentment is something you learn. You learn by choosing to be content in the face of suffering. When you do, you see the power of Christ at work to take you through your hard times. This is when you grow in steadfastness, endurance, character and hope; making it easier to be content the next time you face "weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities," because you have learned that you can "do all things through him who strengthens you" (Philippians 4:13).

This is what it is to suffer in the will of God.

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### Suffer for the Glory of God 4:15-19

Now as we move into verses 15 to 19, we will see what it means to Suffer for the Glory of God. Please follow along with me as I read 1 Peter 4:15-19,

<sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. <sup>16</sup> Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. <sup>17</sup> 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? <sup>18</sup> And

“If the righteous is scarcely saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

<sup>19</sup> Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

Back in 1 Peter 3:17, Peter said, “For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.” Now as we come to 1 Peter 4:15, Peter is more specific. He says,

<sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

Clearly, if you are going to suffer, you do not want to bring it upon yourself by committing acts that are contrary to God's law and, in the case of murder and thievery, also contrary to man's law. You will find no glory by suffering in the justice system for crimes you have committed.

Next Peter says, “let none of you suffer...as an evildoer.” An evildoer is a more general term that denotes any offence against any public law. The Greek carries the idea of someone who makes trouble, that is, seeking an opportunity to injure or damage.

A meddler or a busybody, as it is sometimes translated, is one who interferes in matters not their own, disrupting peace and harmony. The Greek term used here literally means, “overseer of another's matters.”

So, whether as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer or a meddler; a Christian should not be engaging in these things. If you are going to suffer, you ought not be bringing the suffering upon yourself by your sinful behaviour.

Peter continues in verse 16,

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“Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian...”

That is, if you are living for Christ, seeking to live a godly life, and you suffer;

<sup>16b</sup> let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

There is no shame in suffering as a Christian, even though in Peter’s time the name “Christian” was meant to be an insult or a putdown. When you were called a Christian in Peter’s time, it was an attack or a criticism. But Peter is saying, if you suffer for being like Christ, do not be ashamed; instead, glorify God in that name.

Remember what Peter said back in 1 Peter 2:20-21,

<sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

When you suffer for following Christ’s example and for following in his steps, there is no shame in that.

In Acts chapter 3, Peter and John healed a lame beggar as they were going into the temple. The priests and the Sadducees were “greatly annoyed” because Peter and John were “teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” The next day, after healing the lame beggar, Peter and John appear before the council and are questioned. We pick up the narrative in Acts 4:7b where Peter and John are asked, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” Acts 4:8-12 is their response.

<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup> if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. <sup>11</sup> This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. <sup>12</sup> And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

As a result, the council “charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.” Acts 4:19-20 continues,

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<sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, <sup>20</sup> for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.”

The council was not at all pleased with their response. But it was clear that Peter and John had done absolutely nothing wrong, so, as Acts 4:21-22 continues,

<sup>21</sup> ... when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. <sup>22</sup> For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

So, Peter and John were simply living for Christ and as a clear witness of the gospel of Christ. When they suffered for doing so, they simply, and I might add respectfully, shared the truth. Even though, I expect, the council wanted to punish them, they could find no way of doing so because Peter and John had broken no laws. They were simply living for Christ and doing what he had called them to do. This is an example of how to “glorify God in [Jesus’] name,” as Peter commands at the end of 1 Peter 4:16. In other words, this is how to suffer for the glory of God.

Why should you not be ashamed to suffer as a Christian? 1 Peter 4:17-18 says,

<sup>17</sup> 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?

<sup>18</sup> And

“If the righteous is scarcely saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

In verses 17 and 18 Peter is contrasting the judgment that will be faced by believers with the judgement that will be faced by those who reject the gospel of Christ.

Speaking of those who have rejected Christ, John writes in Revelation 20:15,

<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Those who reject Christ’s payment for sin will spend all of eternity paying for their own sin; but even eternity will not be enough time to do so. Jesus describes hell as a place, “where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:48). In other words, it is a place of eternal suffering for sin.

To emphasize the significant degree to which those who reject Christ will suffer, Peter says in verse 17,

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<sup>17</sup> 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?

If judgment, he says, begins with those who have believed the gospel, who have put their faith and trust in the finished work of Christ; if even believers are going to be judged, then what does this mean for those who have rejected Christ? The inference suggests that the outcome for those who reject Christ is going to be very, very bad.

To strongly emphasize his point, he makes it again in verse 18 in a slightly different way. Peter asks,

<sup>18</sup> And

“If the righteous is scarcely saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

That is, if those who have been declared righteous by believing in Christ are scarcely saved, then what becomes of those who have rejected Christ is extremely bad.

Peter is not casting any doubt on the fact that those who believe will be saved. There is no question about that. But believers are saved totally by God's grace, and not by any merit of their own (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Strictly from a human point of view, it is incredible that any of us would be saved, because we are so undeserving. Peter is saying, that if this is the case, if believers are scarcely saved, what hope is there for those who reject Christ. The obvious answer is, there is no hope for them, only eternal punishment.

Now, let's stop for a moment and think about judgment for the believer. First, we must ask the question; if Christ has fully and completely satisfied and appeased the wrath of God on our behalf, then what is Peter talking about when he says “judgment begins with the household of God” in verse 17?

Satisfying and appeasing God's wrath is known as propitiation. Understanding that, listen carefully as I read Romans 3:21-26,

<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over

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former sins. <sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Paul says the righteousness of God is revealed through faith in Christ Jesus for all who believe. Believers are declared righteous, that is, justified before God, “by his grace as a gift.” Though we are sinners, this is possible “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.”

There is nothing else required or to be done for the one who has placed their faith and trust in the work of Christ. The believer’s sin is fully and completely paid for by the blood of Christ. John said in 1 John 2:2,

<sup>2</sup> [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus completely satisfied and appeased the wrath of God by paying for sin in our place. Why then, are we talking about judgment for the believer?

In my last message I quoted John 5:24 where Jesus says,

<sup>24</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Yet in our text for today, Peter is talking to believers and is saying that judgment starts with them. How can this be? Well, it is certain that Jesus has fully and completely paid for our sins, so Peter cannot be talking about judgment for sin for believers in Christ. What then?

Though believers will not be judged for their sin, they will still face judgment. In Matthew 16:27, that we read earlier, Jesus said,

<sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Also, in Revelation 22:12 Jesus says,

<sup>12</sup> “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.

And Paul says in Romans 14:10,

<sup>10</sup> Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

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So, it appears that no one will escape judgment. What does judgment for the believer entail? First, at the risk of repeating myself, what does it not entail. Back in 1 Peter 1:3-5 we read,

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

And Romans 8:1-2, speaking to believers, says

<sup>1</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

So, we can conclude from these passages that the salvation of a believer is absolutely secure. We are no longer under condemnation for sin. So, when believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ, it will not be to determine who gets into heaven and who does not. That has already been settled and was determined from the first moment you believed. Peter clearly stated this fact in 1 Peter 1:8-9,

<sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, <sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

So, if believers will not be judged for sin or to determine if they enter heaven or not, then for what will they be judged? The simple answer is, for every word and deed.

In Matthew 12:36 Jesus said,

<sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak.

Two verses earlier, Jesus said, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). What comes out of your mouth is a window into your heart. If there is evil in your heart, this is what will come out of your mouth. Conversely, if there is good in your heart, this will be evident in your speech. This is why the words you speak are so important.

Not only will we be judged for every word we speak, but also for every deed done in this life. Though believer's sin has been dealt with, we will still be judged by "what we have

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done with the gifts, abilities, talent, skills, relationships, vocations, and finances He’s given us,” says Charles Stanley. (Charles F. Stanley, <https://www.intouch.org/read/blog/the-judgment-of-believers>)

For what purpose? The answer is, to determine our reward. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:10, speaking to believers,

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

The Greek word for the phrase “judgment seat” is *béma* (bay'-ma). It is a raised platform to which someone walked up to receive judgment. In 2 Corinthians, the *béma* seat of Christ is used in the context of the athletic analogy. It was not a place to dole out punishment but rewards, much like the podium at an athletic event, like the Olympic games.

“For what one has done in the body” is talking about things done from the time one became a believer in Christ. That is, “during the believers’ time of earthly ministry.” (John MacArthur, John MacArthur Study Bible notes for 2 Corinthians 5:10). Again, we are not talking about judgment for sin here, but as John MacArthur points out,

Paul was referring to all those activities believers do during their lifetimes, which relate to their eternal reward and praise from God. What Christians do in their temporal bodies will, in His eyes, have an impact for eternity. (John MacArthur, John MacArthur Study Bible notes for 2 Corinthians 5:10).

And finally, 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, “whether good or evil.” Paul is not talking about a moral good or evil here. Paul is talking about activities in our lives that are worthwhile and have eternal value as compared to worthless activities with no eternal value. Once again, John MacArthur makes a helpful comment here. He says,

[Paul’s] point was not that believers should not enjoy certain wholesome, earthly activities, but that they should glorify God in them and spend most of their energy and time with what has eternal value. (John MacArthur, John MacArthur Study Bible notes for 2 Corinthians 5:10).

How will Christ evaluate our activities in this life? Paul says it will be revealed by fire. Listen to the very familiar 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— <sup>13</sup> each one’s work will become manifest, for

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the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. <sup>14</sup> If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

What we do in our earthly ministry as believers in Christ will be evaluated by fire. That which is of eternal value is described as gold, silver and precious stones. Those activities that have no eternal value are described as wood, hay and straw.

Clearly, when gold and silver are refined in the smelting process, they are burned to remove impurities, and the result is a purer and refined precious metal. Precious stones will survive fire as well. However, it is abundantly clear that wood, hay and straw will be totally consumed by fire and will be reduced to ashes.

Paul says in verse 14 that, "If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward." "Reward here means a recompense that appropriately compensates a particular action." Speaking of the believer's reward, commentator Albert Barnes explains,

In regard to the righteous, it does not imply merit, or that they deserve heaven; but it means that, God will render to them that which, according to the terms of his new covenant, he has promised, and which shall be a fit expression of his acceptance of their services. It is proper, according to these arrangements, that they should be blessed in heaven. ([https://biblehub.com/commentaries/1\\_corinthians/3-8.htm](https://biblehub.com/commentaries/1_corinthians/3-8.htm))

What about those who have build on the foundation with wood, hay and straw, meaning that their work will be burned up by fire? 1 Corinthians 3:15 says,

<sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

The one who has spent their Christian life pursuing worthless activities, will not receive the rewards in heaven they might have expected. In this regard it might be considered as suffering loss. Their salvation is not in question here, only what eternal rewards they will or will not receive.

The image here of being "saved, but only through fire," is like one who escapes from a burning building with their life but loses all their work. They are alive, but have nothing left of their work, because it was consumed by fire.

This is the judgment that all believers will one day face before the judgment seat or bēma seat of Christ.

## **Faithful Living Part 2 – Share in Christ's Sufferings**

**1 Peter 4:12-19**

Emmanuel Baptist Church – PM Service – August 2, 2026

### **Conclusion:**

Today we have seen that there is no question we are going to face persecution and suffering for Christ during our time in this life. You should not be surprised by that as if something strange were happening to you.

We also saw that suffering is part of the will of God and is used by God to accomplish his purposes in bringing us to maturity in Christ.

To rejoice in times of testing and trials is not likely the first response that would come to mind. This is a choice you need to make. In God's grace and in his strength, you choose to adopt an attitude of rejoicing and contentment in difficult times. When you do, you see the power of Christ at work to take you through your hard times. This is when you grow in steadfastness, endurance, character and hope. This is how you suffer in the will of God and for the glory of God.

Let us seek therefore to live lives full of activities that have eternal value. Not just for the reward that waits at the judgment seat of Christ, but for the glory of God.

Peter concludes our passage with 1 Peter 4:19,

<sup>19</sup> Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

This is a beautiful summary of what we have talked about today.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

This is faithful living as we share in Christ's sufferings.