

1 Peter 4:12-19

Rejoice in suffering knowing that this is - 1. A time of testing

“12 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; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.”

- **“Fiery ordeals” (stake-burning under Nero) Every Biblical character’s lot in life was full of ordeals.**
- **“Testing” It is not what happens to us but our response to what happens that is most important.**
- **“Sharing the sufferings of Christ” (koinonia) includes – being misunderstood, under valued, physically uncomfortable, emotionally traumatized, and left in shame.**
- **“Rejoicing” is a decision that we must continually make based on an enlightened understanding of the gospel message.**
- **Suffering for Christ’s sake proves and improves our faith.**

Heb. 2:10 “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.”

2. A time of blessing.

“14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. 15 By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if {anyone suffers} as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God.”

- **“Reviled for Christ’s name” Three types of suffering.**
 - 1) **For living in a fallen world,**
 - 2) **For following Adam and participating in the fall,**
 - 3) **For following Christ and participating in the gospel story.**
- **“Blessed” (beatitudes) The deepest experience of happiness comes when we are most authentically human. We are never so human as when we bear God’s image in imitation of Christ.**
- **“not ashamed” There is just shame for sin (without repentance) but no room for shame in doing what is right.**

3. A time of judgment.

“17 For {it is} time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if {it begins} with us first, what {will be} the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?
 18 *And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?*”

- “**judgment**” In the end times there was to be a refining of the remnant of believers along with the destruction of the wicked.
- “**difficulty in being saved**” This is not to suggest that it is hard to save the righteous but rather that the righteous will not escape difficulty as they await their salvation.

Hebrews 12:7 “It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?”

Eph.2:8-10 “8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

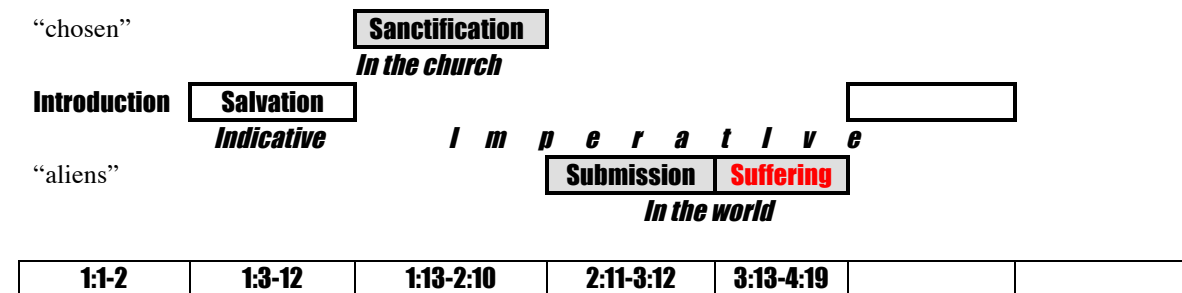
4. A time of faith and good works.

“19 Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”

ILL. George MacDonald 1824-1905 wrote over 50 books that inspired Chesterton, Tolkien, and CS Lewis yet suffered poverty, lung disease, lost 4 siblings to TB. Lost 4 children, stroke at 74 and was silent for the last 7 years of his life.

“With His divine alchemy, God turns not only water into wine, but common things into radiant mysteries, yea, every meal into a Eucharist, and the jaws of death into an outgoing gate.”

1 Peter 4:12-19



Suffering in a fallen world is not only the natural result of sin, it can also an expression of God's judgment.

Zech. 13

“8 In the whole land,” declares the LORD, “two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. 9 This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are my people,’ and they will say, ‘The LORD is our God.’”

Mal. 3

“1 See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. 2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, 4 and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years. 5 “So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me,” says the LORD Almighty.”

Acts 14:22

(Paul and Barnabas) “strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.”

Mark 14

“66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. 67 When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. “You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus,” she said. 68 But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway. 69 When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” 70 Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” 71 He began to call

down curses on himself, and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about." 72 Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times." And he broke down and wept."

John 21

"18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to {go.}" 19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He *said to him, "Follow Me!" 20 Peter, turning around, *saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following {them;} the one who also had leaned back on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21 Peter therefore seeing him *said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" 22 Jesus *said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what {is that} to you? You follow Me!" 23 This saying therefore went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but {only,} "If I want him to remain until I come, what {is that} to you? "

John 15

"1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every {branch} that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither {can} you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and {so} prove to be My disciples."