

1 Peter 4:12-19

In Peter's on going discussion regarding suffering that comes about due to ridicule, insult, torment, and persecution, he delivers yet another nuance. While the subject matter remains the same, his new material is brilliant. Of course, we would expect this, since Peter was inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

Big Idea: If you want spiritual victory learn to rejoice, rather than always acting surprised, when you encounter "the painful trial" of persecution. vss. 12,13

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19.

Come back and read vss. 12 and 13 again.

Question: Why do you suppose the Holy Spirit said through Peter, "do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you?"

Look at John 15:18-21

Question: How does this help you understand that ridicule and the like are standard fare for a follower of Christ?

Question: Can you think of two unfortunate explanations for why a Christian would not suffer ridicule and the like in the name of Jesus?

1. Christianity has ceased to be of any consequence.

Question: If this is the case, what is wrong with the picture?

2. The individual Christian is of no Christ-like consequence.

Question: If this is the case, what is wrong with the picture?

Question: Why do you suppose the Holy Spirit said through Peter, "rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed?"

Question: So, what will it take to rejoice when we're being ridiculed, insulted, tormented, and persecuted? Well...

I. Learning to rejoice during the painful trials of persecution will require that we...

A. ...understand what a blessing we have received. vs. 14

Question: So again, when we're being insulted and the like simply because we are Christians, what is the blessing?

B. ...understand the difference between godly suffering and dumb suffering. vs. 15

Question: In verse 15, what are the words?

That's right, murderer, thief, other kind of criminal, meddler. That is quite the continuum.

Question: Is it possible that you personally have fallen into this continuum? Have you ever blamed your suffering on God, when it was just you being involved in some action or attitude that deserved a poor outcome?

C. ...not fall victim to shame in the middle of our suffering. vs. 16

Question: What might cause us to feel shame during times of insult, ridicule, and torment?

D. ...focus on giving God the glory in the middle of our suffering. vs. 16b-18

Question: What do you suppose this will look like?

II. Learning to rejoice during the painful trials of persecution will enable us to serve others even during our torment. vs. 19

Notice Peter's words, "So then, those who suffer according to God's will, should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good."

*Commit themselves
to their faithful Creator
And continue to do good*

Question: When are we supposed to do this? That's right...when we are being insulted and ridiculed.

Question: If this is the case, who will be the primary recipient of our goodness?

Yep, that's right also...go ahead, say it...

During times of insult and ridicule (remember, on account of our faith in Jesus) the primary recipient of our goodness will be _____.