



Lesson #15: Growing when the Going Gets Tough (1 Peter 4:12-19)

What is it that teaches us about life? In what venue do we glean the most experience? Most of us do not learn very much from the good times. We enjoy those times, but we do not learn from them. It seems that we all have to spend some time in the School of Hard Knocks to learn the lessons God has for us. _____ are our best school masters.

This is the point that Peter has come back to again and again in this letter. Now he returns to that theme one last time. In this passage we find instructions that every Christian needs to give special attention to for they are instructions on how we may _____ in Christ when the going gets tough.

In 1 Peter 4:12-19 the Spirit of God provides for us 3 truths that will help us to be better prepared when the fire of affliction calls upon us.

GENUINE CHRISTIANS SHOULD _____ FIERY TRIALS (4:12)

This is not a popular message. If we would be true to Scripture we would come to understand that the feel-good faith of our generation may not be the faith of _____.

A. Don't be surprised by the _____ of trials

Where was God in all of this? We often ask that same question when intense trials hit. Remember, Peter started this verse off by referring to his audience as "_____." That's not a throwaway word. Peter is saying, "God loves you so deeply and profoundly. Therefore, don't be surprised when you suffer as a Christian. This is the message that we need to hear in our day. _____ is tough. Don't be surprised by that.

B. Don't be surprised by the _____ of trials

Remember that Peter was writing to the "strangers scattered" (1:1). Peter says that they are now foreigners. As citizens of heaven you have a new _____. Now, Peter says that the fiery ordeal that comes up to you is "*for your testing*." If you are a Christian, your faith must be tested and refined through trials. Peter calls this trial "*fiery*" because he associates it with God's chastening or judgement of his people for the sake of _____ their faith.

GENUINE CHRISTIANS SHOULD _____ IN FIERY TRIALS (4:13-14)

Peter is saying literally that a genuine Christian can _____ the trial. How does that make sense? He brings out the reasons why this is possible.

A. Because they lead to a deeper _____ with God

We share in the sufferings of _____ when we suffer. That word "participate" in verse 13 is the Greek word which is usually translated "_____." We normally think of fellowship as something happy or positive. But here Peter speaks of having "fellowship" in the sufferings of Christ. Our sufferings join us with Jesus in a way that nothing else can.

B. Because they lead to deeper _____ for glory

Christ and His glory are now hidden from human sight. But our sufferings now on His behalf will get us a front-row seat for the big event, so that we will burst with _____ at seeing Him. But there is another glory still. Peter's overall meaning is that when we suffer rejection because of our stand for Christ, something of the _____ will be seen in us.

GENUINE CHRISTIANS SHOULD _____ THEMSELVES IN FIERY TRIALS (4:15-19)

These verses suggest three questions we need to ask ourselves when we face trials.

A. _____ am I suffering? (v. 15)

Peter says, in effect, "Make sure you are not suffering because of some _____ on your part." If I have brought suffering on myself because I disobeyed God or broke the law, then I need to repent. But I shouldn't gripe about how I'm suffering for the cause of Christ in that case, when it's really my fault.

B. Am I _____ to be suffering? (v. 16)

Christians should not be ashamed to suffer for their Savior. When Peter and John were beaten by the Sanhedrin for preaching Christ they went away "_____ that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts 5:41).

C. Am I considering _____ in my suffering? (v. 17)

At this point _____ helps us greatly. Verse 17 says that judgement begins with the house of God. Persecution forces us to decide where we stand. But if it starts with us, it won't end with us. Have you considered the end of others as well?

Concluding Thoughts

As Christians we can expect _____. Don't be surprised. Trust Christ when you suffer for your faith in Jesus Christ.