

Simon Says – A Study in 1st Peter
1 Peter 4:12-19 Dealing with Difficulty
Dave Spooner – Mosaic Rockford – July 26th, 2015

Intro:

- Just completed a section telling us how we are to walk in the perfect will of God as Christians.
 - That we are to arm ourselves with the same attitude of Christ – that we are to be prepared to suffer by denying the desires of our sinful nature.
 - That we are not to participate in out of control parties and the like and to persevere under the pain of the social and relational consequences of our non-participation.
 - We are then to focus our lives on three things – prayer, love and service.
- Now, Peter turns back to the theme of suffering and difficulty and gives us some further insight as to the purpose of these hard things and how we are to respond to them and live through them in a way that lines up with the purposes and will of God.
- He starts this section in dealing with our initial respond to hardship by telling us . . .

Suffering is normal

1 Peter 4:12

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

- Peter was dealing with the same response to trials in his day as we are in our day.
- Surprise when bad things happen to good people . . . and think that it is strange that suffering and difficulty has come . . .
 - Some theology tries to justify it away . . .
 - He is saying that this is the normal human existence and just because that you are in Christ does not give you an exemption from suffering but often times is the reason for the suffering.
- He used the intentional language of “fiery trial” . . . as being tested through fire so that we can tell what we are really made of
- ***Not suffering as a punishment for what was; but suffering to tell what is . . .***
- Distinguish
 - Anyone can act as a Christian when things go well . . .

2 Cor 13:5

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.

Suffering of faith

1 Peter 4:13-14; 16

But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you . . . 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

- Rejoice that you participate in the suffering of Christ
 - Which include denials of flesh and hardships that come from walking in the will of God . . .
 - There is an identification and connection of participating in the sufferings of Christ

- Because if you do so you will be overjoyed when the greater reward is reviled
- If you are insulted because of the name of Christ (not the name of God . . .) you are blessed because the Spirit of glory and God rests on you – (the spirit came down on Jesus and on Jesus in us . . .)
- Don't be ashamed . . . but praise God that you bear that name . . .

Suffering from failings

1 Peter 4:15

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

- Don't suffer because of your own failings, or folly or foolishness
 - Murderer . . . or a thief . . . or any other kind of criminal . . . or even as a meddler . . .

Suffering for truth

1 Peter 4:17-18

For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And,

"If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

- Judgement begins with us . . .
- Not suffering as a punishment for what was; but suffering to tell what is
- Either refined or destroyed (seeing what is)
- Hard for us . . . because it testing to see if there is genuine faith

1 Peter 1:7

These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

- *Jesus made the way . . . and we have to walk in it! . . .*
- Things will not turn out well for the “ungodly and this sinner” . . .

Conclusion

- So suffering is normal part of the life of faith, rejoice that you have been found worthy to suffer, don't suffer from your own failings folly or foolishness

1 Peter 4:19

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

- So embrace the suffering that is according to God will
- Commit yourself to the faithful Creator
- Continue to do good!!
- Prayer people
- Prayer for salvation / Prayer