

Why Should the Faithful Have to Suffer?

1 Peter 4:12–19

WHAT IS TRUE, AND WHAT SHOULD CHRISTIANS DO?

When suffering comes for Christ's namesake, do not ask why. Expect it. "Fiery ordeals" can have a purifying effect. God, in his sovereignty, at times, uses persecution to separate false disciples from the fold. True believers are blessed through suffering because of the presence of the Holy Spirit. God is working everything out according to his plan, so when he places you amid suffering, trust him and keep doing good.¹

► **Dear friends, do not be surprised when the fiery ordeal comes among you to test you, as though something strange is happening to you. Instead, when your faith is in the "fire," you should... (v.12).**

A. **Rejoice** as you **share** in the sufferings of Christ (v.13)

- a. You will have **joy** at His return (v.13)
- b. You are **blessed** if you suffer for Christ's namesake (v.14)
- c. You are **blessed** for the **Holy Spirit** rests on you (v.14)

B. **Suffering** for Christ:

a. **Purifies** the church (v.12-14)

Note: False believers (pretenders) exist in the kingdom (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43). They "claim to be Christian" in name, but their hearts are far from God. Posers often do not remain.

C. **Believers** ought NOT to:

- a. Suffer like the **world** does (v.15)
- b. Be **ashamed** to suffer, but instead glorify God in having Christ's name (v. 16)

D. **Persecution** of the church is **evidence** that God's judgment has begun (v.17). We must remember that:

- a. God is **impartial**: believers and unbelievers judged (v.17-19)
- b. The fate of unbelievers will be **dreadful** (v.18)

E. Suffering according to **God's will** means you must **commit** your soul to God (entrust yourself to a faithful Creator); Victory is assured because of faith, and forgiveness is granted by God's grace (v.19)

► **We don't glorify God for suffering. But we can glorify Him in our suffering, and we glorify Him for what He will accomplish in us and through us with the suffering. God is faithful. Wait on Him.**

¹ Samra, J. *James, 1 & 2 Peter, & Jude*. Ed. M. Strauss and J. Walton. *Teach the Text Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.