

## “Standing Firm in the Grace of God Series”

### Lesson #8 “Entrusting our souls to God”

#### 1 Peter Chapter 4:12-19

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 5:6-7 “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

#### **Introduction:**

My father in law owns a company called Guard Tronics. Guard Tronics is a bugler and fire business. He helped start this business when Charity was just a little girl. And he has done quite well with that business because it seems that people are really interested in protecting the things that are really important to them. So they entrust his company to install alarm systems that will protect them.

I was watching a new Russell Crow movie the other night called “3:10 to Yuma” it was about thieves that keep stealing railroad payroll money back in the Old West. So the railroad hired a group to help secure these money deliveries. So, they hired the Pinkerton’s.

Now, **Pinkerton was a National Detective Agency**, usually shortened to the **Pinkertons** it was a private **U.S. security guard** and detective agency established by **Allan Pinkerton** in **1850**. Pinkerton had become famous when he foiled a plot to assassinate **president-elect Abraham Lincoln**, who later hired Pinkerton agents for his personal security during the **Civil War** (although at the time of Lincoln's assassination, his security was no longer handled by Pinkerton, but by **U.S. Army** personnel). Pinkerton's agents performed services ranging from security guards to private military contracting work. During its height, the Pinkerton National Detective Agency employed more agents than the standing army of the **United States of America**,

#### **Transitional Statement:**

Brethren, it seems to me that the most important thing we have is our souls and in the face of many difficult things that happen to us through out our lives, there is only one who can guard it for us...and that is God almighty.

#### **Lesson:**

##### **I. Christians shouldn’t be surprised when hard times come their way**

*1 Peter 4:12*

*“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;”*

A. “Beloved”

Its certainly wonderful to be loved by God and its also great to see Peter having such love for his fellow brethren that he calls them beloved. I wonder if he thought ahead to all of us who would read this letter in the future and wanted us to know he loved us also.....very possibly!

B. Here Peter mentions fiery ordeals among them.

1. Fiery is the Greek word for smelting

- a. It relates to the purification of metal
- b. Metal is heated in a furnace and melted and when it is liquefied the impurities rise to the top and they are removed making the metal purer and stronger.

2. As the rest of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter has pointed out these folks had lots of heat in their lives.....hardships and trials that brought about plenty of suffering.

- a. But, it was ultimately for their purification and strengthening.

C. Peter says here, that these trials and hardships have come upon them for their testing.

1. Testing specifically means putting to a proof

- a. A man can claim to have courage all day long. He can tell his friends about it, he can even write a book about it. He could go so far as making a public proclamation, but he doesn't really have courage until he has been put into a situation and chooses to act courageously.
- b. Its been said that people are like tea bags....you never know what they are made of till you put them in hot water.

-This is what Paul is talking about in Romans 5:3 when he Basically says that holding up under hardship brings about proven character.

2. And James takes us a step further when he says that the testing of our faith produces endurance....and when endurance has run its course it brings us to completion. James 1:3-4

- a. \*Hardship and trials are meant for our growth!

D. Well, Peter says these fiery ordeals shouldn't surprise us.

1. They shouldn't astonish or amaze us

2. And they certainly shouldn't catch us off guard

- a. We ought to be expecting them
- b. After all what father would hold back from giving his children challenges to help them grow.

\*That's right God the Father not only allows suffering like Job, but sometimes He orders it because it's what is needed for change or growth.

E. But, a lot of times our view of suffering gets all tangled up.

1. Most of the time we equate suffering with something being wrong.

- a. I must have messed up....
- b. Or this is unfair!

2. Then, almost immediately we turn our focus inward, toward ourselves!

- a. How is this hurt me physically or even emotionally
- b. How is this going to disrupt my schedule
- c. Will it affect my work
- d. Will it mess up my relationships
- e. They even tend to make us self conscience of how others see us

-Woe is me!.....\*Its all about me!

3. Well, when things get tough sometimes we might even buy into the idea that God doesn't care about us

- a. Or that He is too busy for us.
- b. Or somehow unaware!

4. And would it be safe to say that sometimes we simply don't believe God is able to work all things together for good (Romans 8:28).

- a. When things get really difficult

-Does doubt come knocking at our door?

F. Well, Christians are suppose to have a kingdom view of trials

- a. In other words, how can I use this experience or this hard time to grow my relationship with God?
- b. Or what kingdom business can be accomplished through this hardship or suffering in my life?

\*I want to tell you, church, this takes practice and great patients...

-It doesn't come easy.

c. \*Oh But Church, with such a faithful view

\*God will bless you beyond anything you can imagine

-And that faith shown to a lost world can and will move peoples hearts.

-After all isn't it faith that is credited to us as righteousness

## II. Christians are to rejoice in the face of suffering

*1 Peter 4:13*

*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.*

A. First of all, God allowed Jesus, His only son, to endure great suffering on the cross to fulfill His will, and if He would allow His only son will he not allow us to suffer also?

B. And when we are engaged in kingdom work, like Christ, we too will partake or share in that same suffering.

1. Folks, I wish kingdom work was easy but there exists a natural adversity between good and evil....they are polar opposites, like two magnets when you try to push the wrong ends together and when you take Christ's side you enter into a battle in which you take a stand for what is right in truth and love. And you naturally stand in opposition to the other side.

a. Paul tells Timothy this same thing:

2 Timothy 3:12 "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

C. But, when he says keep on rejoicing it really points to maintaining the right attitude in the face suffering

1. Joy is not necessarily circumstantial but attitudinal. The type of joy under consideration here takes into account the whole picture and considers the entire scope of things.

a. With Jesus Himself being the example.

-He took joy in His sufferings because it was all in light of kingdom purposes.....that is, unto the salvation of man's soul.

-Hebrews 12:2 speaking of Jesus says:

"who for the joy set before Him endured the cross."

D. Peter also says: At the revelation of Christ we want to have exceeding joy

1. Knowing that our faithful perseverance has promoted kingdom purposes.
2. Surely this is why James says we too should consider trials as pure joy (James 1:2)

### **III. Christians who suffer for the name of Christ will be blessed**

*1 Peter 4:14*

*14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

A. Reviled = to defame, i.e. rail at, chide, taunt:.....i.e. if you are run down

B. As a result of the Name of Christ

1. That is as a result of your acceptance of Jesus' authority and character in your life

C. Then you are Blessed = happy or well off

1. Why?

- a. Because being run down for your acceptance of Christ in your life is evidence of God's glory and Spirit being in you.

2. Specifically he says that God's Spirit will rest on us.

- a. Rest here means to cause or permit one to cease from any movement or labor in order to recover and collect his strength i.e. to refresh

b. How could suffering remotely refresh us?

-Example Acts 5:41

“So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

-It was refreshing for them because they knew that this suffering was promoting God's plan and purpose and they felt great about getting a chance to be a part of it.

-And even with their physical pain our God Refreshed them, just like the cool summer rain refreshes the parched ground.

#### **IV. Christian suffering shouldn't be because of sin**

*1 Peter 4:15*

*15 Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler;*

A. We need to make sure that any suffering we have is not a result of:

1. \*Sin
  - a. Murdering
  - b. Thieving
  - c. Evildoing
  - d. Or meddling

\*Or any of the thoughts and attitudes that go with these things

2. The Spirit of God is not connected to this kind of suffering.

B. If our suffering is a result of sin we have simply gotten what we deserved and God's kingdom is not promoted because of it.

#### **V. Christians should not be ashamed to suffer for the name of Christ**

*1 Peter 4:16*

*16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*

A. When we suffer as Christians .....

1. He says don't be ashamed.
  - a. Middle voice verb meaning don't allow folks to make you feel that way.....the world will want you to feel shame and embarrassment.
  - b. But, he says don't lay that on yourselves.

C. I get a chuckle out of seeing this in my mind. A Christian ridiculed and run down by the world....with that little grin on his or her face

1. Because they know who they serve
  - a. Because of what end they are working for.
2. Maybe that is Paul and Silas who had been beaten and imprisoned for their faith, with stocks on their feet.....could joyfully sing to the Lord. (Acts 16)

- a. Can you see the looks on the other prisoners faces
  - b. Can you see them shaking their heads thinking what kind of idiots are these people.
3. Maybe that is why Stephen while folks were chunking rocks at him to kill him, could appeal to the father to forgive them. (Acts 7)
  4. Maybe that is why the Apostle Paul after being dragged out of the city of Lystra being stoned and left for dead, got up and went right back into he city to preach the gospel even more. (Acts 14)
- D. But, instead of allowing feelings of shame and sorrow....Peter says we are to give glory to God in the name of Christ.....
1. In essence we are to be excited about the Lord's work.

## **VI. What will be the outcome of those who do not obey the gospel?**

*1 Peter 4:17-18*

*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?*

- A. The word judgment is the word decision
- B. He says it is time for decisions to be made with the household of God first.
  1. Brethren I think this statement is just as true today
    - a. It's time for Christians to take a stand for godliness
    - b. It's time for us to make some solid decisions concerning our relationship with God.

-Its time for us to get on the ball
- C. Because the souls of the lost are at stake.
  1. Peter says what will be their outcome?
    - a. Without our influence...hopeless!
    - b. Church if we don't get serious and apply ourselves in all circumstances the lost are going to be eternally lost

-And the clock is ticking.

## **VII. Christians should entrust their souls to God**

*1 Peter 4:19*

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

- A. You see God uses suffering in connection with His will
- B. And Insomuch as we gain the right perspective on suffering and endure it for His glory and His purposes we have entrusted ourselves to Him for safe keeping.
  - 1. God is faithful and has never failed to do anything He has said.
- C. But I think many times we as Christians wanting to control our own path and destiny we end up giving God only little portions of ourselves.

### **Conclusion:**

**What would happen right here in our own church if we were to entrust all of our hearts to God and stop given Him just little parts of it?**

**Who have you entrusted your soul to?**

**Well, maybe if decisions begin with the household of God .....maybe you need to make a decision today.**