

LIVING IN EXILE

1 Peter 4:12-19— Judgment at the House of God

May 29, 2016

For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? **-1 Peter 4:17**

I. SUFFERING AS TESTING

- God is not “above” testing our faith (vs. 12; Deut. 8:2; 13:1-4; Judges 3:4; Luke 8:11-13; Heb. 3:8; James 1:1-4).
- Christians are called to rejoice in our sufferings - not in the sufferings of others (vs. 13; Acts 5:41; Rom. 12:15; Phil. 1:29; James 1:1-4).
- When Christ returns in glory, that same glory will rest on you (Exod. 33:8-13; 1 Kings 8:10-11; John 17:22; Rom. 8:16-17).
- Do not fear or be ashamed of suffering for the name of Christ (Luke 6:22; 1 Pet. 3:13-14).

II. REFINING FIRE

- Judgment comes from the house of God. It starts with God’s people (Ezek. 9; Mal. 3:1-3).
- We are saved “scarcely” - with difficulty. Even believers feel the pain of God’s discipline and judgment (1 Cor. 11:32; Heb. 12:5-11).
- The ungodly and sinners (non-believers) do not share the same hope in judgment that believers share (Heb. 10:26-27).

III. THEREFORE...

- There is suffering according to God’s will, and there is suffering contrary to God’s will. Either way, there will be suffering in this life (2 Sam. 24:14; Isa. 45:7).
- Christians who suffer must entrust themselves to God, but they still have an obligation to do good (Eph. 2:10).

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KNOW: Suffering is part of God’s plan for his followers. It happens in a fallen world, particularly to those who stand out as servants of the faithful Creator of that world. Both the church and the world will know God’s judgment, as a refining work or a destroying work.

DO: Suffer well, entrust your soul to God, and do what is right.

Suggested Reading:

If God is Good: Faith in the Midst of Suffering, by Randy Alcorn
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**Questions/Discovery Points for
Life Groups/Families**

Please read 1 Peter 4:12-19

1. Peter tells us not to be surprised due to a “fiery trial” that tests us. How can we prepare for those trials if we have not really experienced them yet in life?
2. Have you seen a believer rejoice in suffering? If so, what did that look like?
3. How does God’s judgment of believers differ from the judgment of non-believers?
4. We talked Sunday about God bringing suffering into life. What do you think about that? Do you agree?
5. Peter tells us that the Spirit of glory rests upon us if we suffer for being a Christian. What does that mean?
6. In what ways can we glorify God as believers when we suffer for our faith?

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