

The Epistle of 1 Peter

▶ Purpose of epistle

- ▶ Encourage Christians to remain faithful through sufferings

- ▶ 1 Peter 4:12:

- ▶ “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you”

- ▶ 1 Peter 5:12:

- ▶ “By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.”

1 Peter – Three main subject areas

- ▶ Three main subject areas addressed and re-addressed
 - ▶ How we ought to live because we have been born again and because of the eternal life we anticipate
 - ▶ 2:1-12
 - ▶ 4:7-11
 - ▶ Obligations in various relationships
 - ▶ 2:13-18
 - ▶ 3:1-12
 - ▶ 5:1-9
 - ▶ Attitudes and behavior in suffering
 - ▶ 2:19-25
 - ▶ 3:13 – 4:6
 - ▶ 4:12-19
 - ▶ 5:10-11

Based on Outline in 1 Peter Commentary by Clinton Hamilton

4:5-6 Suffer, keeping the judgment in view

“They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

{6} For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”

- ▶ God will judge who?
 - ▶ “the living and the dead”
- ▶ Why had the gospel been preached to those who now are dead?
 - ▶ “that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit”

4:7 Exhortation to personal godliness

“But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.”

- ▶ What two attitudes accompany our prayers?
 - ▶ “be serious and watchful”
- ▶ Serious – sober – of sound mind, sensible, sound thinking, not erratic
- ▶ Watchful – “be free from every form of mental and spiritual ‘drunkenness,’ from excess, passion, rashness, confusion, etc.”
 - ▶ “to be calm and collected in spirit; to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect” (Thayer)

4:8-10 Some duties toward brethren

“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God”

- ▶ What will love do?
 - ▶ “cover a multitude of sins”
 - ▶ Example – James 5:19-20
- ▶ Not enough to be hospitable – attitude matters! – “without grumbling”
- ▶ We’ve all received gifts from God, an outpouring of His grace. What are we to do with these gifts?
 - ▶ “minister it to one another”
 - ▶ When we do that, we are being what?
 - ▶ “good stewards of the manifold grace of God”

4:11 Obligation before God in teaching and in serving

“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

- ▶ In teaching, we need to speak:
 - ▶ “as the oracles of God”
 - ▶ Stay within the bounds of the word of God
 - ▶ Not speculation and opinion
- ▶ In serving others, do it:
 - ▶ “as with the ability which God supplies”
- ▶ Do both of these as directed in order that:
 - ▶ “God may be glorified in Jesus Christ”

4:12-13 Suffering for Christ – not a strange, surprising thing

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.”

- ▶ Should Christians be surprised at suffering for Christ’s sake, for doing what is good and right?
 - ▶ “do not think it strange....as though some strange thing happened to you”
- ▶ The trials of suffering are “fiery” – severe and intense
- ▶ The trials of suffering “try you” – they test our faithfulness and refine our character
- ▶ The right response is rejoicing, not complaining
- ▶ Reasons given for rejoicing
 - ▶ “you partake of Christ’s sufferings”
 - ▶ We know that when He returns, we will be glad with exceeding joy

4:14-16 Be sure you suffer as a Christian, not an evil-doer

“If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.”

- ▶ You are _____ if you are reproached for the name of Christ.
 - ▶ You are blessed
 - ▶ You have the approval of God
- ▶ Is there shame in suffering as a Christian?
 - ▶ “let him not be ashamed”
 - ▶ Jesus: “despised the shame” – Hebrews 12:2
- ▶ Two commands:
 - ▶ “let him not be ashamed”
 - ▶ “glorify God in this matter” or “in this name”