


Suffer According To The Will of God

Sermon Text: 1 Peter 4:12-19

*Living*HOPE
THE BOOK OF FIRST PETER

A wide-angle shot of a person swimming in the middle of a vast, dark blue ocean. The person's head and shoulders are visible above the water. The sky is filled with large, billowing white and grey clouds, with a hint of sunlight breaking through on the right side. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

*He never actually said so,
but I think he made his peace with God.*



“Tell me, where did we get the notion that the Christian life is a piece of cake? Where is the evidence for the “name, claim it” theology that promises God will skip along in front of us with His great Cosmic Broom, sweeping aside each trial and every troubling uncertainty? To the contrary, Jesus told His disciples that they should anticipate suffering. He said, “I have told you, these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”



1 Peter 4:12-19 – Suffer According To The Will of God

- Perspective - Share The Sufferings Of Christ
- Purpose - Suffer As A Christian
- Position - Suffer According To The Will of God



1 Peter 4:12-19 – Suffer According To The Will of God!

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; 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. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. 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? 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.



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“It is an incorrect view of scripture to say that we will always comprehend what God is doing and how our suffering and disappointment fit into His plan. Sooner or later, most of us will come to a point where it appears that God has lost control - or interest - in the affairs of people. It is only an illusion, but one with dangerous implications for spiritual and mental health. Interestingly enough, pain and suffering do not cause the great damage. Confusion is the fact that shreds one’s faith.



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It is not uncommon to hear a confused Christian express great agitation, anger, or even blasphemy. This confused individual is like a little girl being told by her divorced father that he will come to see her. When daddy fails to show up, she suffers far more than if he had never offered to come. The Key word here is expectations. They set us up for disillusionment. There is no greater distress in human experience than to build one's entire way of life on a certain theological understanding, then have it collapse at a time of unusual stress and pain."



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James 1:2-4

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.



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“Suffering is inevitable, but misery is optional. The trick I've learned is that suffering leads to misery when hope is set on self (comfort, dreams, control, etc). Suffering leads to joy when hope is set on Jesus.

It's like an unfailing litmus test: if you are miserable, then there is something, somewhere you haven't surrendered to Jesus. ”



1 Peter 4:14-16 – Purpose - Suffer As A Christian!

14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.



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Genesis 4:5-8

5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. 6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” 8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.



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1 Peter 4:17-19 – Position - Suffer According To The Will Of God!

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?** 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.



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“The time referred to is the dispensation of the church, which began at Pentecost and will continue to the rapture. During this age the church is undergoing judgement by the unbelieving world. Believers are experiencing their sufferings now, just as Jesus did when He was on earth.



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“If Christians suffer now for doing good, what will the unsaved suffer in eternity for their ungodly deeds. With all the dangers and temptations that beset a Christian, it is only a miracle of divine grace that preserves him for the heavenly kingdom. That being so, what will be the doom of those who have died in their sins, unrepentant, and unsaved.”



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John 11:35 : JESUS WEPT



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“To those who are hurting and discouraged at this time, I think it would be comforting to look forward to the time when the present trials will be a distant memory. A day of celebration is coming like nothing that has ever occurred in the history of mankind. The guest of honor on that morning will be one wearing a seamless robe, with eyes like flames of fire and feet like fine brass. This is the hope of the ages that burns within my breast. It is the ultimate answer to those who suffer and struggle today, and what a celebration it will be!



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Accept the circumstances as they are presented to you. Expect periods of hardship to occur, and don't be dismayed when they arrive. Lean into the pain when your time to suffer comes around, knowing that God will use the difficulty for His purposes - and indeed, for our own good.”

