

Sunday Morning Message

October 11, 2020

1 Peter 1:13 – What To Do When You Are Going Through It

Series – 1st and 2nd Peter - *Experiencing God's Grace In the Midst of Suffering*

Text – 1 Peter 1:13 - 25

Congregational Reading – 1 Peter 1:17 - 19

Introduction

In the first two messages, which covered verses 1 – 12, we saw that we are saved and secure by God's grace and through our faith. That salvation and that security is a great source of rejoicing, especially since at times in this life we will go through manifold temptations – or various sorts of trials. Trials can be very difficult and painful, but as we learned last week, we know that they serve a purpose. Sometimes, only God knows what that purpose is, but there is a purpose. Trials also purify our faith, just as metals are purified by going through the fire. Trials also prepare us for heaven. They remind us that this world is not our home. Our conversation – our citizenship – is in heaven.

Now, as we examine the rest of this chapter, we will see that God has some advice for us as we go through these difficult days of trial. Remember, the historical context surrounding the writing of this epistle was the first century, a time when Christians were going through extreme persecution. Every Christian was experiencing persecution, and the likelihood of martyrdom was great just for naming the name of Christ. We do not know anything about that level of suffering for the faith, but we may soon learn. Peter has some words for us here in the second half of chapter one that will help us to stay focused during difficult times.

Transition

In the remaining verses of this first chapter of First Peter there are four pieces of advice that God gives to those who are going through a time of intense suffering.

I. Prepare Yourself Mentally (verse 13)

A. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Twice in the Book of Job, God said to Job, "Gird up thy loins like a man." (Job 38:3; 40:7)

The phrase has to do with the fact that the men wore long outer robes, and when they had to work, run, or fight, they would have to gather up the robe at the bottom and tie it

up into a belt. This way they would not trip over the hem. They had to prepare themselves for battle. It has the idea of getting tough. Putting your game face on.

Here Peter tells his readers to prepare themselves mentally by girding up the loins of their mind. We need to be focused and disciplined in our thought life.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" (2 Corinthians 10:5)

If we are going to be disciplined in our thought life, we are going to have to have the mind of Christ. You get Christ's mind by saturating in the Word of God. You will also need to cut off the voices coming from the perspective of a worldly philosophy.

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

Don't let Satan or his worldly philosophy blind your mind. Think biblically. Think with faith.

B. Be sober.

Be alert. Be watchful. Be determined. Be serious. Peter will use this phrase twice more in this letter:

*"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore **sober**, and **watch** (same word as sober) unto prayer." (1 Peter 4:7)*

"Be sober be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" (1 Peter 5:8)

Jesus said:

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:16)

C. Hope until Christ comes for you.

Keeping your focus on Christ will cause you to remain hopeful. You will be reminded of the fact that you are God's child, and that He will not leave you or forsake during your trial. Eventually, He is either going to come and take you home to him. That may be through death, or it may be through the rapture. The undertaker or the "uppertaker" – either way, you are going home soon. Keep your chin up. Keep looking up.

II. Purify Yourself Spiritually (vs. 14 – 16)

Notice that this involves obedience and submission to His will. We will have to surrender our own will and yield to His.

Notice the phrase – "fashioning yourselves." This is the same word (συσχηματίζω *syschēmatizō*) used in Romans 12:2:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

A. Beyond Positional Holiness (vs. 15 – 16)

You received positional holiness when you trusted Christ. God sees you as completely sinless as far as your eternal destiny is concerned, and concerning your birth into His family.

We are positionally holy because of our relationship with Christ:

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans 3:21-26)

*"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."
(Psalm 103:12)*

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
(Isaiah 1:18)*

However, God expects us to live demonstrating practical righteousness while we are here in this world, manifesting the holiness that we have received through salvation.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." (James 2:17-18)

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (1 Corinthians 6:9-12)

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)

B. Because God is Completely Holy (v. 15)

Why do we do this – because God is holy, and He wants us to be like Him; and we ought to want to be like Him.

We first see this phrase – “be ye holy” back in Leviticus. God was warning the children of Israel not to be like the other nations – not to worship other gods; not live immorally as these heathen nations did:

"Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you." (Leviticus 20:7-8)

We are to be set apart – sanctified; meaning that we are not supposed to be like everybody else.

It seems like the latest fad within Christianity is trying to show the world how we can be just like everybody else – like the cool kids – and still be Christians. Yet, God says:

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17)

III. Pass the Time Fearfully (vs. 17 – 21)

Notice in vs. 17 – 21, we have one long sentence.

The idea in verse 17 is this:

You pray to the Father ("calleth upon")

He doesn't play favorites. ("without respect of persons")

He will reward you for what you do. ("judgeth every man's work"), and that includes a reward for remaining faithful to Him when you are suffering.

Jesus told the church at Smyrna:

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

You are only here on earth temporarily. ("your sojourning")

Therefore spend your time on earth wisely and fearfully.

"See then that ye walk circumspectly (carefully, diligently), not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:15-16)

A. Knowing You Were Redeemed by Christ (v. 18 - 19)

Notice the colon after fear and “forasmuch,” which is a connecting word.

You did not purchase your salvation, and you did not work for your salvation. You were redeemed – purchased – with the precious blood of God’s own son. Christ suffered to redeem you and I. The least that we can do is endure a little suffering for Him.

B. Knowing that the plan was in place before He created the World (v. 20)

The plan for your redemption was in place long before this world was created, but was made manifest, or clearly revealed, until the time of Christ’s death. Notice that it was all done for us. The “you” in verse twenty is plural. His death was for all of us who are saved.

C. Knowing that your faith in God is tied to Christ’s resurrection (v. 21)

The resurrection of Christ is God’s proof that He is God’s son, and also proof that God loves us. Knowing all of this allows us to trust Him, and keep trusting Him during these trials. He raised Jesus from the dead. He will also raise us up from whatever trial we may be currently going through.

Review

Prepare yourself mentally – put your game face on.

Purify yourself spiritually – separate from the world and saturate yourself in God.

Pass the time fearfully – considering what Jesus went through in purchasing your redemption.

IV. Purpose to Love One Another Unconditionally (vs. 22 – 25)

A. Because you are saved, you are called to love the brethren (v. 22)

Your sins have all been forgiven, so you must forgive and love your brothers and sisters. Purpose to love each other fervently. The Spirit enables you to genuinely “like” the Brethren; you must now love them unconditionally, especially during times of suffering.

Herein lies the key to survival – the love of the brethren.

This is how people will know that we are saved – “They’ll know we are Christians by our love.” We stick together. We support one another.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35)

Illustration – You can endure just about anything if you know people are pulling for you.

Katelyn – Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies

B. It's all possible because of the new birth.

You have been born into God's family, and the new birth with the indwelling Holy Spirit of God makes all of this possible.

C. The new birth is only possible because of the Word of God.

1. The Word of God is incorruptible.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6-7)

2. The Word of God is eternal.

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalm 119:89)

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)

Conclusion

I wish I could tell you that the Christian life is always going to be carefree, but unfortunately the Bible is very clear that these last days that we are living in are very perilous times. They are going to be fraught with trials and manifold temptations. But God did not leave us without a plan. He helps us through these trying situations, and He gives us great advice right here in First Peter that will help us get through the troubling times.

Prepare yourself mentally – put your game face on.

Purify yourself spiritually – separate from the world and saturate yourself in God.

Pass the time fearfully – considering what Jesus went through in purchasing your redemption.

And, don't forget to love each other passionately.