

1 Peter 4:12-19

This sermon directly interfaces with one of the questions I have been asked over the last couple of months. **Why do we have to suffer? Why do we suffer? Why does suffering as Christians exist?**

IN some ways the answer to these questions is: That's life and being a Christian does not exempt you from the same sufferings and issues as anybody else. But there is more to it than that.

### **1 Peter 4:12-19 (NIV2011)**

**<sup>12</sup> Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.**

Fiery ordeal???

What's your persecution?

**<sup>13</sup> But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.**

This is tough, how do you rejoice in pain?

Well look at this it says

**participate in the sufferings of Christ**

In other words participate with Jesus in His plan for people.

Remember last week we talked about arming ourselves with the attitude of Christ.

### **1 Peter 4:1 (NIV2011)**

**<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.**

It's about being willing to participate in the plan of God total. Including sufferings and resting in the fact God has the big picture worked out.

Eg; Autism why Jackson? Why the pressures he is under? God knows. Rest in that.

**<sup>14</sup> If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.**

I find these verses interesting. Why?

Because our first impulse when insulted whether about ourselves or our belief in Jesus is to react. Want to fight back. Want to have the right to have a voice or have justice.

This verse views it differently.

You are blessed when insulted.

One commentator stated; “At least you know your witness is valid if people are insulting you for it”

<sup>15</sup> If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

This is basic – Don’t count persecution or being insulted for wrong as part of suffering for Jesus.

This is easy to do. Think everything is persecution when we cause some of it ourselves. Some people cause heaps of it because they are horrible, or lazy or just plain cantankerous and call it persecution when it is just them. That doesn’t count.

This counts.

<sup>16</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

It’s kind of like this; “If you are getting persecuted or suffering for Christ then you are doing something very right.”

As an aside:

*Christian* occurs on only two other occasions in the NT ([Acts 11:26](#); [26:28](#)). In both cases it is assumed to have been used by detractors as a term of contempt. However, people of the day used the Latin ending -*ianus* (anglicized as '-ian') in two ways which might shed light on this usage. Herod's followers were called 'Herodians' ([Mk. 3:6](#)) and so 'Christians' could have indicated 'supporters of Christ'. It was the Roman custom for a person adopted into a noble family to use as his own the family name with the -*ianus* ending. So a person adopted into the family of Domitius could call himself Domitianus. Antioch (where the custom began—[Acts 11:26](#)) was a Roman city, and so Christians there might well have used the name to show that they had been adopted into the family of Christ ([Rom. 8:15-17](#)).

New Bible Commentary: 21st century edition.

And here is a test for us to participate in,.

<sup>17</sup> For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

God screens the people of Gods behavior. The church gets evaluated and tested and checked.

<sup>18</sup> And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

This is a quote from Proverbs 11:31

If it is hard for good people to be saved what hope have wicked people got? Well the same in many ways. Through Jesus, it’s possible. But you get the point.

So here is Peter’s conclusion to the matter before he goes onto something else.

<sup>19</sup> So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Notice a couple of things here.

**Suffer according to God’s will –** Its about God’s will and being obedient.

**Commit themselves –** It talks commitment. You have got to try.

**Continue to do good.** Do something with the commitment and obedience.

I think this doing good concept is very forgotten in modern Christianity. We talk about worship, spiritual gifts, church governance, church planting when we are told to do good.

**Sounds nearly too simple.**

**Do Good.**