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PURIFIED THROUGH FIERY ORDEALS

In verse 12 Peter says, "Beloved, do not think that the fiery ordeal among you, coming to you for a trial, is strange, as if it were a strange thing happening to you." The Greek word for fiery ordeal, *purosei*, means "burning," signifying the burning of a smelting furnace for the purifying of gold and silver (Prov. 27:21; Psa. 66:10); this is similar to the metaphor used in 1 Peter 1:7. Peter considered the persecution that the believers suffered as such a burning furnace used by God to purify their life. This is God's way to deal with the believers in the judgment of His governmental administration, which begins from His own house (4:17-19). The Greek word for strange in verse 12 is *xenizo*, the same as the word used in verse 4. Fiery persecution is common to the believers. They should not think it is strange or alien to them, and they should not be surprised and astonished by it. This persecution is a trial, a testing.

Peter's use of the metaphor of a burning furnace in verse 12 indicates that today the Lord is using persecutions and trials as a furnace to serve a positive purpose. The positive purpose served by persecution and trial is the purification of our life. We can be compared to gold and silver. However, we still have some amount of dross. Therefore, we need purification. As gold and silver are purified through burning, we also need to be purified in this way. In verse 12 Peter tells the believers not to regard the fiery ordeal as strange. As Christians, we should realize that fiery ordeals are common. Persecutions and trials are the common experience of Christians. Such things are not strange, alien, foreign, to us. On the contrary, they are common, for we have been appointed to them. It is our destiny to suffer in this age. Of course, this is not our eternal destiny. God has not destined us to suffer in eternity, but He surely has destined us to suffer in this age.

SHARING IN THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

In verse 13 Peter continues, "But inasmuch as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice exultingly." Although persecution is a trial that purifies us through burning, eventually Peter says that by experiencing such a fiery ordeal, we share, participate, in the sufferings of Christ. Here Peter is saying that it is possible for the sufferings a Christian undergoes to be the sufferings of Christ. How can the persecutions suffered by us be the sufferings of Christ? If we were not Christians, we certainly would not suffer the kind of persecution described in verses 12 and 13. Such persecutions are due to the fact that we are Christians, men of Christ. Because we believe in Christ, love Christ, live Christ, bear testimony to Christ, witnessing of Him in this age, the world rises up against us. This age is under the hand of the evil one,

and for this reason unbelieving ones persecute those who believe in Christ and witness of Him. In the sight of God this kind of suffering is regarded as the sufferings of Christ. For example, a certain brother may have had the opportunity to become rich. But because he believes in Christ, loves Christ, and follows Christ, his business may suffer, and he may lose the opportunity to become wealthy. Actually, he may even be in poverty. This kind of poverty is the suffering of Christ. Those sufferings that are for Christ are counted by God as the sufferings of Christ.

Christ lived a life of suffering, a suffering life. Now we are His partners living the same kind of life. According to the book of Hebrews, we are not only partakers of Christ but are also His partners (3:14). We cooperate with Him in living a life of suffering. We follow Him along the way of suffering. This means that what Christ suffered, we also suffer. Therefore, when we suffer for Christ in this way, our sufferings are counted by God as the sufferings of Christ.

We should not be discouraged because we must suffer as Christians. These sufferings are positive and very precious. What a privilege it is to experience the sufferings of Christ! Paul could even say that he made up what was lacking of the sufferings of Christ for the sake of His Body, the church (Col. 1:24). He also speaks in Philippians 3:10 concerning the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Today we should be Christians, followers of Christ, who undergo the sufferings of Christ. We need to participate not only in the riches of Christ but also in the sufferings of Christ. If we take this point of view, we will be encouraged whenever we suffer for Christ. We may even welcome this kind of suffering. Yes, we may face fiery ordeals, but these are the sufferings of Christ in which we have the privilege to participate.

REJOICING EXULTINGLY

First Peter 4:13 says that as we share in the sufferings of Christ, we should rejoice so that at the revelation of His glory we may rejoice exultingly. In this verse Peter speaks of rejoicing exultingly. According to my understanding, this means that we will not only be joyful inwardly, but we will sound out our joy. At the same time, we may stretch forth our arms and also leap for joy. This is to exult and to rejoice exultingly. At the time of the revelation of the Lord's glory, we will exult. I believe that we will shout, rejoice, and perhaps even leap for joy. We will be excited to the uttermost, beside ourselves with joy. Today we may rejoice, but when the Lord is revealed, we will rejoice exultingly.

REPROACHED IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

In verse 14 Peter goes on to say, "If you are reproached in the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests

upon you.” The name denotes the person. To be in the name of Christ is actually to be in the person of Christ, in Christ Himself. The believers, having believed into Christ (John 3:15) and having been baptized into His name (Acts 19:5), that is, into Himself (Gal. 3:27), are in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30) and are one with Him (6:17). When they are reproached in His name, they are reproached with Him, sharing in His sufferings, in the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

The reason the persecutions we suffer are the sufferings of Christ is that we suffer in the name of Christ. According to 1 Peter 4:14, we are blessed if we are reproached in the name of Christ. Do not think that it is a curse to be reproached in the name of Christ. This is to be blessed. However, it may be a curse if people appreciate us too highly. Regarding this matter, we need to have a change of concept.

Today the opposers spread rumors concerning us and accuse us of teaching heresy. I can testify that I am a fundamental Christian and that I love the holy Word very much. I do not teach anything except the Bible with Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, I am accused of teaching heresy. In a sense, I welcome this kind of reproach, for it is actually a blessing, not a curse.

THE SPIRIT OF GLORY RESTING UPON US

Peter tells us in verse 14 that if we are reproached in the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. Literally, the Greek says “the Spirit of glory and that of God.” The Spirit of glory is the Spirit of God. The Spirit of glory is the One through whom Christ was glorified in His resurrection (Rom. 1:4). This very Spirit of glory, being the Spirit of God Himself, rests upon the suffering believers in their persecution, for the glorifying of the resurrected and exalted Christ, who is now in glory.

In his first Epistle Peter mentions the Spirit of God four times. In 1:2 he speaks of the sanctification of the Spirit, in 1:11 he says that the Spirit of Christ was in the Old Testament prophets, and in 1:12 he speaks of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Here in 4:14 Peter says that the Spirit of glory rests upon the persecuted believers. According to what Peter says in this Epistle, the Spirit of Christ is in us, and the Spirit of glory rests upon us. The Spirit of Christ is in us to reveal all that Christ is to us for our enjoyment. The Spirit of glory rests upon us to glorify God. One aspect of this wonderful Spirit is that the Spirit is in us to reveal Christ, and another aspect of the same Spirit is that He is also the Spirit of glory resting upon us.

The more we suffer and are persecuted, the more glory there will be upon us. This is truly a blessing. I can testify that the more I am persecuted and evil spoken of, the more I am empowered. Persecution and reproach do not hold me down. On the contrary, they lift me up. Therefore, we should rejoice when we are reproached in the name of Christ, because the Spirit of glory is resting upon us.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

Verse 15 says, “For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others’ affairs.” Literally, “a meddler into others’ affairs” is “an overseer of others’ affairs.” This denotes one who causes trouble by interfering in others’ business. If we are careless in the church life, we may interfere, meddle, with the affairs of others. To gossip about the saints is to interfere with others’ affairs. If we suffer because we do such things, that kind of suffering does not mean anything. It is part of the vain manner of life.

(Excerpt from Life Studies of 1 Peter, Message 28)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- Our target for 2025, # of newly baptized 25 and # of attending prayer meeting 35
- Perfecting young working saints through shepherding
- Saints blending together to build up the Body in love
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing truth and growth in life to be in the reality of the kingdom.
- Spreading the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel at WVC campus and community.
- Build up container for receiving our next generation

Announcements

- Life-study of 1 Peter MSG 27, 28.
- HWMR: Experiencing, Enjoying, and Expressing Christ, week 3
- 5/13 (Tue.) Prayer meeting, 7:45pm, meeting hall.
- 5/17 Love Feast + Gospel meeting in Chinese, Campbell meeting hall
- 5/23-5/26 Memorial conference. Phoenix, AZ
Nor Cal on-line conference schedule:

5/23 (Fri), 7:30PM	Message One
5/24 (Sat), 10:00AM/7:30PM	Message Two/Three
5/25 LD, 10:00AM/7:30PM	Message Four/Five
5/26 (Mon) , 10:00AM	Message Six

- 6/7 10am Lessons on small groups with br Minoru:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89326774993?pwd=MkJYVU00RW5gcTV0WmlhNU1NNE5PZz09>
- 6/7 Love Feast + Gospel meeting in English, Campbell meeting hall
- 6/16-20 Bible Camp FSCC. \$80/person
- 6/30-7/12 Semiannual NorCal Video training, Registration by 6/15
- 7/20-25, SST at Sonoma State University, registration by 5/18, \$600/person
- Financial Giving:
PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
[Venmo @Churchin-Campbell](#)
- Church in Campbell bookroom account (PayPal/Zelle):
churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com