

PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY:

WHY YES WE CAN GLORIFY GOD EVEN WHEN WE SUFFER?

Houses of Light Church • April 29-30, 2023 • Pastor Netz Gómez

1 Pet. 4:16-17

"Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?"

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In this text we are given the reasons why we can glorify God in the face of suffering and difficulties instead of allowing our hearts to get sick when we feel disappointed because things did not turn out as we expected or they got worse.
- B. **Vs.17 and 18** are the foundation of why we can glorify God when we suffer. So first we are going to reflect on the kind of judgment to which these verses refer, affirming that it comes first to the house of God and we are going to see what is the purpose of God.
- C. The house of God in which judgment begins is the people of God, Christians, the local and global church. **1 Pet. 2:5a** ***"you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house..."***
- D. Peter has in mind a judgment that includes Christians, not for their destruction but for their good; and it also includes the unbelievers for whom a terrible end awaits. **The judgment that believers go through is for purification, not for condemnation, although they can be seen as the same kind of experiences that those who do not know God live and even worse, they are anguishing and painful tests.**
1 Pet. 1:6-7 ***"In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."***
- E. With the coming of Jesus the end has begun and this age we are living in is the time for God's purifying judgment on the church to prepare her for her bridegroom. **When Jesus came and died on the cross the path was divided and He became a point of crisis; He is the great dividing line; the Great Judge and we know that He did not come to condemn the world but so that the world may be saved by Him (Jn. 3:17).**
Jn. 5:24 ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."***
- F. ***"it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God"*** Throughout Scripture we see that this is how God always proceeds and Peter alludes to several passages from the Old Testament (Proverbs, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and others).

Jer. 25:29 *"For behold, I begin to work disaster at the city that is called by my name, and shall you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, declares the Lord of hosts."*

- G. Both in Ezekiel (Ez. 9:4-6) and in Jeremiah and in many of the prophets, we have the picture of a huge historical judgment in the last time because it says '**all the inhabitants of the earth**' but it begins in the city of God or the sanctuary of God and Peter takes this same language affirming that if the judgment begins with the house of God, **where will the rest of the nations that do not obey God end up?** Peter intends for those who know the Old Testament to see it with an end times focus but also adds a proverb to express a principle of everyday wisdom and add more meaning to what he is saying.

Pr. 11:31 *"If the righteous is repaid [he will be given what he sowed/he will be compensated] on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!"*

- H. Peter tells us that this is the kind of thing you see all the time in the world; righteous people who are repaid with punishment or discipline but the wicked will also receive due judgment if they do not repent.

II. IS IT DIFFICULT FOR THE RIGHTEOUS TO SAVE?

1 Pet. 4:18 *"And "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?""*

- A. The righteous are those who have been justified in Christ and obey him, and it is not that God can barely save us but that Christians often have to experience suffering to such a degree that it is as if we were rescued at the end of our lives. **Christians do not live the life that God gives us on this earth very calmly, we also go through this kind of judgment but we know that we will experience the fullness of our salvation when Jesus returns (1 Pet. 1:5).**
- B. So when Peter affirms that if this is the case of those who were declared righteous by the blood of Christ, then what will happen to the wicked and sinners? **The implication is that if they do not repent in time they will not be saved from what is to come, which is going to be terrible.** These same truths are confirmed by the apostle Paul.

2 Thes. 1:7-9 *"and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from[b] the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might."*

- C. So if you are a Christian who suffers, whether you see it as an ordinary experience or as part of some great end-time judgment, the point is that we understand that it is part of God's plan. **By understanding this truth we can have a better perception of what happens in our life.**

D. **We are sure that the judgment we do go through is not a judgment that deprives us of eternal life, but rather a purification process.** Meanwhile, in the long-suffering of God, judgment on the wicked and unbelieving sinners has been postponed to the last day (2 Pet. 3:9-10). **It is important to keep in mind that...**

1. **Warnings are also necessary for believers.** In the Bible the warnings are not only for unbelievers but also for us.
2. **Woe to the wicked because what awaits them will be terrible and we should care what is going to happen to them.** We do not want them to perish; This would have happened to us if we had not believed and it will happen to them if we do not do something to help them not to be unbelievers.
3. **God is not to be treated lightly:** Of course we must be sober when receiving these warnings about those who do not obey or consider the good news of the gospel that God offers. When they continue in their wickedness and sin they are being foolish because treating the living God like this is deadly (Heb. 10:31).
4. **Therefore may your suffering as a Christian seem light and short compared to eternal suffering.**

Rom. 8:18 "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

III. CONCLUSION: GOD IS WORKING IN YOUR SUFFERING

1 Pet. 4:16 "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name."

- A. **You should not feel singled out or fall into self-pity when hard things happen to you, but rather you should glorify God** when you suffer as a Christian, whether you see it as part of the end times or the experiences you live in daily life.
- B. What this passage says helps us glorify God in our suffering and not allow our hearts to become sick with fear or sadness when things don't turn out as we expect. **We must surrender to our Heavenly Father the unfulfilled expectation of what may have been an ideal life or happiness and know that...**
 1. **God is working when there is suffering, not just the man who persecutes or betrays.** Man is not the one in charge and that should give us a lot of encouragement even if he hurts us and that is why we can glorify God.
 2. **God uses even his enemies to purify his people:** This suffering is caused by an enemy that hates the Christian; but God is clearly using that person; He is making enemies instruments in his sanctifying and loving purposes in the life of the suffering Christian.

2 Cor. 12:7 "So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited."

3. **God's purpose is purification, not condemnation.** He purifies our faith (1 Pet. 1:7) and our life (1 Pet. 4:1-2).

4. We must surrender to God is remorse for the mistakes we have made, for which we think we have ruined our lives and those of others, leading us to hopelessness and self-condemnation.

Lam. 3:21-23 "My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. ²¹ But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: ²² The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; ²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!"

- C. Therefore, the great goal in the Christian life is to unite with God in the search for authenticity and purity of intention when we suffer. So if you are a Christian and you are suffering, take heart, God is the one behind all this and you do matter to Him. In everything you are going through, He only has in mind what is best for you. So do not be ashamed but live valuing Him as supremely glorious and thus you will glorify Him in the midst of disappointments.

IV. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do the truths described in this teaching help you glorify God even when things are difficult?
2. Do you keep blaming yourself for your mistakes or have you accepted God's forgiveness and forgiven yourself? Explain.
3. Is there something you need to process with your friends from the Friendship Group? Take time to talk about this and ask them to pray for you.

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Corporate Prayer this Thursday, May 4 at 7:00 p.m.
2. The next quarter of the Discipleship School begins May 15. Sign up today online or at the bookstore.
3. Level 2 of the Effective Parenting Course begins on Wednesday May 17. It is in English and Spanish. Register today at: www.centrodeasesoriafamiliar.org
4. Next Marketplace Ministry Meeting (Business Men and Women) Saturday May 20 at 8:00 a.m. If you are new, please use the QR code to register (Point your phone's camera at the screen).
5. Our B-Courageous Men conference will take place on Saturday, June 10 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - 3:30 pm. It is bilingual for men ages 13 and up. The donation is \$40 and includes breakfast and lunch. Sign up today at the table outside or online at www.housesoflight.org