

PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: CHRISTIANS NEVER NEED REVENGE

Houses of Light Church • May 20-21, 2023 • Pastor Netz Gómez

1 Pet. 4:19

"Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good."

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. What God tells us in this verse is difficult and there are those who oppose this kind of teaching because they say: if you encourage those who do you harm to do good, you are enabling the abuser so that he/she continues doing what is bad.
- B. It has been difficult to share this commandment and to live it in all times, especially in ours where there is a very strong narrative of offense and victimization to gain more rights and power, to impose one's own will, but **Christians are called to living the kingdom counterculture in a world that opposes God.**

II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SUFFER ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD?

- A. This verse can have two meanings:
 - 1. Ultimately God decides if you and I suffer or not.
1 Pet. 1:6 *"In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,"*
 - 2. The way you go through suffering must be according to God's will. Which means we must not allow suffering to lead us outside of God's will. Do not suffer for doing things wrong but stay in the will of God.
1 Pet. 3:17 *"For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil."*
1 Pet. 4:15 *"But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler."*

III. WHAT ARE THOSE WHO SUFFER COMMANDED TO DO?

1 Pet. 4:19b *"...entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good."*

- A. We are not only asked to do as much good as we can to those around us every day of our lives, but to entrust our soul to our faithful Creator. In fact, this is what allows us to do good even to those who hurt us, not because we don't have character or don't know how to set limits, but because we give everything that happens inside us to the One who created everything and is faithful. This is what Jesus did:

1 Pet. 2:23 *"When he [Jesus] was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly."*

- B. The way in which Christ endured the cross and continued to do good for us was entrusting himself to His Father, that is, trusting in Him:

Lc. 23:46 *"Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last."*

- C. So you can be able to continue doing good because you entrust your soul to a God who saves precisely that part of your being. So no matter what they do to you, you are saved forever and this frees you from the desire for revenge; you give it to God and keep doing good.

Rom. 12:19-21 *"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it[i] to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

IV. WHY DOES HE MENTION THE FAITHFUL CREATOR AND NOT THE FATHER?

- A. When Peter mentions God's faithfulness it is because He keeps His promises and that is our security and confidence.

1 Pet. 3:12 *"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."*

- B. The Father has not ignored you or turned the other way, He is attentive to what happens to you and keeps His promises. We need this faithful God when we suffer. The reason why we can think that it mentions the Creator and not the Father is because it is likely that they felt so insignificant that they needed to know that the God in whose hands and souls they are is a faithful God.

1 Pet. 5:10-11 *"And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

- C. Peter mentions the dominion of God; he could have said the glory of God but he emphasizes dominion forever and ever and in fact closes the letter mentioning this aspect. Our Heavenly Father created everything and has total dominion and after you have suffered a little He himself has the power to perfect you, affirm you, strengthen you and establish you.

1 Pet. 4:11 *"...that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen"*

- D. Then entrust your soul to God who is faithful and who has all the power and therefore all vengeance (justice) can be given to him and that is why you can continue doing good because you know that He saves you. This is the impact of God's reality.

V. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

1 Ped. 5:1-3 "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, [a] not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock"

- A. In this first verse of chapter five we see how Peter identifies with the elders he is exhorting to be the kind of leaders who actually win authentic submission instead of forcing it.
- B. We see how Peter practices what he preaches in the words he uses and how he identifies himself. He first tells them **'I exhort you'** he does not say **'I command you'** Paul does the same.

Phil 8-9 y 14 "...Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, 9 yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you... 14 but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord."

- C. Peter said to shepherd the flock **"not out of obligation but voluntarily."** Peter wants them to behave as Paul wanted Philemon to behave, so Peter uses the same strategy as Paul, which is not to use the full capacity of his apostolic authority.

1 Pet. 1:1 "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect..."

- D. The authority that we leaders have is mainly to bless, minister deliverance, healing, and edify or even correct the body of Christ, but not to rule over those in our charge.
- E. We know that Pedro has the right to give them an order but he doesn't do it because he doesn't want them to do it out of obligation but voluntarily. Peter himself is not dominating because of his position of authority. The elders were the leaders of the New Testament churches.
- F. When Peter says **"among you"**; he addresses the church as he speaks to the elders to tell them how they should treat the members of the church. The church can listen as Peter tells the elders how they should treat them. **Here we see how Peter holds the leaders accountable to the church for his leadership style.**
- G. This teaches us that the church is not authoritarian to the point that those who are being led have no idea of how the leaders should do it and can even hold them accountable for how they are doing their work.
- H. Peter has two other ways of describing himself; calls himself a **"witness of the sufferings of Christ,"** and also as: **"partaker of the glory that is to be revealed."** Peter identifies himself as one who saw the horrible suffering of Jesus and suffered with Him and knows that it is partaker of the coming glory. These two themes of suffering now and glory later is a theme that runs throughout the entire epistle.

1 Pet. 1:11 "inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories."

1 Pet. 4:13 "But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed."

- I. Peter says: I am a witness; This has a double meaning I saw him suffer but now I bear witness to his sufferings by participating in those sufferings and affirms that he is being sustained by his hope in the glory that will be revealed to us.
- J. So if you lead a small group, a ministry, as a pastor or elder, lead by example, identifying with those you lead.

VI. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. According to this teaching, for what reason can we continue to do good to those who treat us badly?
- 2. Do you consider that you are leading through your example?
- 3. Explain if you have ever abused your authority.

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1. HOLY58 Youth Service is this Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. Young Adult Set 8:00 p.m. in the House of Prayer.
- 2. The Affirming Your Steps Course and The Discipleship School have already started but you can still sign up at the bookstore, online or at the EDD office.
- 3. The Introduction Course to the House of Prayer (INTRO, which is the third level of the School of Discipleship) begins on Monday, June 5. Please register at www.nhop.la
- 4. Men's Retreat May 26-27. Please register online at housesoflight.org
- 5. We will also be having a fundraiser at Boba Time in Plummer next Friday May 26th to support the young adult ministry.
- 6. Our B-Courageous Men's Conference will take place on Saturday June 10 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The donation includes food. It is for men ages 13 and up and is bilingual. Please register online or at the table outside.