

## WHAT TO REMEMBER IN THE TOUGH TIMES

I Thess. 1:4 – 10; I Peter 4:12-19

### I. DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN PERSECUTION COMES! – v. 4

II Tim. 3:12, “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

John 16:33, “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

Matthew 5:10–12,<sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.”<sup>12</sup> “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

I Peter 4:12,13:<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.<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. .....<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.

A. Persecutions – It has the idea of \_\_\_\_\_ harassment.

B. Trials/tribulations/afflictions – pressure, pressing grapes.

In the church world I've seen these responses to suffering:

- 1) Ignore it
- 2) Blame the person for it
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ for it! Jer. 12:5 - “If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?”

You prepare for the tough times by being \_\_\_\_\_ to the spiritual disciplines in the “practice” times.

### II. GOD \_\_\_\_\_ YOU IN YOUR SUFFERING

A. He sees our reaction to suffering v. 4a

1. Perseverance – standing firm; strength to flourish
2. Faith
3. Endurance - Becoming “\_\_\_\_\_”, not “bitter”.

B. God's perspective is different than ours! – v. 5

The idea behind “counted worthy” is “to be seen as worthy” as in a legal decision by a judge. Suffering is \_\_\_\_\_! Rom. 8:17 – “if we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.”

III. \_\_\_\_\_ IS COMING – V. 6 - 9

A. To the persecutors v. 6, 8, 9

Luke 18:7 – “and will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?”

Your persecution is the \_\_\_\_\_ that judgment is going to come.

1) When will it happen? – V. 7

2) Who will be punished? – v. 8

a) don't know God (Rom. 1:18-23) ignorant but without excuse

b) don't \_\_\_\_\_ – wilful disobedience; rejecting the Truth

3) What form will the punishment take? – v. 9

a) Everlasting destruction - \_\_\_\_\_

b) Eternal separation from God

Justice is also coming

B. To the persecuted v. 7 – \_\_\_\_\_ is promised!

IV. GOD WILL ULTIMATELY BE \_\_\_\_\_ – V. 10

“every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10,11)

His glory will be seen \_\_\_\_\_ us. We will then be like Christ! His glory will perfectly shine through us. He will be glorified in us! I Jn. 3:2: “Beloved, now we are the sons of God. And it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that, when Christ shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!!”

And we will marvel!

