

# Session 9 – 1 Peter 4:7-19

## The Mission of Suffering Believers in the Church

*Hope in Suffering:  
Studies in First Peter*  
Monday, August 5, 2013  
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### 1. Introduction

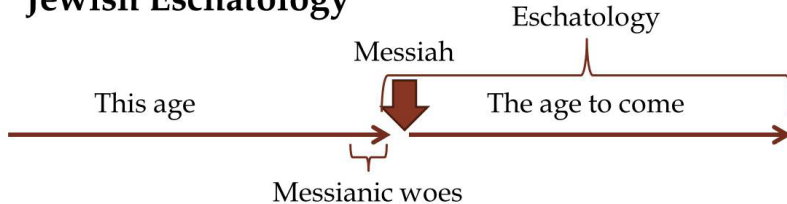
#### Transition

- Peter ends his letter by focusing on the church. One's witness in the world cannot be maintained in \_\_\_\_\_ of the believing community. Strength and perspective to respond rightly to trials depends on participating in the life of the local church.

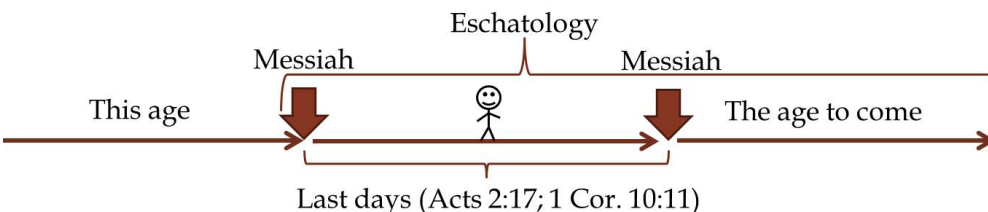
#### Jewish and Christian Eschatology

- **Eschatology:** beliefs concerning the final \_\_\_\_\_ in human \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Jewish Eschatology



#### Christian Eschatology



### 2. General Strategy (4:7-8)

#### Knowledge: Mentally ready (4:7)

- **Command: Be of sound judgment** (reasonable, sensible, be in one's \_\_\_\_\_ mind) & **sober** (clear headed, well-balanced, self-controlled, free from mental and spiritual drunkenness, fuzzy thinking, \_\_\_\_\_)
- **Purpose:** "Proper prayer is not an "opiate" or escape, but rather a function of clear vision and a \_\_\_\_\_ of even clearer vision from God" (Davids 157).

#### Love: Fervently love one another (4:8)

- **above all have fervent love= \_\_\_\_\_ this**
- **REASON: love covers a multitude of sin=** "love will \_\_\_\_\_ or overlook the faults of others in the church and thus is a most valuable virtue in a community that needs to preserve its solidarity in the face of persecution" (Davids 158).

#### Outline for 1 Peter:

- Salutation (1:1-2)
- God's Gracious Activity in the Lives of Suffering Believers (1:3-2:10)
- The Mission of Suffering Believers in the World (2:11-4:6)
- The Mission of Suffering Believers in the Church (4:7-5:11)
  - **General Strategy: Knowledge and Love (4:7-8)**
  - **Specific Strategy (4:9-5:11)**
    - **Love: Serve one another using your gifts (4:9-11)**
    - **Knowledge: Understand God's purpose in suffering (4:12-19)**
    - Love: Serve one another fulfilling your role (5:1-5)
    - Knowledge: Understand Satan's purpose in suffering (5:6-9)
  - The Promise of Salvation (5:10-11)
- Final Greeting (5:12-14)

Notes

### 3. Specific Strategy (4:9-5:11)

#### **Love: Serve one another using your gifts (4:9-11)**

- **Hospitality:** By \_\_\_\_\_ loving one another without grumbling (onomatopoeia= gognusmou).
- **Spiritual Gifts:**
  - **Right Perspective:** Spiritual gifts are given to us as \_\_\_\_\_ (a slave responsible for managing his master's property). Spiritual gifts are a means God uses within the church to bless and grace his people. These gifts of God's grace are \_\_\_\_\_ (same word as in 1:6: various trials).
  - **Kinds of Gifts:** \_\_\_\_\_ gifts & \_\_\_\_\_ gifts
  - **Purpose of gifts:** For the glory of \_\_\_\_\_, not the glory of \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Knowledge: Understand God's purpose in suffering (4:12-19)**

- **Exhortation & Encouragement:** Don't be \_\_\_\_\_ but rejoice (4:12-14)
  - **Fiery ordeal=** Though some have attempted to connect this to a specific event (being burned at the stake or losing house because of arson), yet Peter is most likely using this phrase \_\_\_\_\_ drawing upon the process of subjecting precious metals to intense heat in order to refine them and test their genuineness.
  - **Rejoice=** Joy here must be understood as an expression of \_\_\_\_\_. It is a joy that arises, not from the suffering, but from looking ahead to God's promise to save us.
    - **Our response to suffering determines our \_\_\_\_\_ experience:** Our capacity to rejoice when Jesus comes back is determined by our response to present trials. Jesus's coming will not spell joy for those who refuse to participate in the sufferings of Christ.
    - **Our response to suffering determines our \_\_\_\_\_ experience:** Blessing: We experience and others observe the manifestation of God's \_\_\_\_\_ by His Spirit (Acts 6:15; Is. 11:2).
- **Caution:** Make sure you are suffering for the \_\_\_\_\_ reason (4:15-16)
  - **Sharing the sufferings of Christ means** suffering as a result of your \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ, "Christian" (4:16). You can't share in Christ's sufferings without first sharing in his salvation.
  - **Sharing the sufferings of Christ means** suffering according to God's \_\_\_\_\_ (4:19).

## Excurses: A Theology of Judgment

- The Bible declares God to be the ultimate \_\_\_\_\_ of all men. God is not just a future tense judge; He is a \_\_\_\_\_ tense judge. Mankind lives under the watchful gaze of God.
- The unrighteous reject God's evaluation and in turn \_\_\_\_\_ God to their own judgment.
- The righteous are those who have \_\_\_\_\_ themselves to God's judgment and have accepted His offer of forgiveness through his Son Jesus Christ.
  - Consequently, the righteous are those who submit to and \_\_\_\_\_ God's judgment and scrutiny. They seek to live lives that are approved by God and meet His standards. Like the Psalmist they cry, "Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind." (26:2) It is the approved who seek approval.
  - God's judgment of approval can only fall on those who are genuine, those who have been tested and found true. God's testing comes in the form of \_\_\_\_\_. The metaphor Scripture consistently uses is that of testing gold or silver by fire.
    - Fire \_\_\_\_\_ the gold.
    - Fire \_\_\_\_\_ the gold.
    - Only that which has \_\_\_\_\_ of gold is placed into the fire.
- **Summary:** Those who yearn for God's approval should \_\_\_\_\_ trials because they are God's means of testing leading to approval. This is why Paul describes the believer as one who rejoices in tribulation because he knows that tribulation produces perseverance, and perseverance character (\_\_\_\_\_), and approval hope" (Rom 5:3-4).

*God tries his people, "in the expectation and belief that, whatever of dross may be found mingled with it, yet it is not all dross, but that some good metal, and better now than before, will come forth from the fiery trial."*

-- Richard Trench

- **Explanation:** God is \_\_\_\_\_ his people (4:17-18)
  - Malachi 3:1-4 God has taken up residence in His Temple by His Spirit. This means two things:
    - The \_\_\_\_\_ of God's presence
    - The \_\_\_\_\_ of his purging

- **It is time for judgment to begin**= Though God has always judged his people in this way, yet with the coming of Christ, Peter sees it as happening with greater \_\_\_\_\_ and in an eschatological sense. Our trials are evidence that the process of \_\_\_\_\_ judgment has begun. (Mal. 3:1-4)
- **with difficulty**= not barely saved... BUT saved through \_\_\_\_\_.
- **Main Point:** It is better to suffer \_\_\_\_\_ for doing right, than \_\_\_\_\_ for doing wrong. "In other words, if God's justice is not relaxed even for his own people but metes out assorted temporal judgments, ...how can the wicked imagine that they will escape the severity of the justice of God?" (Carson, Beale 1042)
- **Application:** Trust God by doing \_\_\_\_\_ (4:19)
  - **Faithful Creator**= God is simultaneously \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The God who gave us life can \_\_\_\_\_ us through life.
  - **entrust your soul to God**= "to deposit money with a trusted friend. **HOW?** In doing right! (our actions \_\_\_\_\_ who we trust) This is very practical for Peter: obeying your master; submitting to your husband, respecting authority...
  - \_\_\_\_\_ flows out of trust and faith. Disobedience has its ultimate basis in a heart that does not trust the goodness and power of God.

### Question for August 12

What does the role of elders have to do with the reality of persecution? What is unusual about Peter spending 4 verses addressing elders and only one addressing young people? How does this contrast with 2:13-3:12?