

1 Peter 4:14-16

Suffering in the Christian Life: Roots and Responses

Bad Suffering (1 Peter 4:15)

The direct result of bad/sinful attitudes and/or actions...

...as a spiritual blow torch to reinforce the reality of choices/consequences

Response: Repent (Change Your Attitude) and Return to Faithfulness (Actions)

Good Suffering (1 Peter 3:17-18)

Because of or in spite of good/righteous attitudes and/or actions...

...as a spiritual barbell to cause our faith to grow/expand

Response: Rejoice (Don't Doubt/Pout) and Remain Faithful

Inherent Suffering (Psalm 73:26)

Independent of good or bad attitudes/actions...

...the inevitable bane of living as a physical being in a fallen universe (Prov 14:4)

Response: Recognize (Present Reality) Rally in the Future and Remain Faithful

When Facing Good Suffering 4:14

Christians Should Rejoice (Rest in Christ/Embrace "Eye of the Hurricane")

WHAT: if you are reviled for the name of Christ

(1:1; 1:6; 1:11; 2:11-12; 2:18-19; 2:21-23; 3:9; 3:14; 4:12-13; 4:16)

WHY: because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you to the extent that someone in the world actually noticed you were a Christian!?!)

When Facing Bad Suffering 4:15

Christians Should Repent (Not Rationalize and/or Redefine Our Sin)

Make sure none OF YOU (1:3-5) suffers as

1: a murderer (like King David did 2 Samuel 11)

2: a thief (like Jacob did Genesis 27)

3 an evildoer (like Peter did Matthew 16:23; 26:69-75)

4: a troublesome meddler (Names Withheld at This Time 1 Timothy 5:13)

When Facing Good Suffering 4:16

Christians Should Rejoice (Rest in Christ/Embrace “Eye of the Hurricane”)

Don't be ashamed (either with yourself or with God!)...-

...but glorify God in the name of Christ (who He is, what He has done/will do)

IOWs: don't see a sad status quo as a crisis for your faith but rather as a challenge and a critical opportunity for you to live out and to broaden your faith

Psalm 73

Biblical Case Study of a Suffering Believer Who Moves from Doubting and Pouting To Trusting and Obeying in Light of Who/What God Is...What He is Doing/Will Do

When my heart was embittered and I was angry with You, I was senseless and ignorant; like a wounded animal. Nevertheless I am continually with You because You have taken hold of my right hand.

In the meanwhile even in the midst of my suffering, with Your counsel You will guide me and afterward receive me to everlasting glory. Whom have I in Heaven *but You*? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart will fail, but God You are the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

For, behold, those who are far from You will perish (John 3:16-18); You have destroyed all those who fail to trust in You. But as for me, the nearness of God is my good, I have made the Lord God my refuge (and rather than second-guessing in my suffering my role is) to tell others of all Your works.

Take This To Heart

To Sail and Not Sink Spiritually, When Facing Suffering Christians Should:

1: Recognize The Kind of Suffering We are Facing

Good Suffering

Bad Suffering

Inherent Suffering

2: Remain Faithful to the Lord by Respond Appropriately

Rejoice in Good Suffering

Repent in Bad Suffering

Recognize and Rally in Inherent Suffering

Rather Than Releasing Us from the Responsibilities of Christian Living
Tough Times Can/Should Refine Us as We Continue in Our Christian Living