

The 6th Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday, May 17, 2020
“More Than Conquerors: Victory Over Suffering”
1 Peter 4:12-19

“God has blocked my way and plunged my path into darkness.” (Job 19:8)

“...we see in a mirror dimly...” (1 Corinthians 13:12)

“‘My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,’ says the Lord. ‘And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.’” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

We are _____ beings with finite minds, finite understanding, and finite imagination; and try as we may, we cannot fully understand an _____ God.

This doesn’t mean that God is _____ in times of suffering; it doesn’t mean that He doesn’t see or care about us. Which just need to ask _____ questions.

We don’t learn very much from _____ health, good food, happy days, or money in the bank. We need to spend time in the school of _____ in order to learn the lessons God has for us.

4 LESSONS THAT WE NEED TO LEARN

#1. Suffering is _____.

“Beloved friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.” (1 Peter 4:12)

TWO IMPORTANT WORDS

• _____
Perhaps they expected their life in Christ to be full of _____, benefits, and divine _____.

The reality is, the Gospel is _____ to many; and as we’re obedient to God’s Word and _____ in proclaiming the gospel, _____ from unbelievers is inevitable.

“For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor 2:15-16)

Hardship is often a _____ of biblical faith.

“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first.” (John 15:18)

“Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Timothy 3:12)

• _____
The problem with suffering is that it can tempt us to _____ God’s love and faithfulness.

Peter is reassuring us that God’s love for us—especially in the face of suffering—is meant to be a _____ for our weary souls to rest on.

“If God is for us, who is against us?” (Romans 8:31)

How do you respond to the trials and challenges of life?

#2. Suffering can bring us _____ to God.

“But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.” (13-14)

Suffering isn’t just an inevitable part of the Christian life, but it can also _____ us in three ways:

- _____: We share in the sufferings of Christ.
- _____: We experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- _____: We will rejoice when we see Christ.

If we _____ our allegiance to Him, the world would leave us alone because it’s not us they hate, but _____ in us. That’s why the world doesn’t persecute _____ Christians or a _____ believers—because its not _____ by them. Persecution is a sign that we’re doing what God wants us to do.

participate = *koinonia* =

Peter speaks here of having fellowship in the _____ of Christ. In other words, our sufferings _____ us with Jesus in a way that nothing else can.

It’s not that suffering in and of itself brings us to Christ; it’s what suffering does _____ us and _____ us.

God allows us to go through hard times to remind us that we are completely _____ upon, and _____ with Jesus, in suffering.

Just as Jesus’ sufferings were not in _____, but had an eternal purpose—the redemption of the world—all our sufferings have an eternal _____ and can be used by God for His glory. They unite us to Jesus, and make us more like Him.

Sharing in Christ's sufferings actually gives us _____ that no matter what happens to us, this world isn't the _____—we were made for more than this earthly life—and we'll be with God forever. This hope can give us a sense of _____ that surpasses all human understanding.

“...we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us...” (Romans 5:3-5)

How do you respond to suffering?

Do you allow it to move you closer to Jesus or farther away?

#3. Suffering can lead to _____.

“If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, ‘If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’” (1 Peter 4:15-18)

Sometimes we bring suffering on _____. We all make mistakes; we all make bad _____; and we can't escape the _____.

meddler = *allotriepiskopos* =

Peter us telling us not to do anything to _____ the name of the Lord. Instead, we should praise God that we're counted _____ to suffer for His name. He tells us that suffering forces us to examine our life and faith—to decide where we stand and what we _____.

• “The house of God” = _____.

We are saved by _____. However, even though we're God's children, we'll still face _____ when Christ returns. And so, God allows the heat to be turned up in in our lives so that we can be _____ by our trials.

God disciplines us to make us _____, and hard times are part of His _____ to us. They loosen us from our love of the _____, and make us long for _____.

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.” (Romans 8:18)

• “who don't obey the gospel of God” _____.

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to

repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Today God holds back judgment so we can run to the _____ and be saved, but one day His _____ will come to an end.

How self aware are you? Where do you stand in relation to Jesus?

#4. Suffering can teach us to _____ God.

“Therefore, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.”

When trouble comes we can't do much about our circumstances. However, we can _____ ourselves to God.

commit = *parathemi* =

Because God is _____ in Himself and to His own promises, our souls can find _____ in Him.

In His _____, _____, and _____.

Have you ever done that? Have you made a deposit into the Bank of Heaven and told the Lord He can do whatever He wants in your life?

†

“...in this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

Jesus has _____ the world; and we can be confident, that He is _____ than anything this world can throw at us.

No matter what comes our way, God promises to see us _____, if we fix our eyes on Jesus and the _____. Apart from the cross, it makes no sense to _____ in our suffering.

At the cross we see how the evil purposes of the world serve the eternal _____ of God. At the cross we see untold human _____ accomplishing our eternal _____.

The next time you're facing a trial or challenge, fix your eyes on the cross. Start there and your troubles will come into proper _____. What God did for Jesus, He will also do for _____.

“Adversity is the diamond dust heaven polishes its jewels with.”

~ Archbishop Robert Leighton