

## **Sermon Outline**

### **“Fiery Trials”**

#### **1 Peter 4:12-19 – Joshua Harris – August 8, 2010**

##### **What are fiery trials? (verses 14, 16)**

1. In this passage, Peter is referring to the trial of mistreatment. In verse 14, he talks about being “insulted” for the name of Christ, and in verse 16, he describes suffering because you are a Christian. Because Peter uses the same imagery in 1:6-7 in a broader sense, “fiery trials” are not limited to persecution or martyrdom.
2. Another use of trials is seen in Heb. 3:7-8, in which the wandering Israelites lacked permanence, position, power and provision in the desert. For us trials can be circumstances that leave us uncertain about our future, our provision, or our position.
3. Another use of trials is in Gal. 4:13-14. Paul endured the trial of physical suffering. Those who loved him endured the trial of seeing those they love suffer. Those who suffer physical illness and those who love them are enduring “fiery trials”.
4. Another use of trials is Jesus’ temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane in Matt. 26:40-41. Sometimes our trials are direct attacks from the enemy—crushing depression, discouragement, and temptations to fleshly indulgence.
5. The Lord uses all these different “fiery trials” to test the genuineness of our faith.

##### **Why shouldn’t I be surprised by trials? (verses 12-13)**

1. In verse 12, Peter is saying, “expect trials and view them as a normal part of the Christian life.” This is God’s pattern in the lives of his people throughout the ages to bring about his purposes for his glory and for our good.
2. But most of us don’t live that way. When we look at our future, we often picture things going right. We imagine ourselves healthy. We view trials as an intruder. We view difficulty as a detour from the normal plan. We don’t want to believe that trials are part of the normal plan.
3. But this is only because we haven’t paid attention to our Bibles. Think about the men and women in the pages of Holy Scripture—Joseph, Moses, Ruth, David, Peter, Paul, and Jesus, etc. They all experienced significant trials as part of God’s work in and through them.

##### **Why should I rejoice in trials? (verses 13-15)**

1. Because sharing in Christ’s suffering today means sharing in his glory on the last day. Peter, in verse 15, qualifies this: not all suffering is good if we’re suffering because we’ve sinned.
2. However, when we share in Christ’s suffering for the right reasons, when we suffer because of our union with Jesus, we will be filled with untold joy on the day when Jesus is

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revealed as the Everlasting Son of God. On the last day, Jesus will be revealed as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords for all time and eternity. And it will be a day of great rejoicing for those who shared in his suffering during their life on earth.

### **How do trials relate to judgment beginning with the household of God? (verses 17-18)**

1. "Household of God" refers to the people of God, the church. This means that if you're suffering as a Christian, you shouldn't react to your suffering by doing something shameful. Instead you are to glorify God as a suffering Christian. When we encounter suffering, we can run from God and turn to sin, or we can obey God and glorify him with our actions. What we choose reveals the true state of our heart.
2. The point of these verses is that suffering reveals the real nature of our faith. It reveals whether or not we truly belong to God. The judgment described in this verse isn't punishment for sin. It is the judging between who is a true believer and who is a false believer.

### **How do I entrust my soul to God in the midst of trials? (verse 19)**

1. Because suffering is God's instrument for our good, it shouldn't stop us from loving and obeying him. We should entrust our souls to him and continue to do what pleases him.
2. That phrase "entrust their souls to a faithful Creator" is a rich phrase. To entrust means to give someone something for safekeeping; it is trusting someone to care for and protect something that we value.
3. And even in the midst of trials, the Lord calls us to focus on others and do good.

### **Fellowship Starters**

1. What fiery trials are you currently going through? According to 1 Peter 4:13-14, why can you rejoice in the midst of those trials?
2. Josh taught us that, "God loves us too much to leave us trapped in the lie that the world is our paradise." How have your trials helped you to loose your grip on the things of this world and make Jesus your dearest treasure?
3. In the midst of your trial, what does it look like to entrust your soul to God? (see 1 Peter 4:19)
4. Verse 19 calls us to direct our eyes outward to God and others as we are experiencing suffering. What does it look like to "do good" in the midst of your trials?