

I Peter

I Peter 1:7 - "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:" I am continually impressed by God's timeliness in my daily Bible reading. I have been wondering recently how I would react to real, serious, honest-to-goodness trials. Much of what I typically call trials are nothing more than inconveniences, and this has made me almost fearful of the future. I know people who have faced major hardships that have brought heartbreak, increased temptation, caused physical pain, and forced excruciating decisions of conscience; yet I have encountered these problems rarely and with minimal intensity. My prayer can only be that when the fire comes, I will fully rely on God. Pray that He is glorified when these difficulties come in your life too.

I Peter 1:15-16 - "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Most of those who have been saved for some number of years know this verse, but I wonder how many of us really make holiness a goal. I actually prayed in public once that God would make me holy, and felt a little strange about it. Asking God to make me holy seemed almost arrogant or selfish, yet I knew in actuality this was a wise and Biblical prayer. I believe we often have the idea that our personal righteousness should never be considered, since it conflicts with our skewed view of humility. We should know that humility is considering ourselves last, and not a lack of attention to our personal Godly behavior. Do what is right, consider others first, and make personal holiness a serious priority; this will bring you a lot closer to the character of our perfect Savior.

I Peter 2:12 - "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." This verse may not have impact for you, unless you have been spoken against as an evildoer. Did you know that you could perfectly follow God's principles and operate with impeccable integrity, and someone could still speak against you, calling your actions evil? This has actually happened to me, and the only thing that made me feel better about it was the confident understanding that I had done right and obeyed God. We need to know with certainty in our own hearts that we have done right when we are accused, knowing that being accused is not a sin, as long as that accusation is false. Don't ever let the evil words about you be true, instead do right and let the evil say what they will.

I Peter 4:11 - "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." I have used this verse in a recent sermon about doing your best. We see here that we must minister with all the ability that God gives us. It is almost as though we need to take the talents that God has given us, and use them to their full potential for Him. Sadly, I have seen very little evidence that today's Christian sees this as important. When considering an action, we often set the bar just so high as to be seen as "good enough" to others. Obviously in this regard we are considering how we look, more than how much we have really challenged ourselves to do great things. Forget looking "good enough" and always function in your God-given responsibility at peak performance; this will bring outstanding results and certainly glorify the Savior.

I Peter 5:5 - "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." The idea that we should be subject one to another is neither popular nor often practiced. I would readily admit that I rarely think of this principle and sometimes have the feeling I am a bit of a free-agent. If pressed on the matter I would admit mutual dependence, but as for practicing it daily I fall short. This is an unfortunate thing, because this command seeks to do nothing more than help us. What a wonderful thing it would be to see a younger man hearing and learning from an elder with humility. It does happen, but I would venture to say that if we paid more attention it could happen a lot more.

I Peter 5:8-9 - "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." I read this passage with new eyes today it seems. The words "in the faith" really jumped out, and I can't say I ever remember noticing them before. This refreshed my belief in the idea that we do most of our resisting of the enemy by simply living a consistent, faithful Christian life. Those who have a strong walk with Christ tend to be attacked more by the enemy, but also do a better job of resisting and having victory over him. This seems a strange comment to make, yet we know that those who are aware of attack are more equipped to withstand them. It is the subtle and almost forgotten enemy that will overtake and destroy most effectively, so walk the walk daily and be reminded by God of the battle we face.