**Entrust Yourselves to the Faithful Creator**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

1 Peter 4:1-19

16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. 17 For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

(1 Peter 4:16-19, ESV)

**Introduction**

Religious persecution, while perhaps not something really experienced here in the U.S.A., is not a thing of the past. While people might confuse “woke politics” and oppression of speech freedom on social media with religious persecution, in other cases, religious persecution is disguised as political oppression. Responding to sincere inquiry with gentleness and respect can help us avoid unnecessary conflict. However, we will have to entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator, Savior, and Lord when the enemy of our souls targets you and me.

**1. Further implications of Christ having suffered for the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1-6)**

 a) Are you living for the fulfillment of human passions or for the will of God?

 b) What does 1 Peter 4:6 mean and how should we respond to such mysteries?

**2. Stewarding our lives so God receives glory through Christ. (1 Peter 4:7-11)**

 a) The importance of an eschatological perspective for worship, discipleship and witness.

 b) Serving God with all that has been entrusted to us, regardless of whether little or much.

**3. The reality of the spiritual conflict being fought all around us. (1 Peter 4:12-19)**

 a) Opposition should be expected and perseverance is required because of the enemy of our souls.

 b) We cannot escape suffering in this world, but we can choose who and what we will suffer for.

**Conclusion**

While the prospect of various trials and suffering may not excite us, we should not be surprised that trust in and obedience to God will reveal, if not result, in spiritual opposition in human or even elemental form. However, the chorus of Christ and His apostles—including Peter himself here—remind us that even if we may lose all else, our eternal souls are kept safe by our faithful Creator, Savior, and Lord while we are being and doing good.

**For our prayerful study, discussion, and application:**

1) Please practice CAKE with one another. Then have someone share a recent experience of when they realized they were in Enemy Mode and promptly returned to joy and relationship.

2) Read 1 Peter 4:1-19 and share one thing the Spirit says to you through the text.

3) What is God showing and telling you and what do you need prayer for this week?

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