

1Peter 11-06-03b

Let's pick up our study in 1 Peter chapter 4. We've seen the idea that Peter is introducing here, or reintroducing actually, we saw it back in chapter 1, that there is fiery trial which is not for the purpose of destruction, but for refinement, and we want to be refined, and the reason is given here. Rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings so that when his glory is revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy, and you have this association of ideas back in chapter 1 as well in verses 6 and 7, in this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while if need be you have been grieved by various trials. So you rejoice and in chapter 1 we saw that there was sort of a future expectation.

You're grieved right now by trials so that the genuineness of your faith may be found to praise honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So he says this inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fades not away reserved in heaven kept for you by the power of God ready to be revealed in the last time Inheritance is going to be revealed and so you rejoice in the inheritance and you rejoice knowing that when your faith is proved to be genuine it is going to be reflecting praise honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So there is this stake in the future.

It isn't that we so much think that well suffering is is good for me you know I needed that suffering. You know there used to be a commercial a long time ago somebody would be going off on a tangent and they'd just smack them real hard and they would say thanks I needed that and you know there's there's a school of thought that says well if we're suffering it's probably a slap in the head. That's one reason why Christians suffer, but if you've ever done a full study on suffering which we will probably undertake at least as a summary sometime in the next few weeks just to put these comments in context that's one of the sort of lesser reasons why we suffer.

It's not primarily suffering for discipline or suffering for correction. Our suffering if it's for discipline and correction it doesn't really reflect the glory of Jesus. It's kind of like you know here's my child and I just spanked him doesn't doesn't my child reflect what a great parent I am.

If I had to spank him it's not really reflecting what a great parent I am. If they come in and sit down and have perfect manners and and say please and excuse me and thank you and do all the stuff they're supposed to do and I don't have to spank them now they're reflecting that I've done a good job as a parent right. So when Peter or Paul or anyone else is talking about suffering that reflects the glory of the Lord Jesus that's not suffering for correction.

Suffering you know whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Chastening discipline isn't a glory reflection in the in the best sense of it. All everything reflects God's glory in some way, but that's not the way you want it to happen.

It's a different kind of suffering. If need be you're grieved by various trials. He doesn't say you're grieved by various spankings.

Grieved by trials. This is suffering sort of for righteousness sake suffering because you are doing what you're supposed to do and the world doesn't like it. The environment doesn't accept it and that's what you have as well here in chapter 4. Keep your finger here and just turn quickly back for comparison to Romans chapter 5 because we're going to see another similarity.

Therefore having been justified by faith. This is Romans 5 1 Having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God in the day when the glory of God is revealed whether it's revealed now in sort of through a glass darkly or fully revealed in the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ the day of the Lord day of the Lord's return judgment seat of Christ millennial kingdom kingdom of the Father all of those future things we rejoice in hope of the glory of God not only that but we also glory in tribulations we glory in trials we glory in testings knowing that tribulation produces perseverance and Perseverance character and character hope Now hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us But these are good things right Tribulation produces perseverance This is one of the things that is difficult for our Newest generation of freshly minted adults to understand that When It's it was a similar situation in the 1950s the World War two generation that came back and said I don't want my kids to have to grow up like I did in the Depression and then see the horrors of war and so on I'm gonna give them everything we're gonna swing to the other end of the meter here and instead of Having truck gardens in the backyard and scratching by and and just barely eking out a living My kids are not going to suffer what I did when I was a child.

I'm gonna give them everything and this is the generation that produced the 60s and the 70s and the complete nosedive of Everything of worth and character in this country and part of the reason it's there's a spiritual component but part of the reason is that if you do not have to work and you do not have to Persevere and you do not have to endure You have no Patience and you have no perseverance the generation that that protested on college campuses and and fomented riots and Rebellions and grew their hair out and took drugs and took their clothes off at Woodstock of which they're just inordinately immensely proud You know Woodstock was a giant mud hole It was one of the worst ecological disasters of the 1960s They don't want to talk about that all of these green Environmental people you should see what happened to that poor guy's farm in Woodstock after that concert. There was Sewage, you can't believe what they did to that place all of these love peace people but the lack of challenge the lack of necessity to push against resistance to bring Oneself under control to do the hard things to do the necessary things that you don't feel like doing if you don't have that You are weak You are impatient. You have no perseverance and what has happened now in our school system is we've removed Much of the necessary challenge in public school Everybody just texts each other the answers.

They cooperate to graduate they You know six people get together and do one six of the work and so they don't have to persevere They don't have to work hard not as hard. There's obviously

there is some I'm exaggerating for the sake of argument here But it is much less the bar has been lowered so that more people can cross it If you heard this last week They are now Feeding breakfast in the classroom to children in Chicago 600 odd elementary schools They passed this initiative back in January and they've been gradually implementing it now. There's hundreds of schools in Chicago Because they said well the kids are showing up hungry and they can't learn so we're going to feed them Where are the parents of these children who are sending their kids to school hungry and unable to concentrate And so the school system says well, we're not going to hold the parents to account We're not going to bring the parents in and say you know why your child's getting bad grades because they're starving Get up a half hour earlier and give your child some food or we're going to notify Child Protective Services That you're not taking care of your family and you're sending us an undernourished Unable to focus child.

Oh, no will The state will feed your child will just raise taxes on everybody will bring it So now they're bringing in food, and you know what the food is they've got some you know powdered scrambled eggs, but there's like Pudding pop on a stick there's glazed doughnuts. You know it's not like we don't have an obesity problem in America That's and it's some of the parents a lot of parents got together and complained when this was first passed And they said look you're serving peanuts. We've got children that are allergic to peanuts We've had kids coming home with hives.

You know you don't know what to feed them This is is typical of the state solution. It sounds great on paper It sounds great in the abstract, but when you bring it down to cases and you've got impersonal agencies Trying to give personal care or what is supposed to be personal care it fails Kid doesn't have to get up and feed himself from the time I was small we knew how to feed ourselves. I could make myself a sandwich.

I could make myself a bowl of cereal I could get a piece of fruit out of the refrigerator and feed myself My mother graciously got up and made us you know cream wheat or oatmeal or rice or something every morning But I could have fed myself. I fed myself many times. I made my own lunch for years And took it with me.

I knew how to do that from being a child I knew how to cook a breakfast from from being a child But we don't make our kids learn how to feed themselves We don't hold the children who have now grown up to be adults and our parents themselves. We don't make them do their job. Oh Can't feed your child.

I'll do it for you. We'll have the so and can you imagine it's not they're not They've had before school Cafeteria programs in Chicago for years, but that's not good enough parents Couldn't get the child there early enough to go to the cafeteria and get the free breakfast So they're bringing the breakfast into the classroom. I would love to be the child coming into second period class with the Grease and scrambled eggs and pudding pop mess smeared all over the desks You know the leavings these are elementary school kids.

This is starting in kindergarten first grade second grade. Oh, yes, of course That's just going to be spotless for second hour classes Who's going to clean all that up and the teachers You know, you don't speak up or you don't have a job. So what are they going to say when they're interviewed? Oh, well, you know I at first I was against it But now I can see it Right at first you were against it till you found you'd be fired if you said anything against it So now you're for it, but here's the point We should not think it is strange when God puts challenge in front of us We need challenge.

We need to be pressed We need to be tested Running away from testing that's what weak people do Running away from challenge is what people who are never going to grow never going to advance never going to achieve Because it's too hard. Why don't you just give it to me? I get this From one of my daughters if I want to give the dog a treat You should make him do something for that treat Don't just give him the treat make him earn it make him work for it She always does and she does a great job. She's she's I'm a little bit soft-hearted in that.

I think look he's a dog He's already reached his potential I can't teach him anything here, but It is a good thing to keep in mind and I'm glad she's got that mindset because when she has children of her own They need to earn they need to work for they need to have a challenge put in front of them You get strong by pushing against resistance. It's a biblical principle So that's why Peter says don't think it's strange That's why Paul says you have need of patience so that after you have suffered a while you inherit Inheritance is predicated upon pressing through working through and achieving success against Odds against resistance you think about You know these Contests athletic contests. What's more fun to watch a 48 to nothing victory or a 48 to 46.

Well, yeah, if it's if it's Navy vs. Army or something Yeah, that's that's pretty good but normally Normally if you want to see a really good game, it's a back-and-forth context Contest and the the issue is is someone in doubt and you're playing a really good team I promise you this the victory is much sweeter for a team that plays a really really talented Stubborn opponent and beats them anyway, then to walk over easy Marks, you know, they just they can't play. We're just it's just how fast can we get down the field or get down the court? Victory is sweeter when you know, you had to work for it.

It was hard and you did it That's The idea here, but it takes it a step further that's sort of a human Truism, but look over Peter says here Don't think it's strange concerning the fiery trial rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings What is unique about Christ's sufferings compared to anybody else's sufferings in history? What was different about his sufferings when you think about you know religious leaders any anybody what's different Why did Christ endure the cross? despising the shame What does it say who for the joy that was set before him Endured the cross for the joy that was set before him. That's unique Who before Christ endured sufferings looking for their eternal Reward, of course, you've got your Old Testament Saints But you look at the Lord Jesus Christ as an example for believers as an example for Christians in this

age he exemplifies living your life dedicated to the will of the Father and motivated by and Rejoicing in that which is yet future He wasn't yet at the right hand of the Father. He wasn't raised above all principalities and powers and rulers He was oppressed by them.

He was tested by them. He was dogged by them. He was challenged by them he was argued with by them and They thought they had him beat when they finally got him crucified but he overcame a very determined very Clever and very strong foe he led captivity captive he Conquered sin he conquered death.

There isn't anything more Challenging than that and why did he do it for the joy that was set before him? That's why every time Peter mentions suffering he mentions joy. He does it in chapter 1 he does it in Chapter 4 and he's going to do it again in chapter 5 Rejoice to the extent that you share in suffering We rejoice in hope of the glory of God They're a unit they're inseparable most people their suffering is just suffering Well, I've got you know third stage this I've got Degenerative that I've got this problem that problem. It's not going away You know all things the law of entropy.

It's all going downhill We're different our hope our struggle has joy at the end Rejoice to the extent that you partake so that when his glory is revealed you may also be glad with the exceeding joy Even more joy and the word that's used here for exceeding. Joy is one that Peter always uses of future Hope you know Cara is the regular word for for joy But here in verse 13 it is When he says exceeding joy It is the word Agalio minnow a Golly ah manas And that a golly ah manas Joy is always Future it's a surpassing. It's almost an incomprehensible thing So you're you joy in it now, but it's sort of a measured joy It's tempered with the current suffering that you're going through you are made sorrowful by your griefs And you rejoice in it kind of like you rejoice as you're working really really hard thinking about what's going to happen When you finish women in labor, you know they're glad to be having the baby But that gladness is kind of a limited gladness because they're in the middle of having a baby But once it's over now you've got a golly ah manas joy, because you've got the baby and the labor is over and That's the that's sort of the comparison here you rejoice now because you're sharing but even greater when the glory is revealed If you are reproached for the name of Christ blessed Makarios now this goes directly back again.

Keep your finger in first Peter 4 and turn back to Matthew chapter 5 Seems to be a night for chapter 5 we went to Romans 5 now. We're going to Matthew 5 Matthew chapter 5 if you know your Significant chapter list in the New Testament, you know what this is. This is your your Beatitudes Verse 10 blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake For theirs is the kingdom of heaven Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you this is the same word by the way Makarios and you can't help but think that Peter is is Remembering or is alluding to this teaching of the Lord Jesus, which I'm sure he heard on more than one occasion You know many of these teaching sections of the Lord.

Jesus are representative of What Jesus taught as he traveled it reminds me? Well, I've you know a big fan of the statesman quartet I used to think wow, you know, I want to find every concert tape of the statesman wherever they went Because they were all over the country and people made recordings and well I want to hear that. I want to hear all of them I want to collect all of them But it dawned on me after I got the first 10 or 12 That they had pretty much a set of things that they did just like now anybody that's currently touring With a music act or whatever. Well, if you go hear them in Dallas and they're going to be in in Kansas City next week you can travel up to Kansas City You're going to hear substantially the same thing you heard in Dallas Which is the same thing that you would have heard in Austin? Which is the same thing you would heard in Phoenix, which you know It's a set it and these these teaching units are things that the disciples would have been like, you know Those who accompany traveling? touring acts they would have heard this over and over and over and this is why it was important for the Apostles to be those who are with Christ from the beginning because they had the benefit of Repetition They heard it over and over.

How could you forget? I've heard that so many times. I've heard Jesus give those beatitudes dozens of times and Here in his old age, so to speak Peter still remembers what Jesus said and he uses the very same word Makario Blessed are you? Jesus says in Matthew 5 11 when they revile you and persecute you and say kind all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven Very same thought Peter put it in chapter 1. He's got it here in chapter 4. We'll see it again in chapter 5 If you look ahead in 1st Peter chapter 5 verse 9 The devil is roaring like a lion wandering about resist him steadfast in faith knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in The world may the God of all grace who called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus After you have suffered a while perfect establish faith strengthen and settle you After you have suffered we are called to his eternal glory after we have suffered. Why doesn't he just call us to eternal glory now? Because we need the suffering we need the perseverance We need it if you're not experiencing it if you don't see it if you can't feel it.

What's the matter? It's a part of the program We need it. We should recognize it for what it is and Be thankful it's kind of like if a guy kept waking up every morning and eating his cereal and reading the paper and walking the dog and You know picking up a few things and throwing them in the trash and it gets to be afternoon He says well boy that was sure an easy day He wake ups the next day and makes another bowl of cereal watches a little morning television reads the paper Goes out walks around a little bit comes in put throws a few things away cleans up his breakfast dishes Well, that was a pretty easy day and and that happens day after day. He should wake up one morning and say don't I have a job? Aren't I employed somewhere? Shouldn't I be having some kind of a challenge? I wonder why it is I'm just able to get up and me, you know Am I not gonna run out of cereal here pretty soon won't the paper stop coming and the lights go off at some point You know if it's sort of unusually easy We ought to be looking around saying what did I forget to do? Did I forget to go to work? Did I forget why I'm here? Did I forget what my

identity is? There ought to be some challenge There ought to be some difficulty and if there's not there's something wrong and our danger is not what the first century Scattered Diaspora had where they were actively in the midst of hostile neighbors We are actively in the midst of non-hostile neighbors who are sort of gently carrying us to doom and destruction because we don't resist and our challenge is to maintain who we are and why we're here in the midst of What is a crooked and perverse generation? Are we shining or are we blending and How do we do that? It's not a matter of oh gee.

I'm gonna go picket the next R-rated movie they show at the theater or something. What is it that we do? we have to live our life of Testimony, we have to be willing to do whatever it is that comes our way Even if it is very hard We get used to things being easy and we think there's something the matter if something is suddenly hard Well, don't think it's strange if something hard comes along. That's what Peter says From time to time there should be something difficult.

We should have a tough decision to make maybe it's financial. Maybe it's Relationship wise maybe we're suddenly confronted with a choice of either cooperating with evil or by our presence by our tacit silent lack of opposition Oh, so you're coming out of the closet. Well, isn't that special and and we just don't want to make waves We don't want to hurt anybody's feelings and well none of the rest of the family or none of the rest of the friends are Saying anything.

So why should I? Say or do anything, you know Let me just blend and we no longer shine as lights and guess what pretty soon There is no light shining and it isn't a matter of overt, you know cooperative social protest or anything like that It's a matter of living our individual lives with integrity. I want to read you something in closing If I say Dr. Livingston, I presume how many people know what I'm talking about? Only our old ones they don't even teach it in school anymore. You know, why because David Livingston was a Scottish Missionary he did what he did in Africa because he was a missionary.

It's been expunged and excised You've got to look close in in an article about David Livingston to find out that the reason he went to Africa was to evangelize He got saved at the age of 10 He got a prize when he was a child for memorizing all of Psalm 119 and getting all the way through it with only five Hitches when he was like 13 years old No when he was 9, he was 9 years old memorized Psalm 119 And he only had to pause and think five times got through the entire Psalm 119 at the age of 9 He got associated with dr. And mrs Moffat who were some of the pioneering missionaries in Africa in the early 1800s. He married the Moffat's daughter Mrs. Livingston was a missionary child from Africa he went to Africa and what he discovered as he went in there is that The the white European mission stations that were trying to be set up in Africa Were getting wiped out entire stations like 50-odd people would go in and get wiped out by fever wiped out by disease wiped out by the Portuguese slavers wiped out by Thieves and various things and and they couldn't get a foothold and he said, you know what? We need a bigger vision here instead of just going in and getting groups and trying to pitch the gospel to them We need to open this continent.

We need to make highways. We need to make inroads We need to move civilization in here so that we've got a foundation on which to build missions. There's no foundation This is all sand here any people that are trying to build these mission stations are building on sand He had a great vision from God and in the interest of Christ and for the purpose of the gospel he shifted from trying to just evangelize and be a traditional missionary To being an explorer and he wanted to map he wanted to find the river sources He wanted to find the source of the Nile He wanted to find ways to get in there and bring Civilization and culture so that they could wipe out the fever so that they get large enough Establishments to be able to use those as basis to go into the innermost jungle and evangelize but everywhere he went in his explorations He still evangelized he had Bible studies even with his own guides.

He had daily devotions He still he evangelized tens of thousands of natives while he was exploring But they've just they've written that all out of the historical record But he suffered horribly through the whole last half of his life in Africa he was separated from his family for years at a time and his wife was Insulted and and bad things were said about their marriage They were devoted to each other but they were willing to spend these separation times apart so that she could raise their five surviving children and he could do this work that God had called him to and they had long separations and And there was a lot of derision and a lot of innuendos and a lot of very unkind Insulting and hurtful things that were said about their marriage over the years all false She went back to Africa once her kids were grown enough and and resumed her Her she traveled with him. In fact, it killed her She died in Africa of the fever and he went on for another I think 16 years after her death But he had dysentery he had malaria He had he had 31 separate attacks of fever on one trip his guides had to carry him During some of his expeditions in there because he was too sick with cholera and malaria He had everything known to man things that had wiped out every other missionary that went in there. He survived it.

He had Ulcers on his feet his teeth were falling out But he was pushing trying to get this work done. He knew that somebody had to do it But here's what I want to read you in closing this is a quote from David Livingston People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God? Which we can never repay Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blessed reward in healthful activity the consciousness of doing good? Peace of mind and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter David Livingston was a Bible scholar most missionaries in that day were they weren't your College graduate I'm going to run off and evangelize with very little training and almost no knowledge or life experience He knew the Word of God and he said it's not a sacrifice He said is it a sacrifice that has its own blessed reward? Consciousness of doing good peace of mind bright. Hope of a glorious destiny hereafter Away with the word in such a view and with such a thought that this is a sacrifice It is emphatically no sacrifice say rather it is a privilege anxiety sickness Suffering or danger now and then with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life May make us pause and cause the spirit to waver and the

soul to sink But let this only be for a moment all these are Nothing when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in and for us.

I Never made a sacrifice You can find that quote by the way, they've actually got it on wiki quote Just look for David Livingston But it sums up his life and I would encourage you if you find that that wiki quote and review these words look at the bottom There's a go to the very last link that they give which is David Livingston biographies click that and there's a list of several different summaries of his life read any one of them read all of them to get an Idea of the details of what he went through and for him to say this having gone through those things It just gives you that much more context and makes it that much more meaningful but this should be our attitude and again we're not likely to have to suffer through the jungles of Africa and Deprivation and separation and disease and all the things that he went through but the average of human experience Doesn't vary that much We tend to look over and say well that person doesn't have near the hardship I do or who that person's got way more hardship than I've got in context in Circumstances our human souls are tested pretty much the same. I think in the justice of God There's none of us that are overly oppressed and there's none of us that are overly blessed It's a mix Sometimes our testing is internal and private and invisible other times. It's over an external and visible But God loves all of us God Chastens all of us God tests all of us It would be unfair of God to not test us and to leave us weak and anemic and impotent in our faith Expect to be tested Plan for it prepare for it recognize it and persevere knowing that this strengthens our faith enlivens our hope and Broadens our opportunities and our potential for reflecting the glory of God as As he says we have a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter Away with the thought that we're sacrificing or we're giving up or we're putting up with something away with the thought it is no Sacrifice call it rather a privilege and I can't think of anything that sums up the message of this section of first Peter better than David Livingston's words and With that we will close and we'll pick up with verse 15 next time actually with verse 14 if you're reproached for the name of Christ blessed are you We'll review that and then go to 15 Because I was very fascinated.

Why would anybody that Peter is writing to suffer as a murderer or a thief and The word busybody is not busybody. And so we'll tackle that and straighten it out next time father thank you for the truth of your word, thank you for the Privilege that we have of living in this life and Learning to resist and to overcome the challenges that face us in the world in our own flesh and from our spiritual enemy the devil and his Minions the principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will Help us to be alert when these times of Challenge and testing come that we will recognize them for what we are and that we will also recognize the resources and the strengthening comforting Encouraging truths of your word that are available to us to counter them and to overcome them we know that in so doing we will find the fulfillment of our purpose in this life and We will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus both now and in the ages to come we pray these things in his name Amen