

# CHURCH IN REGINA

Meeting Place: 3860 Buckingham Drive E, Regina, SK, Canada S4V 3A1

1 Timothy 2:4, "Who [God] desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth."

The Church of the Saints in Regina

<http://thechurchinregina.org>

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## CHURCH MEETINGS:

### Lord's Day

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### Prayer Meeting

Tuesdays - Saints' Home  
7:30 Pm - 8:30 PM

### Young People Meeting

Fridays  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

### Small Groupings

Fridays & Saturdays  
Saints' Home

## Seven ANNUAL FEAST

- International Chinese-speaking Conference**  
Anaheim, California  
February 15-17, 2019
- ITERO (Spring)**  
Anaheim CA  
April 5 - 7, 2019
- Memorial Day Conference**  
Seattle, WA  
May 24-27, 2019
- Summer Semiannual Training**  
Anaheim, CA  
July 1-6, 2019
- ITERO (Fall)**  
Bangalore, India  
October 3-5, 2019
- Thanksgiving Conference**  
Houston, TX  
Nov. 28 - Dec. 1, 2019
- Winter Semiannual Training**  
Anaheim, CA  
December 23-28, 2019

## HWMR - THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST, Week 5

### Having No Confidence in the Flesh and Counting All Things to Be Loss on Account of Christ and the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:3-8

Paul testified in Phil. 3:3 that he had **no confidence in the flesh** but in the Lord whom he served in spirit...**What is this flesh** that Paul speaks of? We may think that our flesh is so evil and negative, with many lusts and sins; however,...what Paul considered "**the flesh ...were not necessarily all evil**. We may think that the flesh includes only evil things and not good things; however, **the honorable, lovable, and superior aspects of our natural being are still the flesh**. So we need to say like Paul that we have no confidence in the flesh, especially in the positive and even spiritual aspects of our flesh.

**The confidence in all these things has to go**, otherwise we cannot experience Christ. In the church life the Lord is faithful to expose the flesh, the expression of the natural being, and all our natural man with its manifestations; in the church life we do not pay attention or uplift the natural qualifications but rather **we learn to take the cross, live Christ, and experience Christ**.

We will be like Paul, **considering all things as dung, refuse, and rubbish**, on account of Christ, **on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ**. Gaining the excellency of the knowledge of Christ can be illustrated by the experience of tourists shopping in Hong Kong, especially going to the jade merchants. The merchants present these products in a such a way that the listeners gain a knowledge of the excellency of these things, and they are happy to pay any price to have them. Before the tourists entered the store, they didn't have the knowledge of these precious items, but once they are presented their preciousness, they gain the excellency of the knowledge concerning them.

Many times the brothers and sisters may come to meetings in the way of "window-shopping"; they enjoy the meeting, but they go home and live their life, not paying the price to gain Christ. We may like to listen to others speaking, we may even sing a little, but we may not pay the price to gain Christ. **What is this price we have to pay to gain Christ? This price is to suffer the loss of all things**. If we look at Paul the apostle, he suffered the loss of all things – first he counted as loss all religious gain and all gain by natural birth, and then **he counted all things as loss and even suffered the loss of all things**. He did all these in order to gain the Christ he had seen.

For example, we may spend a large amount of money to purchase something of great value; after purchasing that item and bringing it home, we may begin to regret the price we paid for it, but when we consider or use the item we purchased and realise its excellency, we don't care about the price we have paid. This is what happened to Paul, and this is what should also happen to us. The price Paul paid was to **suffer the loss of all things so that he may gain Christ**; was this a big or a small price? **It all depends on how we value Christ**; if we value Christ the way Paul did, we would consider this as a bargain, for we gave up refuse so that we may gain Christ.

Like Paul we should **not only** count all things **as loss** on account of Christ (Phil. 3:7) but we **should also suffer the loss** of all things and count all things as refuse (v. 8). This doesn't mean that we should throw away all things or dispose of them and then retreat somewhere in the desert to enjoy Christ by ourselves; rather, **we should simply seek to gain Christ by enjoying and experiencing His unsearchable riches, and we will be inwardly motivated to count all things as loss on account of Christ**.

Many of us can testify in faith and before the Lord that, once we see Christ, it's all over; all other things lose their attraction and grip on us, and we don't even worry about what comes later – it doesn't matter what will happen, what matters is that we gain Christ. We don't really see this but the world actually wrecks us; by enjoying the world we think we are free, but we are actually bound and in slavery to so many things – entertainment, sports, technology, glory, fame, sin, lusts...

When we **see Christ**, however, and when we **gain Christ**, we are really free; we are free to enjoy Him, to experience Him, and even to become Him. We are free in Him, we are motivated by Him to pursue Him, and **the things in the world become something that we use or own only to meet our needs, but they no longer enslave us**. May we open ourselves to the Lord, be motivated to pursue Christ, and we will be caused to enjoy Him; when we enjoy Him, we "get a little crazy" – we **don't pay attention to things like paying the price** but rather, we **just enjoy Christ, and everything is worth it!** (*Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, Vol 23, No 8: The Experience of Christ, pp. 107-126*)

## Prayer Burden

1. Lord have **mercy** on us. We want to **know** our **flesh** and **forsake** it. Our flesh can never please You. **Forgive** us from trusting ourselves. **Teach** us to **apply the cross** and bring us further in our experience of You by **doing** everything by the Spirit.

2. Continue to **enlighten** us. We want to **serve** You by the Spirit of God, **boast** in You, and have **no confidence** in the flesh. **Shine** Your light concerning our **natural self**. We **condemn** the flesh and only **boast** in You alone.

3. Lord, **reveal** Yourself more to us. We want to **see** the **excellency**, the **super-eminence**, the **supreme preciousness** and the **surpassing worth** of Christ. **Grant** us a **subjective knowledge** and **revelation** of You.

4. **Increase** our **knowledge** of You. We want to **progress** in our experiencing You by having a **higher revelation** of You. We **praise** You for being the all-inclusive, all-extensive One.

5. Lord, **expose** Your enemy of his **subtlety**. We want to **count all things to be loss** on account of the **excellency of the knowledge** of Christ Jesus my Lord. **Reveal** all things that have become Your substitute.

6. Lord, **save** us from “window shopping” in the church life. We want to **pay the full price** to gain Christ. Not only do we **count them as loss**, but we also **suffer the loss** of all things. All things are **refuse** compared to You.

7. Please pray for:

### - EUROPE

- European **Winter School of the Truth** in the **UK**, the **Netherlands**, and **Spain** (26-31 December) We pray that the Lord will gain this generation of young people for His testimony
- The growth, building up, and blending of the saints and the strengthening of the Lord's testimony in **Hamburg**, **Bielefeld**, **Zurich** (Switzerland), **Vienna** (Austria), **Darmstadt** and **Heidelberg**.

### - ITALY

- Pray for the Property for the church in **Milan** and the Literature Center. A total of 741,600 Euros must be paid by January 13, 2020.

### - USA

- **Winter Semiannual Training** Anaheim, CA, December 23-28, 2019

### - Pray for the sick brothers and sisters

- Brother **Joe** lim - Taguig, Philippines
- Sister **Gloria** - Saskatoon, SK
- Brother **Mark** Haberl - Winnipeg, MB
- Sister **Ellen** Julba - Vancouver, BC

8. Please pray for the church in **Regina**

- To **have no confidence** in the flesh
- The **Campus Work** at the University of Regina
- The children, YP and College work
- The **readings** of the **Life-Study** messages, & the daily personal **pursuing** of the truth to gain Christ, the **excellency of the knowledge** of Christ
- For the purchase of a lot **property** for the church

**Review - LIFE-STUDY OF 1 PETER**  
*“One Life-Study a Day Makes One Holy”*

## December 16, 2019, Monday

### Introduction and the Full Salvation of the Triune God and its Issues

Paul wrote fourteen Epistles, but Peter wrote only two, containing a total of eight chapters. Nevertheless, even though Peter's writings are brief, his writings are vast and he uses certain terms that cannot be found in the writings of Paul. A particular characteristic of Peter's writing is his use of adjectives, especially high adjectives. Along with the precious blood, Peter mentions the incorruptible seed, unfading glory, and divine power. This was an indication that something had truly been built into Peter's character. **In his two Epistles, Peter is on the subject of God's universal government.** These two books speak concerning the universal government of God. **From 1:3 we see that the Father has not only chosen us, but has also regenerated us.** Regeneration, like redemption and justification, is an aspect of God's full salvation. To be regenerated is to receive another life, the divine life, in addition to the human life. According to verse 5, **we are being guarded, garrisoned, by the power of God through faith unto salvation.** The result of this guarding is salvation. This full salvation is composed of the Father's regeneration, the Spirit's application, and the Son's redemption. The result of the Father's regeneration is to bring eternal life into us and to bring us into the full enjoyment of God as our life supply. This life supply is the living hope. This life supply is also the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading. **This marvelous inheritance is kept in the heavens for us so that we may enjoy it and participate in it daily, hourly, continually.** Now this enjoyment is a living hope for us today. The issues of this full salvation can be found in 1 Peter 1:13-25. Among these issues, or results, is the girding of our loins of our mind, being sober, setting our hope on grace, and becoming holy in all our manner of life. Praise the Lord!

### December 17, Tuesday: Growth in Life and Its Results (Life-Study of 1 Peter, chapters 15-18)

First we **grow** by **feeding** on the milk of the Word unto full salvation. Then we are **transformed** unto the **building up of a spiritual house for God's dwelling**, a **holy priesthood** for **God's service**. Following this, in verses 9 and 10, we have the telling out of the virtues of the **One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.**

### Growth in Life and Its Results (1) 1 Peter 2:1-4, 6-8 (Message 15)

1. Verse 2 says, “As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word, that by it you may grow unto salvation.” Born through regeneration, the believers become babes who can **grow in life unto further salvation**, and that for God's building, by being **nourished** with the **spiritual milk**.

2. To grow is a matter **of** life and **in** life. We received the divine life through regeneration, and we need to **grow** in this life and with this life by being nourished with the milk conveyed in the **Word of God**.

3. We need to **desire** the **guileless milk of the word** so that by it we may have real growth in life. True growth is the **increase** of the **measure of life**. If we are growing in life, the life element within us will increase, and there will be an increase in our spiritual stature.

### Growth in Life and Its Results (2) 1 Peter 2:1-4, 6-8 (Message 16)

1. The tasting of the Lord is not in outward miracles. Rather, it is in the **inward nourishment of life**. This inward nourishment is the genuine tasting of the Lord. If we have tasted that the Lord is good, we shall surely **long for the milk in the word**. No matter what kind of environment we may be in or what kind of circumstances we may have, we are sustained by the Lord.

2. A **living stone** is one that **not only possesses** life, **but also grows** in life. This is Christ for God's building. **For God's building, He is the stone.** After receiving Him as the seed of life, we need to grow that we may experience Him as the **stone living in us**. Thus He will make us also living stones, transformed with His stone nature so that we may be **built together** with others a **spiritual house** upon Him as both the foundation and the cornerstone.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS and SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

1. Our Church Pursuit (video) and Combined Prayer Meeting will be on December 31, 2019.
2. Church in Lloydminster, December 22, 2019

### Growth in Life and Its Results (3) 1 Peter 2:4, 6-8 (Message 17)

1. The very Christ chosen by God as a stone, even a **cornerstone** held in honor, is the **preciousness** to His believers. But to the unbelieving, He is a rejected, despised stone. Christ's preciousness is not only a matter of condition, but also a matter of His position. For Him to be precious means that He is **held in honor**, that He occupies an **honorable position**.

2. Christ is not only a rejected stone and a stone held in honor; He is also a **stumbling stone** and a **rock of offense**. As the stone, Christ functions in both a positive way and a negative way. For us, He is the **cornerstone positively**, but for the unbelieving Jews, He is a **stumbling stone and a rock of offense**.

3. Those who **stumble at the word** have been appointed by God to **disobedience**. Disobedience is their portion. If someone does not believe what the Bible says concerning Christ, he stumbles at Him. Anyone who does not believe in the word will stumble at it and then reap the fruit, the harvest, of what he has sown. He sows **unbelief**, and he reaps **disobedience** as the result appointed to him.

### Growth in Life and Its Results (4) 1 Peter 2:5, 9-10 (Message 18)

1. As living stones we are being built up a **spiritual house**. The spiritual house into which we are being built is **God's building**. Eventually, this building will consummate in the New Jerusalem. In the New Jerusalem there will not be any clay, for all the clay will have been **transformed into precious stone**.

2. In 2:9 Peter goes on to say, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." The **chosen race** denotes our **lineage** from God; the **royal priesthood**, our **service** to God; the **holy nation**, our **community** for God; and the people for a **possession**, our **preciousness** to God. This is all in the corporate sense. Hence, we need to be built together.

3. We are such a race, priesthood, nation, and people so that we may **tell out the virtues of Him** who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. To serve corporately is to satisfy God by offering up Christ as spiritual sacrifices; to proclaim abroad is to benefit others by **showing forth** the virtues of **the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light**.

## December 18, 2019, Wednesday: Christian Life and Its Sufferings

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (1) 1 Peter 2:11-20 (Message 19)

1. In verse 11 Peter says that the **fleshly lusts** war against the soul. The fallen body is fleshly and full of lusts. The fleshly lusts in the fallen body war against the soul, against our inner being, that includes the mind, the will, and the emotion. The fleshly lusts are contrary to our good thoughts, intentions, and decisions. Therefore, we should **abstain** from the fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

2. The manner of life must be the **holy manner of life** and the **good manner of life in Christ**, a life not only for God but filled and saturated with God. This manner of life is versus the vain manner of life of the unbelievers. The believers' manner of life should be **excellent**; that is, it should **be beautiful in its virtues**.

3. We should love the brothers in God's family in the **feeling of brotherliness**. In verse 17 we see that the church is a brotherhood. The priesthood is for the service of God, and the brotherhood is for loving the brothers. We need to love the brothers in their totality; that is, **we need to love the brothers in a corporate sense**.

4. As we have seen, in verse 20 Peter says, "For what credit is it if sinning and being buffeted you shall endure it? But if doing good and suffering you shall endure, this is grace with God." It is not a credit to us if we endure buffeting because we have sinned. But if we **do good and yet suffer and endure**, this is **grace with God**. Such a situation indicates that our living expresses the working of God's grace within us and through us.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (2) 1 Peter 2:21-23 (Message 20)

1. The **grace** spoken of in these verses is actually the **processed Triune God**, who is now the all-inclusive, life-giving, **indwelling Spirit for our experience and enjoyment**. **Inwardly** He **motivates** us, and **outwardly** He is the **expression** upon us.

2. Christ is not merely a **model** for us to follow outwardly. He is a writing-copy, an original for spiritual xeroxing, and we need to become His reproduction. This means that we should become xerox copies of Christ by **experiencing** a process that involves spiritual light and the riches of the divine life. The result of this process is that we eventually become a **reproduction** of Christ.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (3) 1 Peter 2:21-25 (Message 21)

1. The subjective aspect of the cross continues in our experience today by the Spirit. The life-giving Spirit is working within us **continually** to carry out the subjective aspect of Christ's cross in our being. **Daily** we are undergoing the **inward working of the cross** of Christ, and daily we are being made alive so that we may **live to righteousness**. Therefore, it is not difficult to overcome sins, because through Christ's death we are being kept away from sins.

2. In verse 25 Peter goes on to say, *"For you were as sheep being led astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."* According to verse 25, Christ is the **Shepherd** and **Overseer** of our souls. Our soul is our inner being, our real person. Our Lord, as the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, shepherds us by **caring for the welfare** of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person.

3. As the **Overseer**, the Lord does not govern us or rule over us. Rather, He cares for us as a mother cares for her child. A mother oversees her child with the purpose of caring for the child. She wants to take care of every need. The same is true of Christ as our Overseer.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (4) 1 Peter 3:1-6 (Message 22)

1. Verse 1 says, *"In like manner, wives, subject yourselves to your own husbands, that even if any disobey the word, they will be gained without a word through the manner of life of their wives."* The phrase *"in like manner"* refers to the **subjection** of the household servants to their masters, as described in 2:18. Therefore, as a household servant submits himself to his master, so the wives should **subject** themselves to their own husbands.

2. In verse 1 Peter tells the wives that if they **subject** themselves to their own husbands, the husbands will be gained without a word through the manner of life of their wives. The "word" here refers to the word of God. A husband can be gained through the wife's **inspiring manner of life**.

3. In verse 4 Peter goes on to say, *"But the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is costly."* The **hidden man of the heart** is the **meek** and **quiet** spirit. Our spirit is surrounded by the mind, emotion, and will. If our spirit is meek and quiet, this will influence our mind, emotion, and will. If our spirit is meek, our mind, emotion, and will also will be meek. When we are meek, we are quiet. **Meekness** and **quietness** of spirit is a **beautiful adornment in the sight of God**.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (5) 1 Peter 3:7-13 (Message 23)

1. If our married life is to be balanced, we need to have two poles, or, if you prefer to say it this way, two extremes. One pole should be the **wife's subjection** to the husband, and the other pole, the **husband's subjection** to the wife. If we have these two poles in our married life, we shall be balanced, and we shall live our married life in a "temperate zone."

2. The relationship of the husband and wife should be governed by **spiritual knowledge**; it should not be governed by the knowledge you have gained through your college education. Spiritual knowledge recognizes the nature of the marriage relationship. In married life, husbands need to have a spiritual knowledge that **recognizes the weakness of the female**.

3. In verse 7 Peter says that husbands and wives are *"joint-heirs of the grace of life."* **Grace of life** is God as life and life supply to us in His Trinity—the Father as the **source** of life, the Son as the **course** of life, and the Spirit as the **flow** of life, flowing within us with the Son and the Father. All believers are heirs of this grace.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (6) 1 Peter 3:14-22 (Message 24)

1. If we are timid and fearful when suffering persecution, the Lord will not be sanctified in us. Whenever we suffer persecution, others must **realize** that we have Christ within us as Lord. If we are bold, sanctifying the Lord in our hearts and expressing Him in our faces, others will realize that we do have something within us. This is to **sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts**.

2. The Christian good manner of life should be one that is in Christ. **It is a living, a daily life, in our spirit**. This is higher than a life which is merely ethical and moral. If we would have a good manner of life and sanctify the Lord in our daily life, we must take care of our conscience. It is not sufficient for us to be justified by others. We need to be justified by our own conscience.

3. Christ died on the cross for our redemption. But although He was put to death in His body, He was enlivened and empowered in His spirit even before the resurrection. In this enlivened and empowered spirit He went to proclaim to the rebellious angels God's victory over Satan, their leader.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (7) 1 Peter 3:14-22 (Message 25)

1. **Baptism** itself does not and cannot put away the filth of our flesh—the dirt of our fallen nature and defilement of fleshly lust. Baptism is only a figure. **Its reality is Christ in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit**, who applies to us all that Christ has passed through in His crucifixion and resurrection, making these things real in our daily life.

2. In 1 Peter 3:21, we see that baptism is first our appeal, the appeal of the baptized ones, to God for a conscience that is both good and pure. **Baptism** and our **believing**, our **faith**, are two aspects of one thing. For this reason the New Testament speaks of believing and being baptized (Mark 16:16). First we believe, and our believing can be compared to the half-step forward of one foot. Then we are baptized. Our baptism can be compared to the completion of the step with the other foot. Together, believing and baptism make one complete step.

3. In verse 22 Peter concludes this section by saying, *“Who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being subjected to Him.”* This additional word not only unveils to us further, as the glorious result of Christ’s suffering, His exaltation after resurrection and a high and honorable position He now holds in the heavens at the right hand of God, but also indicates how glorious and honorable is the organic union we have entered into with Him through baptism, for we have been baptized into Him.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (8) 1 Peter 4:1-4 (Message 26)

1. Because **the mind directs our living**, the preaching of the Word must change a person’s thoughts. What we think governs what we do, say, and practice. For this reason, Peter charges the believers in 4:1 to **arm themselves with the mind of Christ**. To arm ourselves with the mind of Christ is to be armed with the thought and concept of Christ. This implies that **we change our way of thinking**. This also indicates that the mind of Christ is a weapon, a part of the armor needed in fighting the battle for God’s kingdom. If we arm ourselves with the mind of Christ for suffering, we shall be willing to endure suffering.

2. In God’s economy suffering accomplishes a good work for God’s children. **Suffering very much restricts our lusts**. Do not think that because you are a Christian and have the divine life, you cannot be tempted by riches. The **Devil uses riches to stir up lusts**. God, however, **uses suffering in the flesh to cause us to cease from sin**. It is not easy to stay away from lusts and do God’s will when we are rich in material things. This is the reason God assigns a certain portion of suffering to us. These **sufferings restrict our lusts and preserve us in the will of God**. In this sense we all should worship God for our sufferings. We should tell Him, “Lord, how I worship You that in Your sovereignty You have assigned sufferings to me so that I may be preserved in Your will.”

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (9) 1 Peter 4:1-11 (Message 27)

1. In the New Testament age **God’s judgment begins from the house of God** and will continue until the coming of the day of the Lord, which will be a day of judgment on the Jews, the believers, and the Gentiles before the millennium. After the millennium, all the dead, including men and demons, will be judged and will perish, and the heavens and the earth will be burned up. In the Bible there are varied judgments, and the results of these different judgments are not the same. Some judgments result in a **disciplinary dealing**, some in a **dispensational punishment**, and some in **eternal perdition**. By all these judgments the Lord God will clear up the entire universe and purify it so that He may have a new heaven and new earth for a new universe filled with His righteousness for His delight.

2. God may use persecution as a dispensational discipline. This dispensational discipline is God’s governmental judgment exercised upon us to perfect us. The purpose of this judgment is **that we may live according to God in the spirit**.

### Christian Life and Its Sufferings (10) 1 Peter 4:1-11 (Message 28)

1. Although persecution is a **trial that purifies us** through burning, eventually Peter says that by experiencing such a fiery ordeal we share, participate in, the sufferings of Christ. Here Peter is saying that it is possible for the sufferings a Christian undergoes to be the sufferings of Christ. How can the persecutions suffered by us be the sufferings of Christ? Because we believe in Christ, love Christ, live Christ, bear testimony to Christ, witnessing of Him in this age, the world rises up against us. This age is under the hand of the evil one, and for this reason unbelieving ones persecute those who believe in Christ and witness of Him. In the sight of God this kind of suffering is regarded as the sufferings of Christ. We should not be discouraged because we must suffer as Christians. These **sufferings are positive and very precious**. What a **privilege** it is to experience the sufferings of Christ!

2. Peter tells us in verse 14 that if we are reproached in the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. Literally, the Greek says *“the Spirit of glory and that of God.”* This very Spirit of glory, being the Spirit of God Himself, rests upon the suffering believers in their persecution for the glorification of the resurrected and exalted Christ, who is now in glory. The more we suffer and are persecuted, the more glory there will be upon us. This is truly a **blessing**.

3. We need to see the truth concerning God’s judgment and have a **holy fear of God**. As Paul indicates in 1 Corinthians 11, we need to be careful in taking the Lord’s table. It is a great blessing to partake of the Lord’s table. However, we need to take of the bread

and of the cup with **discernment**. If we are careless in this matter, we shall eat and drink judgment upon ourselves. This judgment may involve weakness, sickness, or even death. This judgment is God's discipline, a discipline that is a dispensational judgment exercised over the believers who are wrong in certain matters.

### **Christian Life and Its Sufferings (11) 1 Peter 4:17-19 (Message 29)**

1. In 4:17 Peter asks what will be the end of **those who disobey the gospel of God** if God's judgment first begins from us. This question indicates that the unbelievers, who disobey the gospel of God, will undergo a judgment more severe than that which the believers have undergone.

2. When the believers suffer persecution in their body, especially as in martyrdom, they should **commit** their souls as a deposit to God, the **faithful Creator**, as the Lord did with His spirit to the Father. The persecution could damage only the body of the suffering believers, **not their souls**. Their souls are kept by the Lord as the faithful Creator. They should cooperate with the Lord by their faithful commitment. In suffering His just disciplinary judgment in our body, **we should commit our souls to His faithful care**.

### **December 19, 2019, Thursday: God's governmental judgment**

The concept of God's governmental judgment is a basic thought in Peter's composition of this Epistle. If the thought of God's judgment were removed from the books of 1 and 2 Peter, these Epistles would lose their basic structure. The means by which God carries out His government is by judging. Eventually, after God's judgment has been completed, there will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein righteousness dwells. The new heaven and the new earth are the consummation of 1 and 2 Peter.

### **God's Governmental Judgment (1) 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:23; 4:5-6, 12, 17-19 (Message 30)**

1. The scope of 1 and 2 Peter extends from eternity past to eternity future. These two books consummate with the new heaven and the new earth with righteousness as their contents. This is related to the government of GodT

2. God's judgment began to be exercised in the Old Testament, and it has been continually exercised throughout the generations. **Today God is still judging**. In the New Testament we see that God's judgment begins from His own household and ends with the burning of the old heaven and the old earth.

3. We need to be impressed by the fact that God's government differs in dispensation. There are different judgments for different cases, and these judgments have different results. The **daily judgment of God** is not exercised upon fallen sinners; instead, it **is exercised upon God's children**.

4. We have seen that the results of the different kinds of judgments are not the same. Certain judgments result in a disciplinary dealing. Other judgments result in dispensational punishment. Dispensational punishment refers to punishment during the thousand years, during the millennial kingdom. Other judgments will result in eternal perdition. Therefore, we can see three kinds of results of God's governmental judgment: disciplinary **dealing**, dispensational **punishment**, and eternal **perdition**.

5. **The fiery ordeal is God's way to deal not with sinners and opposers but with believers**, the members of His household. The burning furnace is a means used by God to carry out the judgment of His governmental administration. In the administration of His government, God uses fiery ordeals as a furnace to purify any dross the believers may have.

### **God's Governmental Judgment (2) 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:23; 4:5-6, 12, 17-19 (Message 31)**

1. We need to be deeply impressed from 4:17 that **judgment begins from the household of God**. This is God's governmental administration carried out by His disciplinary judgment over His own children. The purpose of this disciplinary judgment that begins at God's house is that **God may have a strong ground to judge, in His universal kingdom, all those who are disobedient to His gospel and rebellious against His government**.

2. The word "difficulty" in verse 18 refers to judgments, persecutions, and hardships. This may even include illness. Many believers have the concept that because they believe in the Lord Jesus and are saved, everything in their lives should be smooth. Actually, the very opposite is true. **In the Christian life we have one difficulty after another**. Hence, Peter says that the righteous is saved with difficulty.

3. First Peter is a book on the Christian life under the government of God. The Christian life and the government of God go together. **In order for the Christian life to grow, we need the discipline of God's government**. In his writings Peter gives a serious word regarding God's governmental dealings with His regenerated people.

### December 20, 2019, Friday: The Mighty Hand of God and its Goal

We must be **willing** to be made **humble, lowly**, under the mighty hand of God. While God is acting to operate on us, we need to take the initiative to be operated on by Him. To take the initiative is active; to be operated on is passive. This is our willingness to be under the hand of God, which is mighty to do everything for us.

#### The Mighty Hand of God and its Goal (1) 1 Pet. 5:5-9 (Message 33)

1. In 5:5 Peter says that all of us should gird ourselves with humility toward one another. **Everyone** in the church, including the elders, should **gird himself with humility**. In 1:13 Peter charges us to gird up the loins of our mind, but here he indicates that our entire being needs to be girded.

2. According to Peter's word, we should be girded with humility "*because God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" Peter uses this word to show how strong God is in resisting those who are proud. Peter says that God not only resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Strictly speaking, this grace refers to the Triune God Himself as the life supply being multiplied in the humble believer.

3. In verse 6 Peter says, "*Therefore, be humbled under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.*" This needs our cooperation with God's operation. We must be **willing** to be made humble, lowly, under the mighty hand of God. Hence, be humbled. **While God is acting to operate on us**, we need to **take the initiative to be operated on by Him**. To take the initiative is active; to be operated on is passive. This is our willingness to be under the hand of God, which is mighty to do everything for us.

4. We cannot make ourselves humble. Rather, **we need to be made humble by God**. Nevertheless, God's humbling of us requires our cooperation with God's operation. This means that **we must be willing** to be made humble, lowly, under the mighty hand of God.

5. We all must **learn to cast all our anxiety upon the Lord**. If we do not cast our anxiety upon Him, we shall not have peace. Although it is not easy, we need to cast our anxiety upon the Lord. If we find that we take back the very anxiety we have given the Lord, we need to cast it upon Him again. The reason we may cast all our anxiety on the Lord is that "*it matters to Him*" concerning us. The disciplining and judging God has a loving concern for the believers, especially the persecuted ones. He cares for them faithfully. They can cast their care upon Him, especially in their persecution.

#### The Mighty Hand of God and its Goal (2) 1 Pet. 5:5-14 (Message 34)

1. God's hand is more mighty in His judgment than in His salvation. Of course, in saving us, God's hand is mighty. But we see much more of the might of His hand in His judgment.

2. According to Peter's word in 5:6-8, we need to **do three things** that are related to our experience of the mighty hand of God. First, we should **humble** ourselves under God's mighty hand. Second, we should **cast all our anxiety** on Him. Third, we need to be **sober** and **watch**.

3. Peter says that God has called us into His eternal glory in Christ. "In Christ" indicates that **the God of all grace has gone** through all the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to accomplish the complete and full redemption so **that He may** bring His redeemed people into an organic union with Himself. All the steps of the divine operation are in Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God becoming the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit as the bountiful life supply to us.