I Peter 4:12-16

*Thrown Into The Fire*

Introduction

1. Have you been thrown into the fire? The heat is turned up.

2. I Peter 4:12-16 4 admonitions are given when the heat is turned up:

Have you been thrown into the fire? The heat is turned up.

**I. EXPECT TO BE THROWN INTO THE FIRE 4:12**

 ***A. Beloved***

**1.** This is not Peter’s love for them. They are loved by God in a very special way.

 (John 3:16).

 **2.** This reminder is needed when we are thrown into the fire. It is then that we

 question God’s love. If life hurts badly enough it is easy to question whether God

 really cares.

 **3.** On this we rest…no matter what is happening to me. God loves me.

 ***B. Bewildered***

*Think it not strange…as though something strange happen to you.*

1. Don’t be amazed. Don’t be surprised or shocked.
2. *Stop thinking it is strange.* Some were feeling that Christianity provided an immunity from reversals, hard times and pain.
3. In the 21st century we have developed a ‘feel good’ Christianity. Many are bewildered when they are thrown into the fire.
4. *Though something strange happened to you…***Trials are to test us. It is trials that bring out what is really in us.** *Strange:* out of the ordinary. *Trials* (come from the outside) *Temptation* (comes from the inside…bitter…anger…pity, etc) Being thrown into the fire is a process God uses to purify us and make us look more like Jesus. God may not be the author of the trial or testing but He permits it.

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**II. ENHANCE WHEN THROWN INTO THE FIRE 4:13**

How can the fire be enhanced? *Rejoice* is a continuous attitude and activity*. But* marks a

 sharp contrast between what they were doing (v. 12) *Why me? But* ***rejoice*** allow your joy

 to overflow. How is this possible? I’m in the fire. It isn’t comfortable! Two reasons

 make this possible. **We must get our eyes off the fire and back on Jesus!!**

1. ***Rejoice In Participation*** *You are partakers of Christ’s suffering.*
2. Stand for Jesus and there is a cost involved.
3. This is not suffering in death or suffering because of sin.
4. You will be misjudged, mistreated, misunderstood…for your Master suffered for doing right. **Song: It Will Be Worth It All** when we see Jesus.
5. ***Rejoice In Preparation***  *That when His glory is revealed or in the revelation of His*

*glory.* **Christian rejoicing will be made complete at and by the return of Christ in glory. There is a better day coming!** Pain now, Persecution now, Fire now, but overjoyed at His return!

1. He is not only alive, but He is coming again! If Jesus was merely a pile of dust and ashes in a Judean tomb we would have every right to complain. If this was all there is. We of all people should and would be most miserable!
2. **But Jesus is alive! Jesus is coming again. He does have a plan!!**

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**III. ENDURE WHEN THROWN INTO THE FIRE 4:14**

*If you be reproached (insulted, reviled) for the name of Christ*

Three reasons we endure:

1. ***Blessed*** *Happy (makarios) are ye*
2. You are *blessed.* It is the same Greek word that is found in (Mt. 5:1-11)and the same as in (3:14).
3. *Makarios* island was a totally self-contained island. Nothing else was needed in order to survive. The word is always connected with duty. All external securities and supports removed…our sufficiency is in Him. This works from the inside out, not the outside in.
4. ***Bountiful*** *The Spirit of God and the glory of God rests upon you.*
5. The reason for our sufficiency is the Holy Spirit which is in each of us.
6. *Rests upon you…*This was a technical term used in agriculture: a farmer resting his land by sowing light crops on it. He relieved the land from producing heavy crops. Today a farmer will rotate his crops…to recuperate its strength. (Matt. 11:28) *I will give you rest…I will rest you.*
7. The Holy Spirit rests and refreshes the believer in the sense that He takes over and carries our trials. He gives us victory.
8. **The pause that refreshes: “I” give up! “I” totally surrender. REST!**
9. ***Beautiful*** *On their part He is evil spoken of, on your part He is glorified.*
10. The world mocks the God in you. As the Holy Spirit is given His rightful place joy overflows and God is magnified and glorified.
11. **God is glorified in us!! All the world can and will see!**

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**IV. ENLARGE WHEN THROWN INTO THE FIRE 4:15-16**

Don’t dishonor God by being punished for sins you commit. This list in v. 15 is

 interesting…*murder* and then an acceptable sin *busybody.* The opposite is

 given…glorify God! How can we enlarge (give greater scope to) the fire?

1. ***Suffer As A Christian***
2. *Because you are Christ’s.*
3. The ‘ian’ on a word brings the idea of related to. A Romanian is related to Romania. An American is related to America. A Christian is related to Christ.
4. If Christ loved you as a sinner, how much more now that you are related to Christ?
5. Christ suffered…jeers, scourging, mockery, death *let him not be ashamed!*
6. ***Shine As A Christian*** *But* is contrasted with *being ashamed. In that name let him*

 *glorify God (NASV)*

1. In the name of Christian let him glorify (bring glory to) God.
2. Right in the fire I am to bring glory to God. I am here on earth to bring glory to God. The world does not revolve around me, but around Him.
3. The Lord hasn’t promised to answer every ‘fire’ question…*Why???* Why did a 3 year old get stomach cancer? Why did a young man meet that girl who crushed his world? She left him after one week for a homosexual lover.
4. If every ‘why’ were scientifically, philosophically and factually answered…do you think that would suffice? A child gets his finder pinched in a door. You set the child down and explain. 1500 lbs per square inch was applied to your finger…an impulse sent a pain signal to your brain…He is comforted by his mother’s presence, love, care and tenderness. So it is with our Lord!!

***No matter how hot it gets, the world should see Jesus in me!***