“How to Live as Suffering Saints”

1 Peter 1:17-21

“If is better translated “since”

To call on the Father is the same as saying you are a Christian

Every true believer continually communicates with God

God is completely impartial - treating or affecting all equally

What intelligence, status, wealth, or achievement can possibly impress God?

Acts 10:24: “Then Peter opened his mouth and said: ‘In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality’.”

Romans 2:11: “For there is no partiality with God”

There’s two future judgments

At the end of the broad road for unbelievers is the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)

At the end of the narrow road for believers is the Judgment Seat of Christ (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

At both judgments God the Father and God the Son will be entirely impartial

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How are we to live knowing this time of judgment is coming?

The answer is “with reverent fear”

There is a huge distinction between godly and ungodly fear

The wrong kind of fear causes us to freeze up, it restricts, it paralyzes, preventing positive thoughts and actions

The right kind of fear will free us up, it liberates us to live out the will of God through glorifying Him and edifying others

The wrong kind of fear indicates we’re focusing primarily on earthly realities

The right kind of fear indicates we’re consciously prioritizing eternal realities

Proverbs 9:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

Ephesians 5:21: “Submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

Philippians 2:12: “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

Hebrews 12:28: “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

The fear of God is linked with faith in God

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The more I humbly acknowledge him, the more I will believe, God and rely upon Him

Godly fear is a strong motivator

It leads naturally to willing obedience

So, we are to be God-fearing sojourners this present world

We tend to think we’re permanent rather than temporary residents on the earth

Our time here may not be long but it is unquestionably significant

The eternal rewards waiting for us in heaven will be based upon our earthly obedience to God

Knowledge is also a strong motivator

I live with a holy intention because I know the price that was paid for the forgiveness of my sins

All the purest silver and gold in the world isn’t sufficient to pay the price for our sins

They may be very valuable commodities but they are perishable like all other earthly things

Traditional religious rituals cannot save us either

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The solution is inescapably singular

Only the precious shed blood of Christ is sufficient payment

Nothing else can redeem our souls

Christ alone was the perfect, holy sacrifice

There were only three kind of people in society back in Peter’s time - slaves, freemen, and freed men

The last category refers to those who had experienced redemption

They were set free by someone else paying a price to release them from slavery

Understanding biblical redemption also requires us to go back to the first Passover when the Hebrews were captive slaves within Egypt, seeking liberation through Moses

When the final plague came, there was only one way of escape

The blood from a sacrificed unblemished, spotless was to be put on the sides and tops of their doorframes

The destroying angel would see this sign and pass over, preserving the life of any firstborn son within their home

A Hebrew family could have put all the silver and gold they possessed outside their front door but it would not have saved their son

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They could have performed any other kind of religious ritual, no matter how sincere, but it would have been useless

The Passover foreshadowed the one and only sufficient, final sacrifice for all of humanity’s sins

People want options, the right to choose on one’s own terms, in one’s own time, in one’s own way

However, God doesn’t deal in options

He has one plan, one way of salvation

He operates within exclusive measures and singular realities

Ephesians 4:4-6: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Only the sinless Son could be a sufficient sacrifice

We do not reflect enough upon the sinless nature of Christ

This was one of the most amazing things about Him

We sin commonly, easily, frequently, inevitably

None of these realities so normal to us were existent with Him

His saving sacrifice was foreordained by God even before this universe and our world came into existence

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Therefore, from eternity past, God’s plan of redemption was already set in place

Ephesians 1:3-6: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of His grace, by which he made us accepted in the Beloved.”

God brought this plan into reality for you and me through Christ

What He accomplished through Jesus is wonderfully, intensely personal

It is truly astonishing when I think the Son of God would give up His life willingly for me

Have we lost the wonder of this?

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene and wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner condemned, unclean.

How marvelous, how wonderful and my song will ever be. How marvelous, how wonderful  
Is my Saviour's love for me.

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Verse 21 is one of the few New Testament verses which references the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, His bodily resurrection and His glorious ascension back up to heaven

These unalterable, certain realities give us a secure faith and an unwavering hope throughout our earthly trials

We are the beneficiaries and God receives the glory, honour and praise

Here’s some concluding questions

So, am I truly fearing God by the way I live my life?

Have I begun to minimize the great significance of what I know regarding the price of my redemption?

Let’s permit the Word of God to transform our lives throughout the months to come