

"IN THE MIDST OF AFFLICTIONS"

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TEXT: 1 Peter 4:12-19

PURPOSE:

1. To encourage Christians to stay the course even in the midst of discouragement.
2. To remind Christians what to do when we face trials in life.

INTRODUCTION:

1. What do you do when you face difficult moments in life?
2. How do you handle afflictions that come your way?
3. Three kinds of suffering:
 - a. Suffering for the cause of Christ.
 - b. Suffering as a result of sickness, loss of a loved one, lost a job, chronic disease, terminal disease, etc.
 - c. Suffering for one's sin.
4. Do you know of Christians who used to be faithful to God, but no longer are due to the afflictions and discouragements they faced in life?
5. Knowing how to face and handle the afflictions of life is very important because...
 - a. It will help us to not depart from the faith (Context of the Book of Hebrews).
 - b. It will help us to not lose heart.
 - c. It will help us to encourage others.
 - d. It will help us make it to heaven.
6. In this lesson we will examine two points of discussion:
 - a. The reality of afflictions.
 - b. How to handle afflictions.
7. **Let's pay close attention because today or tomorrow you may face afflictions!**
8. As we listen to this lesson, please allow the words of God to sink into your ears (Luke 9:44).
May we also plan to practice the things we learn from God's Word (James 1:22-25).

I. AFFLICTIONS ARE PART OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

1. **The Bible makes it very clear that afflictions, tribulations, persecutions, and discouragements will be part of the Christian life.**
2. **Notice the following passages that prove this to be the case:**
 - a. Matthew 5:10-12 - Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness' sake!
 - b. John 16:1-2 - There will be times when some will even kill you!
 - c. John 16:33 - Jesus said there will be afflictions!
 - d. Acts 14:22 - Afflictions are part of the Christian life!
 - e. Philippians 1:29 - It is a privilege to suffer for Christ!
 - f. 2 Timothy 3:12 - Living a faithful life entail suffering for it!
3. **Afflictions were part of the life of our brothers and sisters in the first century:**
 - a. Acts 4-5 - Peter and John are put in prison for preaching the Gospel of Christ.
 - b. Acts 7 - Stephen was stoned for preaching the Word.
 - c. Acts 8 - The early church was persecuted.
 - d. Acts 9 - Saul of Tarsus faced death threats.
 - e. Acts 14 - Paul was stoned in Lystra for preaching the Word.
 - f. Acts 16 - Paul and Silas are thrown into prison.
 - g. Acts 27-28 - Paul's journey to Rome.
4. As we can see, afflictions are part of the Christian's life.

Now, let us consider what we can do when we face afflictions in life

II. GOD HAS TOLD US WHAT TO DO IN THE MIDST OF AFFLICTIONS.

1. 1 Peter deals with the Christian's suffering and what to do in the midst of it.
2. **The central theme of 1 Peter is:** Even in the midst of suffering, Christians still have the responsibility to live a holy and faithful life in Christ.
3. The Apostle Peter tells us what to do (1 Peter 4:12-19) when we face difficulties for the cause of Christ:
 - a. **#1:** We must **not be surprised** when we face trials and afflictions (1 Peter 4:12; cf. Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12). *Expect suffering to be part of our life!*
 - b. **#2:** We must **rejoice** to have the privilege to be partakers of Christ's sufferings (1 Peter 4:13; cf. Acts 5:41; Acts 16:25; James 1:2-3). *Let us rejoice for the Lord!*
 - c. **#3:** We must **remember that we are blessed** to suffer for the cause of Christ (1 Peter 4:14; cf. Matthew 5:10-12).
 - d. **#4:** We must remember **not to suffer for the cause of our own sin** (1 Peter 4:15). *Suffering for the right cause is approved by God!* (1 Peter 2:20).
 - e. **#5:** We must remember **not to be ashamed** but glorify God (1 Peter 4:16; cf. 2 Timothy 1:8). *Let us not be ashamed to suffer for the cause of Christ!*
 - f. **#6:** We must remember to **never stop living a faithful life in Christ** even when we suffer (1 Peter 4:17-19; Revelation 2-3). *Let us always be faithful to God!*
 - g. **#7:** We must **remember the value of prayer** in the midst of suffering (1 Peter 4:19; cf. Matthew 26:41). *Never stop praying!*
4. Thank God for His Word and the blessing we have of possessing the right information as to what to do in the midst of afflictions!
5. May we never give up!

CONCLUSIÓN:

1. God has equipped us with all the things we need to be able to overcome difficulties in life.
2. Remember that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:18; 37-39; Romans 8:31; Hebrews 13:5).
3. To God be the glory!
4. Start giving God the glory by obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ! (Hear the gospel, believe the Gospel, repent of your sins, confess Christ as the Son of God, be immersed in water to receive forgiveness of your sins, and live a faithful life in Christ).

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