

(9) Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies --- in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!

(12) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

(15) But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name! For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?! And, (Proverbs 11:31)

"If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

(19) Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

Think on these things:

- 1) Is it possible to serve Christ by serving others in a wrongful spirit? How is that reported here (v. 9)?

**Yes. We are cautioned to be hospitable without complaining (grumbling). It is not okay to fret and whine as we provide Christian service to others. We need a proper spirit, too!**

- 2) V. 10 speaks of God's varied "grace" manifest as "gifts" He gives us. Consider 1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11, 14-17, and 26-30. What is your gift, and how are you using it today? According to vs. 10-11, what are the three purposes of God giving gifts to His people?

**What is YOUR gift? This is a very personal response, and some people may have no idea. The goal is to get folks to consider how God has gifted them in His family (the Church). Corinthians lists many gift types, as can also be found in smaller lists in Ephesians 4 and Romans 12. --- According to Peter's verses, the three purposes are: 1) To serve one another [v. 10]; 2) To show oneself as God's good steward of His gifts [v. 10]; and 3) To glorify God [through Jesus, v. 11]. God's gifts are never for self-serving purposes or to bring glory to the individual believer...!**

- 3) What does Peter caution us not to be surprised by? What is the purpose of this/these (v. 12)? Is this unexpected or to be expected? When will it all "be worth it"? See also James 1:2-4.

**Fiery trials that we face as Christians "test" our faith. (Tests come from God, temptations to sin come from Satan, James 1:1-18.) Suffering as a Christian was announced by Jesus very early on, that just as He was persecuted, so will be His followers. It is not unusual or "strange" for this to happen. James says the end result (full effect) of steadfast faith will be perfection and completeness.**

- 4) Can you recall --- and share --- a time when you were insulted or ridiculed because of your faith in Christ?

**Personal responses from your class members. It might be good to come prepared with an example from your own life, or something in the news lately, or an historical example.**

- 5) We covered in a previous 1 Peter lesson that there is no blessing when we suffer for doing wrong. V. 15 speaks of three specific sins, and the all-encompassing "evildoer." What is the last specific sin, and does it surprise you? This can be an easy trap.

**The last specific sin in the ESV version is a "meddler," someone who inserts himself/herself into the personal affairs of another. In the KJV, it's a busybody in other men's matters. In the RSV, it's a mischief-maker.**

- 6) If you suffer as a Christian, what are you told to do (v. 16)?

**Don't be ashamed, and be sure to give God glory in Jesus' Name.**

- 7) Judgment is always an interesting topic. Judgment for Christians is NOT the same as judgment for non-Christians,

> Matthew 24-25 Tribulation Judgment before the 1,000-year Messianic Reign on Earth,

> Revelation 20:11-15 Final World Judgment after Messiah's reign and Satan's release

How will Jesus judge Christians (1 Corinthians 3:1-15)?

**Christians will be judged according to their good works ("wages according to labor"). The foundation of faith is Jesus, God's Cornerstone. Paralleling our 3 Little Pigs story, each believer builds on this foundation by works, teachings, testimonies, etc..., and these things will be tested by God's fire. If God sees that what we did had a genuineness, a correct permanent impact, He will reward us. If it fails God's scrutiny (self-serving works...?), then rewards will be lost --- though salvation for genuine faith will still be provided.**

- 8) Was hell created for the bad, unsaved people of this world? See Matthew 25:41.

**Unbelievers will spend eternity there, but hell was created for the Devil and his angels.**

- 9) How is a Christian saved? See John 3:16-17, Acts 16:30-31, and Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Salvation comes from believing in God's only Son, Jesus, the Christ. Salvation is a gift from God to those committing to a life-dependent (born again), personal faith in Jesus.**

- 10) When you are under pressures, especially for being a person of faith under persecution, what does v. 19 counsel us to do?

**Continue doing Christian good, and entrust yourself anew to God's care and provisions during the troubles.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: