

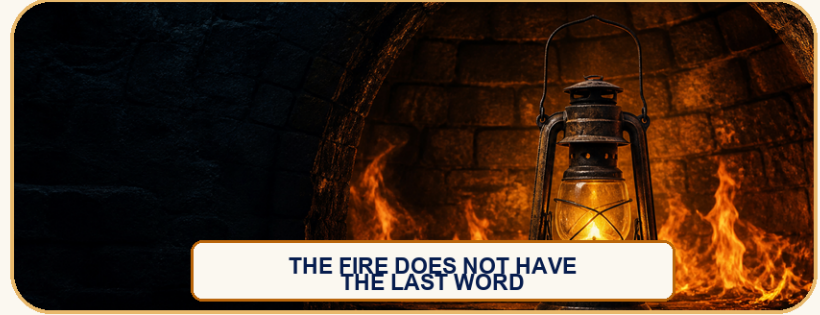


WHEN FAITHFULNESS LEADS INTO THE FIRE

1 PETER 4:12-19

Sometimes suffering is the cost of refusing to depart from God's purpose.

The fire is not the purpose; faithful suffering becomes a testimony to the glory of Jesus Christ.



THE FIRE DOES NOT HAVE THE LAST WORD

1 THE FIRE IS NOT STRANGE

4:12

- Beloved before the fire: suffering does not cancel God's love.
- The trial reveals allegiance; it does not prove God's purpose failed.
- Do not treat faithful opposition as foreign to the Christian life.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial..."

2 SHARING CHRIST'S PATH

4:13-14

- We add nothing to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice.
- Faithful suffering follows His pattern: suffering, then glory.
- The Spirit of glory rests upon those who bear His name.

"The spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

3 ASK WHY YOU ARE SUFFERING

4:15-16

- Not every consequence is persecution for righteousness.
- Ask whether Christ is visible - or pride, harshness, or intrusion.
- Receive needed correction; refuse the world's shame.

"Let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God."

4 JUDGMENT BEGINS AT GOD'S HOUSE

4:17-18

- God begins His searching work among the people who bear His name.
- The cross is complete; the fire tests, corrects, purifies, and proves.
- Judgment produces compassion and sober witness, not pride.

"Judgment must begin at the house of God."

THE CONTROLLING COMMAND - 1 PETER 4:19

"Commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

HOW THIS CHANGES OUR LIVES

E

EXPECT

Do not treat faithful opposition as strange.

X

EXAMINE

Ask whether Christ or pride is visible.

R

REFUSE

Reject the shame the world attaches to Christ.

T

ENTRUST

Place the outcome in the Creator's hands.

G

DO GOOD

Continue the work God has placed before you.

W

WITNESS

Let the fire display your allegiance to Christ.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Am I suffering for Christ, or because my conduct needs correction?
2. What good has God placed before me that I am tempted to abandon?
3. What would entrusting this outcome to the faithful Creator look like today?

THE BOTTOM LINE

The fire is not the purpose, and it is not proof that God's purpose has failed. Entrust your soul to the faithful Creator and continue doing good.

The enemy may kindle the fire, but he does not control what the fire reveals. The faithful Creator will not abandon what He has made.