

Sanctification In Tribulation

(Rom 5:3-4)

- Read section- Rom 5:1-11
 - Paul, having established 3 things (peace, access, hope) the believer has due to justification by faith, now begins to tell us how this looks on a practical basis
- I. “Not only so”- as if Paul is saying, “but wait, there’s more” (powerful), justification by faith allows the Christian to deal with the hardships of life in this evil world
- A) The Christian hope is not only for or limited to the future glory, it is a present hope and help
1. Not just hope for times of prosperity, but especially for times of trial, tribulation and suffering
 - i. All the schisms and “isms” promise hope in prosperity, but what is special about that?
 - ii. In fact, the preachers of the “prosperity gospel” say if you are suffering and in tribulation, then you probably aren’t saved anyway
 - a) John 15:18-20- The world will hate you and persecute you
 - b) John 16:33- Last thing the Lord says, “in this world, tribulation”
 - c) Acts 14:22- We must through much tribulation enter the KOG
- B) Why must there be suffering and tribulation for the saints?
1. 1 Pet 1:6-7- Tribulation tries faith and perfects faith
 - i. Rom 3:3-4- “Knowing”- This is what Paul is saying, that the child of God understands something about the processes of God in sanctification
 2. Tribulation proves the difference between “profession” of faith and “possession” of faith
 - i. Justification by faith will never let us down, but will uphold us in the end, though we may stumbled and falter
 - a) But compare this with the mere profession of faith, or “head faith”
 - 1) The person who has had a superficial reaction to the gospel never stands the test of faith
 - 2) The person who has had an emotional experience alone, will fail when the emotion is gone
 - 3) The person who has trusted a feeling or religious exercise, will find they have no strength to stand in the trial of their faith
 - (a) The Parable of the Sower brings all this out perfectly

- 4) The person who has been taught that they are not appointed to tribulation will fail due to the very fact of the tribulation they enter
 - (a) This is what happens so often under the “prosperity gospel”
 - (b) The religious world is being set up for this fall currently with the “secret rapture” theory
3. Faith that doesn’t help us in a practical way in this world is not true faith
 - i. 1 Kings 18- The faith of Elijah in a time of sore trial and persecution
 - ii. Chris Pettey
- II. Christian reaction to sufferings and tribulations (this is a great test for our profession of faith)
 - A) Rom 5:3-4- “We glory in tribulations”
 1. Not simply “in the midst of” or “during”, although we can glory in the midst of it, even if after grumbling and being downtrodden at first
 2. Neither is it “in spite of”
 - i. Paul doesn’t mean stoicism
 3. Paul means “we glory on account of tribulations”
 - i. But why? Are we called to be masochists?
 - a) Heb 12:11- No suffering is pleasant at the time
 - 1) But read the whole passage- Heb 12:3-14- This is how God “exercises” His children
 - (a) Bodybuilders get excited when they are sore after training
 - B) Rom 5:3-4- “Knowing.....” (this is God’s process), therefore we glory being the recipients of it!
 1. Matt 5:10-12- “Rejoice when men persecute you” for Christ’s sake
 2. Acts 5:41- Disciples rejoice they were counted (accounted) worthy to suffer
 3. 2 Cor 4:8-17- The example of Paul’s faith under trials
 4. James 1:2&12- “Count it all joy....”
 5. 1 Pet 4:12-14- Rejoice in sufferings
 - C) How?
 1. Again, this doesn’t mean we like what is happening, or enjoy it; but it means that we come to see it is of God and serves His purposes in sanctification
 - i. At first, we often not only don’t like it, but grumble, complain, and react in our old nature, but if true faith is present, it will kick in
 - a) Because of what we “know”, this is God working in/on me
 - 1) Therefore, by the application of faith, we are enabled to “glory in tribulation,” even when we don’t like tribulations
 - 2) This is not an automatic response, it is the working out of faith
 - (a) Rom 5:3- Tribulation worketh patience”

- (1) It's doing something for me
- (2) Compare a woman in labor (John 16:21)
- (b) Rev 17:14- "Called, chosen and faithful"

III. The process

A) Tribulation worketh patience

1. Tribulation comes, and we falter, but then faith kicks in and causes us to remember God, and to consider His providence in all things
 - i. This process not only makes us look to God again, but also to look away from self
 - ii. It causes us to pray to God, to seek His help, to cast ourselves upon Him and His Christ
 - a) We better understand our complete reliance upon Him
 - b) John 15:5- "Without Me, ye can do nothing"
 - 1) "I thought I was strong, and could stand up, but I saw how frail I am"
 - 2) "I also saw the faithfulness of God, He will not forsake me"
- (a) This all leads to a strengthened patience for future tribulations, thus:

B) Patience worketh experience

1. Experience- "proof, the positive outcome of an experiment"
 - i. It is the fruit of God's process, and the end is something tangible, something that can be remembered and strengthens us for future trials
 - a) It is not "I can pass the test," it is instead "God is able to bring me through"
 - 1) The trial/assay of gold, or testing metal
 - (a) Example of the Rockwell Harness test on connecting rods
 - (b) Example of submarine "test depth"
 - ii. This experience is also how we are enabled to answer satan's attacks on us in times of suffering: "where is your God now?"
 - a) Answer: "He is the One using you right now to chisel away at my rough exterior, and to shape and fashion me a stone fit for His heavenly temple."

C) Experience worketh hope

1. We come full circle, from hope to a now stronger hope
 - i. I believed I was a son of God, but then the trials came, and I stumbled and faltered and was weak in my own power. But then God lifted me up and brought me out of it, into an even larger place, more certain of Him and His faithfulness

- a) Now I know He is my Father, because I was chastened and there is no good reason I am still in faith, if it were up to me, I would have fallen away in my weakness and quit
 - b) Psa 119:71- “It is good for me that I was afflicted”
 - 1) Thus this whole process brings us to a fuller resignation to God’s will
2. Rom 15:4- I can also learn the same by the afflictions and endurance of the O/T saints