

Guarding Our Hearts While Sharing in Christ's Suffering

1 Peter 4:12-19



1 Peter: Holy Living in a Hostile Land

“To our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world we say: ‘Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go’ (Joshua 1:9). It appears that the world may well be entering a time of testing, not only for the Church, but for everyone who believes in freedom and who opposes tyranny. Let us stand with those who are hard-pressed, arrested, or forcefully isolated because they have chosen to do what is right.

“Let us stand in solidarity with those whose churches are forcefully closed or who are exiled from their congregations. Let us help and support in practical ways those who are fined or have to forfeit their employment for the sake of Christ. And we ask our brothers and sisters who have lived under persecution all their lives to pray for us, that God would give us the courage to stand firm in our faith as His witnesses; and that He, who is Lord over all, would give us the strength to remain faithful and persevere to the end. Amen.”

Conclusion to *The Frankfurt Declaration*

“The United States government (and others in the Western world) have already established themselves as enemies of Christ by legalizing abortion; demanding that homosexuality be encouraged and celebrated; refusing to recognize God-given gender distinctions; sanctioning same-sex marriage; and promoting the barbaric, pagan mutilation of children. These overt government-sponsored attacks on long-established moral standards constitute a formal, parliamentary declaration of war against God, His created order, His moral law, and the authority of His Word.

“Our current government therefore now stands in opposition to God no less than the Baal-worshipers of the Old Testament did. Why would we not expect them to come after people who would put their lives on the line for the cause of God and His Word? There are many signs that sound churches and faithful believers are about to face a wave of harsh persecution.”

John MacArthur, emphasis added

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In **1 Peter 4:12-19**, Peter gives us **four guarding insights** to **guide our hearts** in glorifying God as we share in the sufferings of Jesus.

Guarding Insight #1:

- I. **Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Testing**
... so do not be surprised by it (1 Peter 4:12)

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“Beloved” (*Agapetoi*): much loved ones, dearly loved ones, cherished ones or, theologically, set apart to love ones—which is just how God loves us in Jesus Christ.

His love—has set you apart—to love you.

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**I. Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Testing
... so do not be surprised by it (1 Peter 4:12)**

These trials are **purposed** for us by the Lord, and the fire of the ordeal is God's design to refine us and to establish us in our faith. The fiery ordeal is not strange, but arranged, so don't be put off or taken **off guard** by it.

Expect God to deepen your devotion by experiencing it.

Guarding Insight #1:

**I. Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Testing
... so do not be surprised by it (1 Peter 4:12)**

"In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

Guarding Insight #1:

I. **Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Testing** **... so do not be surprised by it (1 Peter 4:12)**

“Jesus has *conquered* the world, in the same way that He has defeated the prince of this world. Jesus' point is that by His death He has made the world's opposition pointless and beggarly. The decisive battle has been waged and won. The world continues its wretched attacks, but those who are in Christ share the victory He has won. They cannot be harmed by the world's evil, and they know Who triumphs in the end. From this they take heart, and begin to share His peace.”

D.A. Carson

Guarding Insight #2:

**II. Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Blessing
... so keep rejoicing in it (1 Peter 4:13-14)**

Guarding Insight #3:

III. Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Glory

... so don't be ashamed of it (1 Peter 4:15-18)

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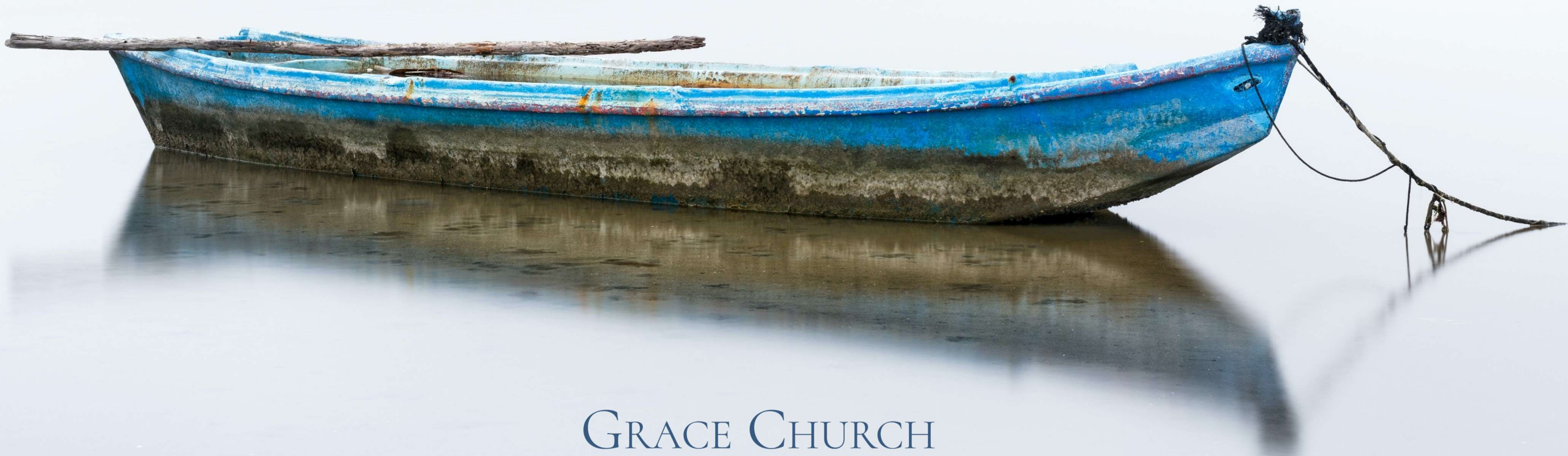
You prove Him, praise Him, and reflect Him as you humbly and gratefully **live the privilege** of bearing His name—Christian.

Guarding Insight #4:

IV. Sharing in Christ's Sufferings Shows God's Faithfulness

... so trust God in it (1 Peter 4:19)

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