

Feeding Faith and Fighting Fear

I. God's Promises

Persecution

- We will be persecuted. Jn.15:20
 - Stony soil – Mk.4:16-17
 - Scattered Christians – Ac.8:1

Provision

- Salvation, Ep.1:3
- Shield, Ep.6:16 (Ph.1:23-24)

I. God's Promises

II. Gospel's Precepts

Romans 5:1-5

- Justified by faith / peace with God through Christ
 - Faith: 1:8 = 16:19
 - Peace: No longer under penalty of God's wrath
- Rejoice in hope
- Rejoice in sufferings (boast)! Mt.5:10-12; Ac.5:41...

Romans 5:1-5

...KNOWING THAT ...

- Tribulation (suffering) produces endurance (3 = 2:7)
- Endurance produces character (4)
- Character produces hope – does not disappoint (*put to shame*, 5)
 - No shame unless: ¹Lord lies / ²we fall
 - Sufferings bless us. 2 Co.11; 12; Hb.12
 - Ro.8:18

1 Thes.3:1

- Paul could no longer endure... (1, 5)
 - Ac.9:...11-16
- Paul's attitude: Ph.1:...29 / 3:10

“God has granted you the high privilege of suffering for Christ! This is the surest sign that He looks upon you with favor”
– Lightfoot.

- Paul's affliction: alone... (3:1, 6). Ep.5:31

1 Thes.3:2

- Paul sent Timothy . . . 2 Tim.1:6-8
 - Timothy is young but gospel is the power
 - Three levels of maturity:
 - Paul
 - Timothy
 - Thessalonians

1 Thes.3:3

- Not shaken (moved, disturbed, troubled) – of a dog – *to wag the tail*.
 - Do not curry favor?
 - Trials will come; don't let them shake you?
- We are appointed for this.

1 Thes.3:4

- You will suffer tribulation
 1. Trials can defeat us if we take our eyes off the Lord.
 2. He uses trials to make us stronger.
 3. Satan tempts us to make us weaker (v.5; 2:18).

1 Thes.3:5

- “I could no longer endure” – v.1
- Paul had to know about his young brothers

1 Thes.3:6

- Timothy returns: Paul breathes again
- “Good news”

1 Thes.3:7

- Comforted: their faith is intact.
- As mother with child, 2:7.

1 Thes.3:8

- Now we live if . . .
- MAIN thing: they stand fast in Lord.

No matter what else happens
... this matters most

James 1:2

- My brothers
- All joy
 - “Don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends” – Phillips

“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God...” – Ac.16:25

James 1:2

- My brothers
- All joy
- When (not “if”) – certainty.
- Fall into – as Lk.10:30.
- Various trials (1 Pt.4:12).
 - Trials are not a sign of disfavor.

Abraham

Job

Joseph

James 1:3

- Knowing...testing faith (= approved)
- Produces patience, 1 Pt.1:6-7

James 1:4

- Perfect work: fully developed morally; mature
- Complete: whole, intact, with integrity
- Lacking nothing: not deficient in something
Lk.18:22

I. God's Promises

II. God's Precepts

III. Godly Plans

Hard times will come ... test our faith

2 Tim.3:12

Hard times can produce spiritual growth

Ex.1-2

Job 42:5

Dan.1, 3, 6

Hab.1, 2, 3

Conclusion

1. We were never promised it would be easy ... painless ... without tears.
2. If satan does his worst, we are more than conquerors (Romans 8).
3. *Just as I am...tho' tossed about...*

“God’s blessings are poured
out in bitter cups”

Abraham / Joseph / Moses

Daniel / Paul