

Introduction

1. A marvellous picture of the believer!
2. What a list of blessings is here!
3. But God does not hide the trials.

1. GOD HAS APPOINTED TWO EXPERIENCES FOR US

- 1) Peter here speaks to believers:
 - (i) experience of happiness – "greatly rejoice"
 - (ii) of sadness – "heaviness...temptations"
OBSERVE: As believers we must expect both
APPLICATION: Is this not true to our experience?
- 2) This is different from the unconverted:
 - (i) no joyful experience of God's grace
 - (ii) their troubles are different. Explain.
- 3) We must expect such trials here below:
 - (i) think of the lives of all the saints: Heb. 11
 - (ii) think of the malice of Satan: Job
 - (iii) think of Christ our blessed Lord
APPLICATION: In times of trial recall these words here

2. WAYS OF LESSENING THE PAIN OF OUR TRIALS

- 1) So much depends on how we think of them:
ILLUSTRATION: Latimer + Ridley; Wigton Martyrs
- 2) Things to remember in our sufferings:
 - (i) "for a season": they are temporary
 - (ii) "if need be": there is a need
 - (iii) we learn much from them
 - (iv) they wean us off the world

- (v) they teach us to pray
APPLICATION: How else shall we learn to live by faith?

- 3) It is often a sign of God's love when we have pains or trials:
 - (i) Abraham – offering up Isaac
 - (ii) Job – look at the outcome!
 - (iii) David + all his afflictions
 - (iv) Paul's "thorn in the flesh"
APPLICATION: We are trained like horses or dogs – till we are godly.

3. THE BENEFIT OF THESE TRIALS IS CLEAR

- 1) It is to "try our faith":
 - (i) in afflictions of all sorts we prove God
 - (ii) trials purify the gold by fire
ILLUSTRATION: look at Paul's list (2 Cor. 11:23-29).
OBSERVE: The better the faith the brighter the believer
APPLICATION: Pray for this benefit to your trials.
- 2) At the end of life the benefit will be seen by all the world:
 - (i) the Day of Judgement will declare it: "This man/woman persevered".
ILLUSTRATION: the Olympic Games
 - (ii) "praise, and honour, and glory"
God Himself will reward our faith
APPLICATION: Look how Job was rewarded

CONCLUSION

1. The hypocrite resents suffering
2. The genuine believer is ready to trust God
+ to go patiently on to glory.

PSALM**66: 5 – 12****132: 1 – 8****129: 1 - 8**