

1 Peter 4:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Analysis

Peter concludes his teaching on suffering with practical instruction. 'Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God' (ῶστε καὶ οἱ πάσχοντες κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, hōste kai hoi paschtes kata to thelēma tou theou) acknowledges God's sovereignty over suffering—it's not random but divinely permitted when aligned with His purposes. This phrase 'according to God's will' distinguishes righteous suffering (persecution for faith) from suffering due to sin (4:15). The command follows: 'commit the keeping of their souls to him' (παρατιθέσθωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν, paratithesthōsan tas psychas autōn). The verb παρατίθημι (paratithēmi) means to deposit for safekeeping, like entrusting valuables to a trustworthy banker. Believers are to deposit their souls—their very lives—into God's faithful hands. This isn't passive resignation but active trust. The description 'in well doing' (ἐν ἀγαθοποιίᾳ, en agathopoiia) indicates the context: while continuing to do good despite persecution, believers entrust themselves to God. The final phrase identifies God as 'a faithful Creator' (πιστῷ κτίστῃ, pistō ktistē). Creator emphasizes God's power and ownership—He who made us can preserve us. Faithful assures His trustworthiness—He will keep what we commit to Him.

Historical Context

Peter writes to believers facing Neronian persecution (c. AD 62-64), when faith in Christ could cost everything: property, freedom, family, life itself. The Roman authorities burned Christians alive, fed them to lions, crucified them. Believers

faced agonizing decisions: flee or stay? Deny Christ or face martyrdom? Peter doesn't promise escape but provides theological framework for endurance. The phrase 'commit your souls' echoes Jesus's words on the cross: 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit' (Luke 23:46). Jesus modeled entrusting Himself to God in suffering, and believers follow His example. The emphasis on God as Creator reminded suffering saints that the One who formed them from nothing could preserve them through anything—even death itself, which for believers is gateway to resurrection. Early Christian martyrs exemplified this verse, facing death with supernatural peace because they'd entrusted their souls to their faithful Creator.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does it practically mean to 'commit your soul to God' when facing suffering, and how is this different from passive fatalism?
2. How does understanding God as both 'faithful' (trustworthy) and 'Creator' (powerful) enable you to entrust yourself to Him in trials?
3. What does it look like to continue 'well doing' (good works) even when suffering unjustly, rather than becoming bitter or retaliatory?

Interlinear Text

ὅστε	καὶ	οἱ	πάσχοντες	κατὰ	τὸ	θέλημα	τοῦ
Wherefore	G2532	G3588	them that suffer	according to	G3588	the will	G3588
	G5620		G3958		G2596		G2307
θεοῦ	ώς	πιστῷ	κτίστῃ	παρατιθέσθωσαν	τὰς	ψυχὰς	
of God	as	unto a faithful	Creator	commit the keeping	G3588	souls	
G2316	G5613	G4103	G2939	G3908		G5590	
ἐαυτῶν	ἐν	ἀγαθοποιίᾳ					
of their	to him in	well doing					
G1438	G1722	G16					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 37:5 (Faith): Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

2 Timothy 1:12 (Faith): For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

1 Peter 3:17 (References God): For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

Psalms 138:8 (Parallel theme): The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Psalms 31:5 (References God): Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

Romans 2:7 (Parallel theme): To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

1 Peter 2:15 (References God): For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

Daniel 6:22 (References God): My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Isaiah 43:21 (Parallel theme): This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

Acts 7:59 (References God): And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

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