

The Predictability, Praise, Prosperity, and Prohibition of Suffering as a Christian

- A. There should be no surprise when suffering, knowing that it is a test to reveal the validity of our faith in Jesus Christ (which is more precious than gold) as God uses various difficult situations and circumstances to expose the level of our faith in Jesus Christ. (*Predictability - v12*)
- B. There should be no surprise when suffering, knowing that it is a test to develop us in our faith in Jesus Christ (which is purified like gold but not perishable like gold) as God uses various difficult situations and circumstance to cleanse the dross of sin off of us and to mature us in our faith in Jesus Christ. (*Predictability - v12*)
- C. If we are suffering for the sake of Christ, we can be glad with exceeding joy because we know that those who have suffered for Him can anticipate the rewards that come with suffering for Him. (Romans 8:17, 2 Timothy 2:12). (*Praise - v13*)
- D. When we are insulted for Jesus, it is the indication of a spiritually prosperous life, but also of the fact that the Holy Spirit is resting upon us, affirming our Christianity.¹ (*Prosperity - v14*)
- E. If we are suffering for the sake of Christ, there should be no shame. There should be no embarrassment for representing Jesus Christ, no being embarrassed to carry the name of Christ due to its negative connotation given by the culture. (*Prohibition - v16*)
- F. If we are suffering for the sake of Christ, we should glorify God in this name. Where the name Christian may have been used in a derogatory sense by the culture, we who bear the name should demonstrate the greatness of God's character in all that we say and do when suffering for Jesus by that name. Everyone should see that we are not ashamed and that we are glad and excited to suffer in the name of Jesus Christ! (*Praise - v16*)

¹ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1 Peter 4:14.

- G. If we are Christians, we should not be suffering as a:
1. Murderer - one who is involved in the unlawful killing of another person
 2. Thief - one who is involved in taking things that belong to others without their permission
 3. Evildoer - one who is generally harmful or injurious to the community at large
 4. Troublesome meddler - one who gets involved in lives of other people and creates trouble
- (Prohibition - v15)

The Process to Authenticate Your Christianity and to Develop Your Hope in Jesus Christ

