

# 2020 REFLECTIONS AT CHRISTMAS TIME

## 1 PETER 5:6-11

### 2020 -- A Year of Challenge

COVID-19

Economic Uncertainties

Loss of Loved Ones

Isolation

Emotional Duress

Inability to worship corporately

Church Closures -- no longer functioning

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

I Peter 5:6-11 NKJV

“So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are. In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.”

## 1 Peter 5:6-11 NLT

**PURPOSE** – To encourage Christians with the comforting spiritual realities behind the persecution they faced! Peter is probably addressing suffering and persecution prior to Nero's reign. Christians, from their beginning, were experiencing oppressive local persecution.

## Acts 14:19-20

“Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. But as the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.”

Acts of the Apostles 14:19-20 NLT

- A. Suffering is a natural part of the life dedicated to Christ.
- B. Suffering is God's tool to shape godly character within persons.
- C. Christians are encouraged to live righteous and holy lives in the face of evils or persecutions that we face.
- D. Suffering is a part of our service to God and His kingdom.
- E. JESUS ENDURED THE AGONY OF THE CROSS TO SAVE US FROM THE BONDAGE OF SIN! Jesus is to be our model in handling all the difficulties of this life.

Because “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.”

- A. Humble yourself – to do or say something which shows that one knows one has been wronged, or behaved with too much pride. This is the recognition that one is not the greatest or best – to not think more highly of

oneself than he or she ought to.

B. Under the mighty hand of God – to voluntarily place yourself under the authority of God. This is recognition that He is Lord!

C. He may exalt you – God Himself will exalt the lowly, in His own time, when they are submitted to Him.

### SUFFERING PERSONS HAVE OPTIONS!

A. Cast all your care upon Him – this requires TRUST! Cares denotes all our worries, anxieties, and problems presented to God in order that He might handle them.

B. Be sober – self-disciplined – thinking rationally and not foolishly

C. Be vigilant – being alert to the spiritual pitfalls of life and making certain that you do not stumble

D. Your adversary – Satan is your avowed enemy! Never taking a break, he is constantly seeking to destroy you. He likewise is constantly accusing us before God.

E. Like a roaring lion – Satan is both cunning and cruel. He, like a lion, attacks when least expected and his only desire is to destroy!

F. Resist him – Christians are not instructed to run but to resist – to fight rather than flee! Victory can only come when we remain committed to God, because He is greater than our enemy.

G. Steadfast in the faith – staunch and steady – a sureness that can be depended on – to be fixed in a place (in faith-no wavering)

## SOME NON-OPTIONS (After you have SUFFERED A WHILE)

A. Perfect – “Like a doctor setting a broken bone, God will end our broken lives and make us whole.”

B. Establish us – God will make our way stable, despite how we feel in the world of instability and uncertainties.

C. Strengthen us – God will give us the ability to succeed in ALL that we do for Him.

D. Settle us – As a consequence of our facing the attacks of, our enemy, God will build in us a firm foundation that will make us STEADFAST AND IMMOVEABLE!

## GLORY AND DOMINION

A. God is in control of all things in this world and for eternity.

B. Amen – this is to declare that everything that has been said is true and that its hearers are committed to putting into practice what has been said.

God has spoken by His Son Jesus. AMEN!!!