

Text: 1 Pt 4.14

In tonight's passage, Peter returns directly to the topic of persecution. The passage presents the uniquely Christian attitude towards persecution, taught by the Lord Jesus himself.

We see admonitions to "count it all joy" and to have a positive perspective on persecution in various passages of Scripture.

The "count it all joy" phrase comes from the book of James. One of my commentators on James called that "stern doctrine," and so it is.

Yet there is a reality to this that isn't just "the power of positive thinking" or some kind of "Pollyanna" approach.

When we understand Peter's teaching in verse 14, we will understand a key reason why we can remain positive, though reviled.

[Read 1 Peter 4.14-19](#)

Subject: The Christian attitude to persecution (14)

I. Understanding "reviling"

A. The kind of persecution here: personal insult

1. Reviled = "**to find fault in a way that demeans the other, reproach, revile, mock, heap insults upon** as a way of shaming"¹
2. These are verbal, rather than physical attacks

The sneer, the insult, the butt of jokes

B. The occasion for such abuse

1. Not simply by being a Christian
2. But by proclaiming Christ

"They had not been reproached because they called themselves Christians; nor does Peter imply that confessing to be a Christian was a punishable crime. Rather, the reproaches had been hurled at them 'in connection with' the name of Christ and the revelation associated with it. Because

¹ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

their enemies hated that name and all it stood for, when the readers proclaimed and exalted that blessed name, hatred against the readers expressed itself in assaults on them.”²

Very little abuse will come your way for attending church. It is when you take a stand for Christ when the insults fly.

II. The surprising Christian attitude: “blessed”

A. Our translators put it in sentence form “you are blessed”

B. It is simply the plural of “blessed,” like a shout: “Blessed!”

1. This is exactly the word that repeats ten times in the Beatitudes, especially:

Mt 5.11-12 ¶ “Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.¹² “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Note: “insult” in Mt 5.11 is exactly the same word

C. A repeated admonition (in various forms)

^{1 Pt 1.7} so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

^{1 Pt 2.20-21} For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God.²¹ For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

^{1 Pt 3.16} and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

² D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 Peter* (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1997), 287.

III. Additional phrase in KJV: “on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified”

I mention this point here because I want to close with the description of the Spirit.

- A. Textus Receptus reading
- B. “fair measure of textual support and may have been accidentally omitted”³ (although modern versions omit it)
- C. Meaning: those who revile dismiss the obvious presence of the HS in the believer’s life

IV. The reason for our blessing

- A. The presence of the Spirit
 1. The Spirit is “the Spirit of Glory and of God”
 2. The phrase is unusual (won’t bore you with the grammar)
 3. Essentially, two distinct characteristics in view
 - a. The Spirit who bestows glory
 - b. The Spirit who is from God
- B. Key word: “rests”
 1. Can refer to resting and refreshing

“to cause someone to gain relief from toil, trans. (mid.: ApcEsd 1:12 p. 25, 5) **cause to rest, give (someone) rest, refresh, revive**”⁴

2. But compare Isa 11.2

Isa 11.2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

3. Here it is “the Spirit of glory” resting on the suffering saint

³ Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 288.

⁴ Bauer, *BDAG*.

C. The Spirit of glory glorified the Son

1. He rested on him at the baptism (as a dove)
2. He raised him from death in the tomb
3. He rests on his people when they are reviled for his name

Conclusion:

I intended to take this message through the next two verses, which reinforce the viewpoint we have in verse 14. However, as I worked through the notes, I thought I had enough with what we have, even if the message ends up on the short side.

We shrink away from proclaiming Christ because we know people will mock. It's just the way it is.

We should remember that the Spirit of glory and of God rests on us when we speak for our Lord and our hearers mock him.

And even better, some *might* hear him and repent, instead of mocking.