

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | August 1-5, 2022

1 Peter 4:12-19

DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19.

- *What is the imperative (command) in verse 12? How should believers not think of suffering?*
- *What does verse 13 say about how a believer should respond to suffering now? What is the future event to keep in mind when suffering, and what will be the Christian's response?*
- *What does verse 14 tell us about the blessing in suffering?*
- *How does this information in verses 13 and 14 help you understand what a believer can rejoice in while suffering?*
- *What does Peter's exhortation in verse 19 tell us about how a believer can suffer well? What do we need to know about God?*

Pray today in adoration. Praise our faithful Creator for his Sovereignty. Praise him for the Spirit that rests upon you and for the future rejoicing and gladness that await you when Christ's glory is revealed!

DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. Though the Bible mentions how God uses suffering of all kinds in the life of a Christian, Peter has a specific sort of suffering in mind. Today we will focus on the possible causes of suffering so we can identify what sort of suffering Peter is writing about.

- *In verse 14, what specifically might believers expect to experience? What would be the cause they are suffering in this way?*
- *What does verse 16 say about a cause for suffering? How does Peter instruct believers to respond to this?*
- *According to verse 15, what should the Christian make sure is not the cause of their suffering?*
- *How would the above causes of suffering aid or detract from Peter's commands in verse 16?*
- *According to verse 19, how should a believer live while experiencing suffering for the name of Christ?*

Pray today in supplication. Ask God to empower you by His Spirit, so you will not suffer because of your evildoing. Ask Him to equip you so that when you experience suffering for being a Christian, you will not be ashamed but will glorify God.

DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19 again. Peter warns us that suffering is a normal part of the Christian experience.

- *Read 2 Timothy 3:10-13. What does Paul write to Timothy about his own life in verses 10-11? What do verses 12-13 say will be the normal experience for a Christian who is living out their faith?*
- *Read John 15:18-21. What does Jesus tell his disciples to expect as they follow Him?*
- *Read Acts 5:40-42. What did these same disciples experience? What was their response to this?*

Today, pray again in supplication. Ask God to adjust your thinking of suffering and to prepare you now for the suffering you will face in future so that it will not take you by surprise.

DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19 again today. Yesterday we saw that suffering is to be expected; today, we will learn that suffering also isn't pointless.

- Look back to 1 Peter 1:6-9. What has Peter already told his readers about the purpose of suffering?
- Read Zechariah 13:8-9. What does verse 9 tell us about the purpose of the fire? What will be the end result?
- Read Malachi 3:1-4. Who does Malachi say will come, and where will he come? What will he do? What will be the end result?
- Read 1 Peter 4:17-18. Where will the judgment begin? What does the implied severity of the outcome for the unrighteous and sinner add to your understanding of the purpose of suffering?
- How do the above passages from the Old Testament help us understand what "fiery trails" do for the Church and that refining is actually a gift of grace for us?

Pray today in thanksgiving. Thank God that our suffering isn't pointless or wasted, rather, he uses our momentary suffering to refine His people and save us from eternal suffering.

DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19 one last time today, thinking about what this passage means for your life.

- We tend to want to avoid suffering at all costs. Think about your expectations for the Christian life. Do you expect God to make your life comfortable and easy, or do you have an understanding that suffering is inevitable if you identify with Christ?
- How does what you've learned about God's character and purposes help you to be prepared for trials while not living in fear of the persecution that you will experience?
- What are the areas in your life that you do (or will) face suffering if you live for Christ?

Pray today in supplication. Ask God to equip you to live boldly in the face of social pressures and Him to empower you to not be afraid of the insults and suffering you will face for associating yourself with Him
