

Faith that Endures

(Online Study, Tuesday Evening at 7:00 PM)

Week 5: Suffering Without Shame

1 Peter 4:12–19

Peter writes to Christians who are bewildered by suffering. Persecution was not what they expected. They had believed the gospel, obeyed it, and committed their lives to Christ—and yet they found themselves insulted, marginalized, and mistreated. Peter addresses their confusion directly: suffering for Christ is not strange. It is normal.

This passage reframes suffering entirely. Rather than viewing trials as evidence that something has gone wrong, Peter teaches that suffering shared with Christ is a sign of participation in His story. Believers should not be ashamed of suffering for the name of Christ; they should glorify God in it.

Peter also draws a sharp distinction between suffering for doing wrong and suffering for doing right. A Christian who suffers as a murderer, thief, or evildoer has no cause for honor. But one who suffers as a Christian—simply for following Jesus—stands in a long line of faithful witnesses who endured without shame. Peter closes by reminding believers that judgment begins with the household of God, and that those who suffer according to God's will can entrust their souls to a faithful Creator. Enduring faith does not demand the absence of suffering; it demands faithfulness in the midst of it.

Group Discussion: Why do you think many Christians are surprised or discouraged when they face suffering or opposition for their faith? How does Peter's teaching challenge that expectation?

Personal Reflection: Have you ever felt tempted to be silent about your faith or to soften your convictions in order to avoid social pressure or discomfort? How does this passage speak to that temptation?

Read 1 Peter 4:12–19

Study Questions

1. In verse 12, Peter tells believers not to be “surprised at the fiery trial.” Why do you think Christians are often surprised by suffering, and why does Peter call this reaction misguided?
2. According to verse 13, believers should “rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings.” How is suffering for Christ connected to sharing in His story?

3. Verse 14 says, “If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed.” How can insults and rejection be considered a blessing, and what kind of mindset does this require?
4. Peter mentions “the Spirit of glory and of God” resting on those who suffer for Christ (v. 14). What does this promise mean for believers enduring persecution?
5. In verses 15–16, Peter draws a sharp distinction between suffering as an evildoer and suffering as a Christian. Why is this distinction important?
6. What does it mean to “glorify God” in suffering (v. 16)? What does that look like in practical terms?
7. In verse 17, Peter says “judgment begins at the household of God.” What does this mean, and how should it shape the way believers view trials and discipline?
8. Verse 18 asks, “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” What is Peter’s point, and how does this put Christian suffering in perspective?
9. According to verse 19, those who suffer according to God’s will should “entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.” What does it mean to entrust your soul to God during difficulty?
10. Looking at 1 Peter 4:12–19 as a whole, how does this passage equip believers to face suffering without shame and with enduring faith?

Now or Later-- Reflect on these passages: **Acts 5:40–42** — The apostles rejoice in suffering for Christ; **Romans 8:17–18** — Suffering now, glory later; **2 Corinthians 4:7–18** — Treasure in jars of clay