**Be Prepared - 1 Peter 4:12-19** April 27, 2025

**I. Be Ready - 1 Peter 4:12-14**

 1. Approaches suffering from another angle (**verse 12**)

 A. Don’t be surprised

Rea -why are we surprised?

 -this is not a “strange” thing

 B. Fiery ordeal

Rea -sounds rough

 C. To test you

Rea -does God do this? - does God allow this?

 D. Such trials are a tool for spiritual growth

 2. These are the sufferings of Christ (**verse 13**)

Rea -how do we participate in His suffering?

 -he admonishes them to “rejoice” over their trials

Rea -Jesus reminded us... if they have persecuted me, they will persecute you

 3. If you are insulted (**verse 14**)

 -then you are blessed

Rea Ideas and Questions:

 1. If we are insulted and tried... we are on the right track

 2. If we are harassed we are on the right “team”

 -conversely, what does it mean if we are not persecuted... or if we simply fit right

 in?

 3. Discuss that these trials are a tool for our spiritual growth - as indicated in verse 12

-at Genesis 22:1ff God tested Abraham with the sacrifice of Isaac - how does that fit into your theology?

 -happy, happy, happy theology?

**II. Be Righteous - 1 Peter 4:15-16**

 1. Contrasts two types of suffering (**verse 15**)

Rea -so some suffering we bring on ourselves because of our sins

Rea -how do you tell the difference?

Rea -is this part of bearing “your cross?”

 2. Suffering as:

 -murderer

 -thief

 -criminal

 -meddler

Rea 3. “Even” as a meddler - a “smaller” sin

 -so, we ought to suffer as a meddler?

 4. **Verse 16** is suffering as a “Christian”

 -do not be ashamed to suffer in this way

Rea -compare Romans 1:16 - I am not ashamed!

 -praise God

Rea -it is considered an “honor” to suffer or be persecuted for Christ in the New Testament

Rea **Ideas and Questions**:

 1. So, “rejoice” and “blessed” and here “praise” - positive things from a negative event

 2. The book of James says “count it all joy”

 3. We don’t “seek” to suffer, it happens because we are like Christ - why do non-believers

 persecute believers?

**III. Be Assured - 1 Peter 4:17-19**

 1. Judgment begins with the household of God (**verse 17**)

 -the final judgment had already begun

 -the “church age”

Rea -some have called it “the age of grace”

Rea -to chose to follow Jesus even if it involves hardship makes the choice special - it is intentional suffering

 -“household” - this judgment is a purifying judgment - chastening

 -suffering always purifies the people of God

Rea -for that matter, the church has always grown best under hard times - or when the church was the most “different” from the world. I talk with believers all the time who want to be “like” the world to “win” the world. It doesn’t work that way.

 2. Hard to be saved (**verse 18**)

Rea -I thought it was an easy thing to be a believer?

 -hard to live out the believing lifestyle... because if we are true to the Bible, we are

 very, very different and the world persecutes those who are different

 -comparison between the believer and the sinner in their suffering

Rea -we are to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus, the Christ

 3. Suffering according to the will of God (**verse 19**)

Rea -here it says it openly - “suffer according to the will of God” - some suffering is

 His will for us

 -here is what you “should” do - commit (Rea - or re-commit) to your faithful

 Creator during these times

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

 1. No one likes suffering - but it is part of so many things

 -discipline to be a good athlete

 -the pain of childbirth

 -the toil of making things grow

 -the pain of parenting

 2. Peter hits the suffering of believers head on... shouldn’t we do that also?

 3. Our missionaries suffer:

 -deprivation - do not have all the “blessings” of the USA

 -being different

 -persecuted - like in a Muslim country

 -away from family for years at a time

 4. If we are bold in our witness (even in the good ole Bible belt) we will experience “push

 back”

 5. Suffering forces us to “get in or get out”

Rob Tims - 1 Peter and Jude - Spring 2025