

1 Peter 4:12-19 Discussion Questions

Read 1 Peter 4:11-19

1. In Scripture there are different categories of suffering (e.g. persecution, physical ailments, tragedy, putting sin to death in our bodies). What these all have in common is that they can have a refining effect in the life of the Christian, and thus they are often depicted by fire.

a. We often wish that God would only bless and not refine us, or that he would take us directly to be with him instead of living out the rest of our lives on earth struggling. Based on this passage, and even other passages that you are familiar with, why does God operate the way he does?

b. What has been the most effective refining instrument God has used in your life in the past?

c. What in your life is God using right now to refine you? What is it producing in you?

2. Peter exhorts us to rejoice for two reasons. First, in the same way that we share in Christ's suffering we will share in His glory. Also, God is with us by His Spirit.

a. Why do you think it is so important that we rejoice in our suffering? What does rejoicing in our suffering reveal or communicate?

b. Have there been any instances where you witness others suffer with joy? If so, how were you impacted by their example?

c. Have there been occasions when you were able to suffer with joy? If so, how did you do that?

1. What were you doing that enabled you to get there?

2. What was your mindset?

3. What were the grounds of your joy?

3. Pastor Bryan mentioned multiple times that one of the keys to be able to endure suffering well is not to go through it alone: we need to walk with God and others through it.

a. How have you seen this to be true in your life and the life of others?

b. Have you done it both ways, and if so, what was the difference for you?

4. One of the keys in this passage is that we need to make sure that we are not suffering because of our own sin.

a. What are some examples or ways that we might think we are suffering unjustly, but it is actually because of our sin?

b. Do you have any examples of this in your own life?

5. In this passage, we are told that we ought to suffer for the sake of God's glory and the gospel. This is because when we suffer well, not only are we transformed more and more into the likeness of Jesus, but our example can also be a powerful witness for the gospel. In this way, our suffering can become immensely purposeful. This also means that we can waste our suffering by not allowing it to achieve its purpose.

a. How does thinking about suffering this way change the way you feel about or approach suffering for the sake of Christ?