

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 23RD, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 PETER

## GOD AND SUFFERING (1 PETER 4:12-19)

### HOW DO WE RESPOND TO SUFFERING?

Just like Peter was surprised when Jesus spoke about how He would have to suffer and die, we too are often surprised when we have to suffer.

- Though we can be bewildered that it is happening, **we can't let that bewilderment make us bitter. We have often masked our bitterness in America with our "rights."**

### SUFFERING FOR THE RIGHT REASONS

Sometimes, our suffering is our fault because of poor choices or a sinful lifestyle. You can't be a **murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a "meddler"** and expect anything more than suffering.

- We often **blameshift and act as victims because of our actions. Not all suffering is God's will!**

### THE REASON FOR THE FIERY ORDEAL (V17)

We will partake in one of two fires. The fire that purifies through persecution and suffering. **This fire conforms us to Christ's image** as we lean on Him for our strength.

- **Those who reject this refining fire of God will face another type of fire. The fire of His judgment.**

## ELDER AND OVERSEER (1 PETER 5:1-4)

### A WITNESS TO THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

Peter qualified his ability to speak into these matters because he was also a fellow elder and a witness to Christ's sufferings!

- **Many witnessed the sufferings of Christ but were not transformed by what was done on the cross. The transforming power of the cross must mark our lives!**

### WHO IS YOUR ELDER?

Elders are overseers of the integrity of the church. They **pray, counsel, oversee the church's spiritual health, and teach.**

- This idea of an elder comes from Jewish culture, meaning *someone mature and wise*. Hopefully, these traits are found in an older person, but it is not about a specific age.

### WHAT LEADERS IN THE CHURCH MUST DO

The first part of leadership is to **shepherd the flock of God, being an overseer** just as Peter was instructed to do when he was restored.

- One of the best ways that can be used to shepherd God's flock is by **having a heart that looks like Christ**. This is done through leading, feeding, and protecting.

### AN EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP

The elders are to be an example to us, which means **these same traits should be applied to our lives as we disciple others.**

- We have all been entrusted with the responsibility of the spiritual care of certain people. **Do we do it with an eagerness to serve, without being harsh or forceful, or for what we can get?**

## HUMBLE RESISTANCE (1 PETER 5:5-7)

### MUTUAL SUBMISSION

We should be in a place of submission to those in leadership over us. **Submission** means to **voluntarily yield rights or will to someone else's as an expression of love.**

- **There is freedom when we submit to God** by being able to come under others' authority for His sake. This is a theme that has played out throughout the entire letter.

### CLOTHED IN HUMILITY

In v5, Peter is drawing on the image of Christ putting on the servant's robe to wash the disciple's feet.

- **If we fail to humble ourselves, then God will oppose us! We must see ourselves for who we truly are**, not self-deprecating, but in humility.

### CHRIST WILL LIFT US UP

Peter understood the pitfalls of pride and the places it leads, as seen when he boasted he would never deny Christ.

- **We can either choose to be humble or be humbled by God.** Either way, **when we decide to turn our eyes to Christ, He will lift us up**, just as He did with Peter's restoration.

### AN INTENTIONAL DECISION TO TRUST

Our anxieties pull us in different directions, not allowing us to see what lies before us. This often causes us to rely on our strengths.

- When we finally look toward God, we see that **we are more concerned with matters of this world than the Kingdom. God's caring for us is constant, ongoing, and unending.**

## FINAL GREETING (1 PETER 5:8-14)

### LIKE A ROARING LION

A vivid image for the 1st century Christian. Behind those in charge were principalities and spiritual forces. The same holds true today.

- He can roar at us through **persecution**
- He can roar at us through **temptation.**
- He roars through **blasphemies and accusations against God**

### YOUR DESTRUCTION

One of the greatest deceptions of Satan is that he can't harm us if we don't choose him. But there is a second that is even more significant: **Satan doesn't exist at all.**

- Satan will use everything at his disposal to devour you. Sometimes he will make you **miserable**, but other times he may use **pleasure for your destruction.**

### WE ARE NOT HELPLESS!

We have been given the Holy Spirit, which gives us access to the armor of God so we can resist Satan.

### But this requires action on our part!

- Peter calls on us to do the very thing he failed to do in the garden, which was to watch and pray. **Sometimes Satan lets us do the work for him. So, we must have a humble heart and be in fellowship, the Word, and prayer.**

### WE ARE NOT ALONE

We are **never alone in our suffering.** Some Christians are going through or have gone through the same struggles as you.

- **Satan wants you to be isolated in your suffering.** That is why **it is so important to be in community** to encourage and build each other up!

### "AFTER YOU HAVE SUFFERED A LITTLE WHILE"

**Suffering should be expected if we call ourselves followers of Christ because, in our sufferings, we are purified!**

- How can we ever be a **church that knows how to radically love the broken** unless we have been broken but then also restored, established, strengthened, and supported? **We must remember our past!**

### BROUGHT INTO HIS ETERNAL GLORY

After we have suffered, we are called into His eternal glory. **This is not our home!**

- This world will encompass suffering, but we have hope for our future glory. One in which we will be **purified, perfected** in complete **victory**, in God's **presence** reflecting His Glory, forever enjoying His constant **fellowship.**

### FINAL GREETING

We are left with the final greeting from Peter and those helping him, including Silvanus (Silas), she who is in Babylon (the church in Rome), and Mark.

- Just as Silvanus helped interpret the letter and answer questions they may have had, **we too have people in our lives to help us learn and understand the Bible.**

### LEADERS ARE AN EXAMPLE

- God has placed pastors and elders in a place of authority to lead and shepherd us.
- Not only are they responsible for helping and leading people, but we are called to disciple others as well.
- **To do this, we must have a heart that looks like Christ's.**

### WE ARE NOT ALONE AND HELPLESS

- We cannot be motivated by pride. If so, we won't be able to receive God's grace in our lives.
- We need His grace as we fight our anxieties, so we can be sober-minded and alert to resist the devil.
- **We need fellowship. We need to be in prayer. We need to read the Word.**

### WE HAVE A FUTURE HOPE

- God purifies us to look more like Him as we suffer in this world.
- We have the **protective care of God** that will restore, establish, strengthen, and support us.
- **We are being brought into His eternal glory, for this is not our home!**

### WE ARE A TESTIMONY TO THE BROKEN

- Peter's final words left us with the phrase "the true grace of God," in which we are to stand firm.
- We need to understand the magnitude of how **unworthy, unjustified, and extraordinary the gift of grace is.**
- **Because of this, we should be a testimony to the world with our radical love!**