

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, September 6, 2009

Passage: 1Peter 4:12-19

Memory Passage: 1Peter 4:13

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1Peter 4:12.** Why would Peter describe the trials that they could face as “fiery” (Zech 13:9; Mal. 3:3)? Why would Peter warn them not to be surprised when trials do actually come (Rom. 14:7; Gal. 5:22-23; Phlm. 7)?
- (b) According to 1John 3:11-15, what is the reason that we should not be surprised when the world hates us? What reason does Peter give us for the trials (1Peter 1:6-7; 4:12)?
- (c) How are we supposed to respond to trials (James 1:2-3; Romans 5:3-5)? What kind of suffering is Peter talking about in this passage (3:13-14)? Why would this be important (2:20)? How would it make this kind of suffering “strange”?
- (d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:12. What does Peter mean that they are going to experience fiery trials? Why shouldn’t we be surprised when they come? Talk about what it means to be tested or refined. Why have these sufferings come upon these Christians? Pray that the Lord would prepare your heart for when times of testing and trial comes so that you will not be caught unaware.

DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1Peter 4:13-14.** Why should we rejoice in sharing Christ’s suffering? What motivation should we have to rejoice in the sufferings for God (Luke 6:22-23; 2Tim. 4:7-8)? Does this seem selfish at all? How is this principle taught in other scriptures (Matt. 13:44-46; 16:24-27)?
- (b) How is it that the glory of the Lord and the Holy Spirit are related (Acts 7:55; 2Cor 3:18; Phil 3:3)? What does it mean that the Spirit of God rests upon us (Matt. 3:16; John 14:17; Rom 8:9-11)? How do these passages talk about unclean spirit’s resting, help clarify (Matt. 12:43; Luke 11:24)?
- (c) *Think about it:* Read 1 Cor. 3:16-17. How does Paul want us to think about our lives in light of this? Do you think about your body as the Temple of God? How should this affect your attitude and response to people and situations throughout the day?
- (d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:13-14. Why is it that we should rejoice because we are sharing in Christ’s sufferings? Why are we to be motivated to suffer? Do you have a story of being insulted for the name of Christ? What does it mean that the Spirit of God and glory rests on us? How does this show that we are blessed? Pray that you would hold fast to the Spirit who rests upon us and gives us strength to share in Christ’s sufferings.

DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1Peter 4:15-16.** Do you think that anybody that Peter is writing to is suffering as a thief or a murderer? While we might not be struggling against killing or breaking into houses, are there other ways that we can murder and steal in maybe a more subtle sense (Matt. 5:21-22)? How do the remaining two identities fill out the list? Why would someone do each of these four things?
- (b) How does it seem that the term Christian is being used during this time period (Acts 11:26; 26:28)? How does Peter’s exhortation allude to how it was seen?
- (c) *Think about it:* Do you try to avoid the label of being called a Christian or follower of Christ or anything that identifies you as a Christian? Why would you or anybody do that? How is it that we are supposed to respond to that name?
- (d) *Extra:* The word for meddler or busybody in this passage is found nowhere else in the New Testament or other Greek writing! This makes it very hard to figure out what it means. It has a root in the same word that is often translated as overseer, but this word has a negative prefix attached to it. The translation busybody and meddler are probably right but fail to give the word the force that Peter is trying to give.
- (e) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:15-16. What did Jesus say about who a murderer is (Matt. 5:21-22)? Talk about verse 15 in light of this. Why do people murder? Steal? Practice evil? Meddle? Why does Peter use the term Christian? Was it a term that they called themselves (Acts 11:26)? What should our response be when people tease/insult us with terms like super-spiritual, or religious? Pray that you might bring glory to Christ in all that you say and do.

DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:17-18.** Is the judgment that Peter is referring to eternal judgment or temporary judgment (1Pet. 1:6-7; 4:7, 12)? Why would Christians be judged (Ezek. 9:1-6; Mal. 3:1-4)? What are some clues that would help us to decide whether this is an eternal judgment or a testing of some kind?

(b) What will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God (Phil. 3:18-19; 2Th. 1:7-12; Heb. 12:24-29)? Verse 18 is from Proverbs 11:31. What does Paul mean by saying “the righteous is scarcely saved”?

(c) *Think about it:* There are a lot of people who think that if you have faith that you won’t suffer. How does this verse relate to that idea? How does it change our perspective on suffering according to God’s will? If you were to write down what the Christian’s perspective on suffering was, what would you write?

(d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:17-18. What does Peter mean by the “time of judgment [is about] to begin?” Does this refer to the last judgment or to something else? What will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel? How will the righteous *scarcely* be saved? How should this motivate us to live? Pray that you would live in light of the real judgment that God will bring.

DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:19.** Of all the things that Peter could have referred to God as, he chose “faithful Creator.” Why do you think he would do this? What is the importance of God being the faithful Creator (Ps. 146:5-9; Is. 40:25-31; 51:12-13)? How does remembering God as your faithful Creator help you in times of trial?

(b) Peter says for us in our suffering to entrust our souls to God. What would it look like to suffer according to God’s will but not entrust yourself to Him? Why is it so important to do everything in faith (1Pet. 2:23; Heb. 11:6)?

(c) How are the two phrases, “who suffer according to God’s will” and “doing good”, related? How has Peter described what suffering according God’s will looks like (3:13-14; 4:13-14)? How is this distinct from other kinds of suffering? Can we suffer for doing something good but not suffer according to God’s will? Why or why not?

(d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:19. How is God our faithful Creator? Why is the fact that He is our Creator so important? What does it mean that He can ask of us? How does trusting in Him as our faithful Creator give us hope? Do you think about God as creator of everything around you? How might we live differently if we applied this truth to all areas of our lives? Thank God for His creating of you and His creation and ask Him for the faith to trust in Him everyday.

DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT**READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE**

(a) *Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* Are you going through a fiery trial right now? What is God wanting to teach you in the midst of this? Maybe you don’t have any major trials right now. Is there anything that you need to apply this week in preparation for future trials? Is your life marked in such a way that what you say and the way you do things is because you believe in Christ? Pray that God would be the center of everything that you do and that you would faithfully express this truth to those who need the Gospel.

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The Joy of Suffering with Christ
“rejoice...as you share in Christ’s sufferings”