



As humans, our natural instinct is generally to avoid things that are painful: physically, mentally, and emotionally. As far as we can help it, we tend to avoid suffering of any kind. However, what Peter is calling us to in chapter 4 is that as Exiles, we should expect suffering. Not only that, but we should lean into God's will for us in the midst of it, and to do good in spite of it.

Read: 1 Peter 4:1-19; Romans 5:3-5

In the very first verse of 1 Peter 4, we are told to arm ourselves. What does this tell us about the task at hand, what is available to us, and our choice in the matter?

Are there ways in which suffering can help purify us from sin? How so?

What else does Romans 5 tell us that suffering leads to in the life of a believer?

How do your prayers reflect the attitudes you currently arm yourself with (4:7)? Do you arm yourself with an attitude aligned with Christ? Is there anything you need to shift to align your attitude with the heart and mind of Christ?

Are there any words or phrases in v.12-16 that seem contradictory in the context of suffering? Why do you think the Scripture is written like that?

In light of all of these verses, what should our expectation be with regard to suffering, and how does it differ from what some may have been taught about the Christian life?

Compare: 1 Peter 4:13-14 with Romans 8:18

How does suffering connect with the will of God?

When we do suffer, what 2 things does Peter tell us we should continue to do (4:19)? Why do you think he encourages us to do these things?

Dig Into It:

In the verses we've looked at this week...

...what do you learn about God?

...what do you learn about believers and unbelievers?

...where do you find hope and peace?

Did any of these things surprise you? Why?

Prayer:

*Father, we know that you are with us in the midst of suffering. We know that you use our suffering to shape us, to refine us, and to draw us closer to you. Help us to walk in step with you as we endure, and to continue to love and serve those around us, in spite of our trials. May your glory be revealed in beautiful ways through us.
Amen.*