

More than Suffering Study Guide

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Series Overview

Your faith is more important to God than your comfort. There is more to suffering than your discomfort. Suffering helps us become more humble and dependent on God.

Using This Guide

You may choose to use this guide:

- for personal study and reflection
- as a discussion guide with any group of people interested in what the Bible says about these topics

last update *6 Apr 2020*

1-Refining Suffering

Icebreaker: Quote

React to this quote.

There are no gains without pains. -Benjamin Franklin

Questions for Study or Discussion

- Why would you rejoice during trials (**1Pet 1:6**)?
- What value does God place on faith during trials (**1Pet 1:7**)?
- When you believe in Christ, how do you react (**1Pet 1:8**)?
- What is the result of your faith (**1Pet 1:9**)?

Dig a Little Deeper: Tested by Fire

To purify gold, you put it in the fire. As it becomes more pure, it becomes softer. To grow your faith, you must endure suffering which burns away impurities which softens your heart.

Consider Daniel's three friends in *Daniel 3*. They refused to worship the image King Nebuchadnezzar had created. The king became angry enough to have them **bound**, then tossed into a fiery furnace.

- Who was the fourth person the king saw in the furnace?
- What was the only thing that got burned up in the fire?
- How did the king react when Daniel's three friends came safely out of the fire?

Application Exercise: Pray During Suffering

Rather than simply pray for God to remove the suffering, consider some of the following prayers.

- Lord, remind me that Your grace is sufficient in my weakness (*2Cor 12:9-10*).
- Lord, help me lean on You rather than my own understanding (*Pro 3:5-6*).
- Lord, restore my hope and joy in You (*Isa 40:29-31*).
- Lord, use Your Word to strengthen me (*Psa 119:28*).

2-New Identity

Icebreaker: I've Changed

What are some ways that people take on new identities?

Questions for Study or Discussion

- To obey, you must have the proper mindset. How does Peter describe the work required to get your mind ready to obey (*1Pet 1:13*)?
- What must you leave behind to remain obedient (*1Pet 1:14, 1Pet 2:11*)?
- Why is your behavior important in taking on your identity as a Christ-follower (*1Pet 1:15-16*)?
- What is the **one** requirement for being saved (*1Pet 1:17-19*)?
- When you know you are a child of God, what does that bring to you (*1Pet 1:20-21*)?

Dig a Little Deeper: He Created You

- In what ways does knowing Christ created you for Himself comfort or concern you (*Col 1:16*)?
- When He corrects you, how should you react (*Heb 12:9*)?
- What types of things can you accomplish through submitting to Christ (*Eph 3:20*)?

Application Exercise: What He Means to You

- Find a place to be alone with God.
- Ask Him to show you the truth about what Christ means to you.
- Ask Him to give you one thing to change in your life that will let Him know you are serious about your relationship with Him.

3-Submissive Attitudes

Icebreaker: Define Submission

- First, write a definition of submission.
- Next, compare your definition to the one in the Dig a Little Deeper section.

Questions for Study or Discussion

- What is the purpose of submitting to government (*1Pet 2:13-17*)?

- What is the purpose of submitting to leaders (*1Pet 2:18-20*)?

- In what way is suffering a requirement for submitting to Jesus (*1Pet 2:21-25*)?

- In what way can a wife's submissive attitude influence her husband for Christ (*1Pet 3:1-6*)?

- What is a husband's responsibility to his wife and why is it important (*1Pet 3:7*)?

Dig a Little Deeper: What is Submission?

- Submission does not mean you agree, stay silent, or obey something that is clearly against God's Word (*Acts 4:19, Acts 5:26-29*).
- Submission is an attitude of willingness to follow a leader.

Application Exercise: Submissive Attitude Assessment

Take this submissive attitude self-assessment.

	not<.....>completely
I am surrendered to God as my Savior.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am submitted to God as my Lord. I do things His way.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I trust God. I know He is in control and loves me.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I strive for mutual submission in all my relationships.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

4-Suffering as a Choice

Icebreaker: Just Say No

When was the last time you said, “No” to yourself?
What was the circumstance?

Questions for Study or Discussion

- In what way does saying no to yourself (suffering) bring you in alignment with how Jesus thinks (*1Pet 4:1-2, 1Cor 2:16*)?
- Why should suffering not come as a surprise or embarrassment (*1Pet 4:12-16*)?
- In what way can you hold yourself accountable for your sins while willingly suffering according to His will (*1Pet 4:17-19*)?

Dig a Little Deeper: While You Are Suffering, Remember

- Remember that the suffering you experience is only a small taste of what Jesus experienced (*Col 1:24*).
- You should hold yourself accountable for your sins (*1Cor11:26-32*).
- God's will is for you to continue to do good even while you suffer, (*2Tim 2:12*).
- Suffering is evidence that you have Christ (*Jas 1:2*).

Application Exercise: Pray

Pray, asking God to show you when and how He wants you make a sacrifice for Him.

5-Spiritual Support

Icebreaker:

Make a list of the people in your life with whom you share a mutually supportive relationship.

Questions for Study or Discussion

- In what way do physical shepherds compare to Christians leaders who care for those under their care (**1Pet 5:1-4**)?
- How important is humility for both leaders and followers (**1Pet 5:5**)?
- How aware are you of the tactics the devil uses to separate you from God's support (**1Pet 5:6-8**)?
- When you sense you are under spiritual attack, what is the appropriate response (**1Pet 5:9-11**)?
- How are members of both the local church and global church part of your spiritual support and how do you contribute to their spiritual support (**1Pet 5:12-14**)?

Dig a Little Deeper: Resist

- To resist the devil, you must believe the truth (*John 17:17*).
- Consider how Jesus resisted Satan (*Mat 4:1-11*).
- When you are suffering, pray (*Jas 5:13*).
- Stay close to God and other believers (*John 17:20-22*).
- Remember, if you are a Christ-follower, you are never alone (*Psa 139:7-12*).

Application Exercise: Find the “One Another”s

- Use a Strong’s Concordance or online search tool to find the Bible references to “one another” or “each other.”
- Check how many of them you regularly do.
- Ask God to point out one or two that He wants you to begin doing.