



OPPOSITION: 1 PETER 4:7-19

Community Group Study Guide Week of November 17, 2019

We continued our series "Tough & Tender" this week by looking at how to be a Lion and a Lamb in the face of persecution and opposition to our faith. We follow a persecuted and crucified Savior, but also a risen and reigning Lord. Jesus promised that all who would follow him would face persecution, but also that nothing in all creation would be able to separate us from God's love and our eternal life with him. Because of this reality we should not be surprised when others oppose us for our faith, but we should also not retaliate according to the flesh. Instead, we're called to be bold in our witness and ready to face opposition, but also loving toward those who oppose us on account of our faith.

In 1 Peter 3-5, the apostle Peter gives some pointed advice to Christians who are facing persecution. Pastor Jan broke this down into seven points that can help us respond to persecution in a constructive and Christlike manner.

- 1) **Welcome to the club:** As those who follow Jesus we should "not be surprised" by the opposition when it comes. Christian today, and throughout history, are the most persecuted people group on earth.
- 2) **Lead with Repentance:** We should examine our lives before claiming to be persecuted to ensure we're being persecuted for our faith, and not for our sinful or meddling behavior.
- 3) **Rejoice at the honor:** We should rejoice knowing there is fellowship with Christ when we suffer for his name, and this gives assurance to our faith.
- 4) **Fight Shame with glory:** We must fear God, more than we fear men so that our temptation to be ashamed of Christ may be overcome by a zeal for his glory.
- 5) **Love your enemies:** We must understand that we were all enemies of God and His grace is the only thing that makes us any different from our enemies. In light of this we must love our enemies and see our persecutors as souls to be saved instead of enemies to be defeated.
- 6) **Trust God as you do good:** We must remember that God turned Jesus crucifixion into resurrection and redemption, and we can trust that he is sovereignly willing and able to use our opposition and suffering for our greatest good and His glory.
- 7) **Extend hope gently:** As people see us respond to persecution in a Christlike manner, many will be intrigued. Therefore, we must be prepared to "give a reason for the hope" we have in Christ that enables us to face suffering with peace and joy.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To understand how to respond to opposition in a Christlike way, and how God uses persecution for our growth.

Heart

To trust God's goodness and sovereignty in the face of persecution and opposition.

Hands

To be bold in our witness and loving in our response to those who oppose us for our faith.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership or Baptism:

Contact

admin@mosaicboston.com to sign up for our next membership class or learn more about baptism.

Mosaic JP:

Please keep Mosaic JP and other faithful Boston church plants in your prayers. If your CG would like to serve Mosaic JP together on a Sunday please contact Andy Hoot at andy@mosaicboston.com.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read 1 Peter 3:13-18; 4:12-19; 5:6-11

In 1 Peter 4, the apostle Peter gives some pointed advice to Christians who are facing opposition. Pastor Jan broke this down into seven points.

- 1) **Welcome to the club (1 Peter 4:12):** Why should Christians not be surprised when we face opposition for our faith? How might the expectation that we will be persecuted help us when we are faced with opposition?

- 2) **Lead with Repentance (1 Peter 4:15-18):** Why is it important to know the difference between persecution, and merely facing opposition because of our own sin or bad behavior? Why should Christians be intentional and precise in how they use the word persecution?

- 3) **Rejoice at the honor (1 Peter 4:13-14):** In what way can suffering for the name of Jesus be an honor, joy, or blessing? Can you think of times when you've experienced this in your life?

- 4) **Fight Shame with glory (1 Peter 4:16):** Why are we often tempted to feel ashamed of Jesus? What does it mean to fight shame with glory?

- 5) **Love your enemies (Luke 6:27-31, 1 Peter 3:9):** How does the Gospel empower us to love our enemies? How is love more effective at overcoming evil, than retaliating with anger or hatred?

- 6) **Trust God as you do good (1 Peter 4:19):** How does the Gospel assure us that God is trustworthy, even when we're facing suffering or persecution for our faith? How does belief in God's sovereignty change the way we look at our suffering?

- 7) **Extend hope gently (1 Peter 3:14-15):** What implications does this have for how we should view suffering and persecution as Christians, and how we should be prepared to act and respond during those trials?

- 8) What else stood out to you about these texts or this week's sermon? Was there anything else you found particularly encouraging, convicting, or challenging?