

I Peter
Lesson #14 One More Look at Suffering
I Peter 5:9-11

I. Vs. 9 “...Your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings”

Historical Christian Persecution Statistics:

More than 70 million Christians have been martyred in the course of history. More than half were martyred in the 20th century under communist and fascist government ([Gordon-Conwell Resources](#)).

In the 21st century, roughly 100,000 to 160,000 Christians were killed each year ([Gordon-Conwell Resources](#) and [World Christian Database](#), respectively).

Roughly 1,093,000 Christians were martyred, worldwide, between 2000 and 2010 ([World Christian Database](#)).

Modern, Global Church Persecution Statistics:

322 Christians are killed for their faith every month ([Open Doors](#)).

214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed every month ([Open Doors](#)).

772 forms of violence (beatings, kidnappings, rape, arrest, etc.) are committed against Christians every month ([Open Doors](#)).

The 10 countries where Christians face the [most extreme persecution](#) are, in order: North Korea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Eritrea

II. Vs. 10 “...after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”

“Suffered:” To feel with heavy emotions.

“A Little While:” Could be in time or degree. See II Cor. 4:17-18

IT IS THE IDEA OF BEING TEMPORARILY OUT OF ORDER.

“Will Perfect:” To restore, to put into order, to properly adjust so it fits. See Matt. 4:21-mending nets.

“Will Confirm:” To be inwardly firm, committed. It is a support that fixes, makes it possible to stand. See Rom. 1:11

“Will Strengthen:” Will make it strong so as to be mobile, able to be most effective.

“Will Establish:” To lay a foundation (Matt. 7:25- founded on a rock). It is a faith that is firmly established. See Col. 1:23

THIS IS A SECURE BASIS FOR THE INNER LIFE.

III. The objectives of suffering

- A. We suffer to develop our capacity and sympathy in comforting others. “There are wounded people that we need to identify with.”

2 Cor. 1:3-5 “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.”

- B. We suffer to keep down our pride

2 Cor. 12:7 “To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.”

- C. We suffer as a training tool. We have lessons to learn.

Heb. 12:5 “And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you.”

James 1:2-4 “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

- D. We suffer as a witness to others

2 Tim. 2:8-10 “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God’s word is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.”

2 Cor. 4:12-13 “So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak.”

E. We suffer to bring about continued dependence on the grace and power of God.

Eph. 6:10 *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."*

F. We suffer to manifest the life and character of Christ. "We have a suffering Savior with whom we can enjoy greater intimacy."

Phil. 1:19 *"Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance."*

G. We suffer to broaden our ministries

Phil 1:12-14 *"Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly."*

(www.Bible.org)

IV. So What?

Here are some things to REMEMBER about suffering:

A. Remember, it is temporary.

Ps. 30:5 *"For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning."*

B. Remember to pray

"I pray for the strength to bear it, the grace to benefit from it and the devotion to offer it up to God as a sacrifice of praise." (Joni Erickson Tada)

1 Pet. 4:7 *"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."*

C. Remember to keep loving others (deeply!)

1 Peter 4:8 *"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."*

D. Remember to rejoice and keep on praising the Lord

See Acts 16:25 and notice what Paul and Silas were doing

E. Remember to keep "doing good"

1 Pet. 4:19 *"So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good."*

(From Neil Chadwick)

Remember: Sometimes He chooses not to heal us, but to hold us. "The more intense the pain, the closer the embrace."

March Meditation Verse

1 Peter: 3:15: *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

Questions:

1. Read 1 Peter 3:15 (above).

Look up the word "revere," and write the definition.

What do you think, "In your hearts **revere** Christ..." means?

What does it practically mean to have Christ as **Lord** of your life?

2. Living in a broken, sinful world brings about suffering. We may never know if there is a reason for our suffering. How can we be both authentic and faithful in these situations? Discuss this as a group.

3. Take a moment to look at Sherry's notes under the "objectives" of suffering. Which one(s) connect with you most? Is there one that stands out to you in a past or current situation?

4. Is the concept that God's grace is sufficient and available to you in the midst of suffering easy or difficult to understand or believe?

Study at Home:

1 Peter 5:10 says, "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

From Sherry's notes or other tools, what does it mean to:

Restore:

Confirm:

Strengthen:

Establish: