

12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

14 If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. 15 If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs. 16 But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name! 17 For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God's household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Good News? 18 And also,

"If the righteous are barely saved,
what will happen to godless sinners?"

19 So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you.

— 1 Peter 4:12-19

Discussion/Journal Questions

Have you ever been surprised? Share of a time you experienced a good surprise. What about a bad surprise?

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What does Peter tell us not to be surprised by? How should we respond instead?

What reason does Peter give for telling us to be glad? Be honest, how do you feel about this idea?

In the sermon, John mentioned the organization Open Doors and their watch list of countries in which Christians are facing persecution. How often do you think about our brothers and sisters who are enduring "fiery trials" around the world? What can you do to remind yourself to pray for them more regularly?

John also mentions the idea of having a sleepy faith. Read Revelation 3:15-16. What is Jesus warning against here? What can we learn from this?

How can your group pray for you this week?

Who are you praying for to accept Jesus, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?

Who are you currently discipling, and what specifically did you do this week to help them know, love, and follow Jesus?

Who are you considering for future discipleship relationships, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?