

Passage: 1 Peter 3:8-17

Title: Suffering (The Attitude and the Altitude)

Summary: When we find ourselves suffering, may we consider two things; "Attitude" (How we look at Suffering – 1 Peter 3:8-14), and "Altitude" (Where we look during Suffering – 1 Peter 3:14-17).

1 Peter 3:8–17 (NKJV) ⁸ Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil." ¹³ And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶ having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Peter's Credentials / Still Feeding

Written by the Apostle Peter, whose credentials have been challenged because of his lack of education and training; but Peter walked with the Lord, the second Apostle called, and all could see that his power and boldness came because he had been with the Lord. For 3 years he walked with Jesus step-by-step, and now it is 30 years since the resurrection and Peter is still faithfully doing what the Lord commissioned him to do, "feeding His sheep".

The Dispersed

He is writing to the Believers that have been spread out, dispersed from their homeland, thrown into foreign countries. Many of them are struggling and suffering; but their greatest struggle is yet to come, for in just several months Roman Empire Nero is going to launch an all-out attack and persecution against Christians, and over the next 2 centuries over 6 million Christians will die for their faith.

Why Peter Writes / Remember

Peter tells us in the Second Epistle why he writes to them (and us), to stir us up, to remind us, that we hang on to the things we have been taught in the Old Testament, the Epistles of the Apostles, and the teachings in the Gospels. He says remember these things, hold on to them, no matter how hard life may get.

(2 Peter 3:1 NKJV) Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), *(2 Peter 3:2 NKJV)* that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

Doctrine – Duty – Declaration

Peter pretty much breaks this letter into 3 areas. Doctrine, Duty, and Declaration; this book takes on the frame work of Ephesians, except Peter adds on the Declaration – The Lord is Returning – Remember that! Doctrine, what we believe and why. Duty, doctrine in action, living it out. Declaration, soon and very soon we are going to see the King, Hold-fast until then.

Doctrine: Remember Our Great Salvation (1:1 - 2:10)

The Certainty of Our Salvation (1:1-12)

The Calling with Our Salvation (1:13-25)

The Chosen of Salvation (2:1-10)

Duty: Remember Our Example Before Men (2:11 - 4:6)

Honorable Living Before Unbelievers (2:11 - 3:7)

Submission to the Government (2:11-17)

Submission to Masters (2:18 - 25)

Submission in the Family (3:1- 7)

Honorable Living Before Believers (3:8 - 12)

Submission to One Another (3:8 - 12)

Honorable Living in the Midst of Suffering (3:13 - 4:6)

The Principle of Suffering for Righteousness (3:13 - 17)

The Perfection of Suffering for Righteousness (3:18- 22)
The Purpose of Suffering for Righteousness (4:1 - 6)
Declaration: Remember Our Lord Will Return (4:7 - 5:14)
The Responsibility of Christian Living (4:7 - 11)
The Rewards of Christian Suffering (4:12 - 19)
The Requirements for Christian Leadership (5:1 - 4)
The Realization of Christian Victory (5:5 - 14)

Theme

He tells us to remember because of the theme of this book. The theme of this book is given to us in chapter 5:

(1 Peter 5:10 NKJV) But may the God of all **grace**, who called us to His eternal **glory** by Christ Jesus, after you have **suffered** a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

The word suffering is used 16 times, glory 12, and grace 8. Peter unites these 3 words to write a letter of encouragement to those who are struggling and suffering, that their suffering will one day be transformed into glory.

Perfect / Establish / Strengthen / Settled

He writes to us so that we may be:

- Perfect - (mature) which means to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair, to complete, to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust, to fit or frame for one's self, prepare;
- Established – to set fast, confirm one's mind;
- Strengthen – to make one strong;
- Settle – to lay a foundation.

Flowing to Next Topic

We are now flowing into our next topic of this wonderful epistle as we start to focus more specifically on suffering, which is a major theme of this epistle.

Suffering in Context of Marriage / Bonding or Bickering

Suffering in the context of marriage we just study is important. When the days get difficult, husbands and wives can either find themselves binding and bonding, or bickering and biting. These passages are important because marriages can come together at these times, but often they unravel because of them. Understanding suffering is very important, very vital for every marriage, and of course every believer.

Old Preacher – Young Man

Not long ago I heard a story about a young man and an old preacher. The young man had lost his job and didn't know which way to turn. So he went to see the old preacher. Pacing about the preacher's study, the young man ranted about his problem. Finally he clenched his fist and shouted, "I've begged God to say something to help me. Tell me, Preacher, why doesn't God answer?" The old preacher, who sat across the room, spoke something in reply--something so hushed it was indistinguishable. The young man stepped across the room. "What did you say?" he asked. The preacher repeated himself, but again in a tone as soft as a whisper. So the young man moved closer until he was leaning on the preacher's chair. "Sorry," he said. "I still didn't hear you." With their heads bent together, the old preacher spoke once more. "God sometimes whispers," he said, "so we will move closer to hear Him." This time the young man heard, and he understood. We all want God's voice to thunder through the air with the answer to our problem. But God's is the still, small voice, the gentle whisper. Perhaps there's a reason. Nothing draws human focus quite like a whisper. God's whisper means I must stop my ranting and move close to Him, until my head is bent together with His. And then, as I listen, I will find my answer. Better still, I find myself closer to God. (Author Unknown)

Be Still / Struggled Here / Deep & Profound / Can't Hear how Simple

When you are suffering, for whatever reason, be still, pull out the studies from this epistle. I really struggled with this study. I read and re-read it, I was looking for the deep truths. This passage goes back into the Old Testament, pulls verses out from Psalms and Isaiah, I surely thought there must be something very deep and profound here because Peter is quoting OT in his epistle. I struggled to make it profound, deep, but then I saw it, it is not meant to be profound, it is so simple, it is profound. When suffering comes, we can be so busy ranting about our problem, that we can't hear God. God makes it simple for us, that when we are suffering, you need only look at two things, attitude, and altitude.

The Outline for this Study:

- Attitude – How we look at Suffering – 1 Peter 3:8-14
- Altitude – Where we look during Suffering – 1 Peter 3:14-17

Peter Understands Suffering / Beaten & Imprisoned / Crucified

Peter understands suffering, he knows suffering, and he learned through his suffering that the Lord delivers His righteous, He was imprisoned twice, and knew his day would come to be killed, as James was killed before him (Acts 12)

Acts 4:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Acts 12:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. ² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³ And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

Peter Knew what was Coming

Eventually in the end according to church writings, he was forced to watch his wife crucified, and then he himself was crucified. Yet in the end he said to his wife, "remember thou the Lord". Peter knew he could trust the Lord, even with the suffering of death. He would not recant his belief or witness to escape suffering.

At End of Life - Prison Rome 5 Months / Waste – Lay Down – Darkness – Breathe – 40 Saved

Church writings tell us that Peter was imprisoned in Rome for 5 months. He was chained to a pole. We know from past studies that those conditions in a Roman prison were horrendous. The cells were next to each other, they had a common trench running through them for the human waste. Most likely he would have been standing in his own waste. You could never fully lay down. You stood in complete darkness; the smell was so horrible that many people died from the inability to breathe. Amazingly church writings say that Peter led some 40 Roman guards to the Lord before his crucifixion. Peter is a person who writes to us about suffering, from living on the side of suffering we can never fully imagine.

Peter knew suffering and he knew the great suffering that was ultimately coming upon him, (probably will die within a year or two of writing his epistles), so he is not writing from a philosophical lofty I-am-so-spiritual position, but from one who has lived it, and fully knows it is not going to get easier, but harder.

Peter is going to move us on and say if you want to love life and see good days, listen to this:

1 Peter 3:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For "He who would love life And see good days,

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?

- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

Attitude – How we look at Suffering – 1 Peter 3:8-14

(1 Peter 3:8 NKJV) Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;

Finally

V8 – Finally - THE word “finally” does not indicate the conclusion of the letter, but the conclusion of the exhortations. But.... It was also used in the sense of “to the uttermost”. And these next verses are literally a guarantee to a life of love with one another and the Lord. Do these things in verses 8-12, and any and every relationship (marriage, family, church, work) will prosper greatly because of doing them. And..... don't forget them in the midst of suffering (whether yours or theirs), for there is something in our human nature that can turn on others in the midst of our suffering. Often times when I see (or am the brunt of) someone's unkindness, I know very often that there is something going on in their life that needs dealing with, and they can't, won't, don't know how to deal with it and overcome it, so it carries over into every area of their lives and manifests itself in contentions and lovelessness.

Guzik

V8. – be of one mind - Pastor Dave Guzik says most people have no problem being willing to have one mind, as long as that one mind, is their mind.

This speaks to the essential unity of God's people. We are one; but we are not all the same. While we should all be of one mind, we can't expect everyone to be like us.

v.8 – having compassion for one another - Their attitude toward each other should be one of “compassion” (sumpatheis, sympathy, a fellow-feeling). It is so easy for us to not relate or connect to someone because we don't relate or connect to what they are going through. We do well to stop and ask ourselves, seek the Lord, and say what are they going through, how would I feel if that was me in that situation, and when we do we can find ourselves then relating to their pain (or joy) and coming alongside of them so they don't have to bear it alone, or go it alone, and simply know they are not alone.

We all have missed this point, we have all missed someone in their need, but God gives us reminder that we have today to change today and tomorrow.

v.8 – love as brothers – the word is “phileo”, and it is the Greek word for love that means brotherly love.

God is putting before us church, there's an expectation the is family to love one another

v.8 – tenderhearted – the word tender, tenderize makes me think of cooking meat, and three things that are the top three in tenderizing meat fit so well here.

- One is you pound the meat to tenderize it, now we should not be the pounders obviously but as we see a beloved one being pounded by the world, going through a trial and suffering, and we have compassion on them as we just looked at, our hearts will become tender and sensitive to them.
- A second tenderizer is salting (seasoning the meat), and the Word says let our speech be gracious (always), seasoned with salt.
- And thirdly, regarding tenderizing meat, is marinating (a soaking), and our hearts will become tender towards that person when we are soaking, praying, interceding for them in prayer before the Lord.

Colossians 4:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ *Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.* ⁶ *Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*

V.8 – be courteous (humbly) – Jesus comes lowly, and his only auto biographical description of himself, gentle and lowly

Matthew 11:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

(1 Peter 3:9 NKJV) not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

Peter Following Jesus Footsteps

Remember our writer is Peter - the disciple who grabbed a sword and tried to split the skull of the Jewish henchman - who came to arrest Jesus. Malchus swerved his head at the last second, and Peter clipped off his ear. This was sword-slinging Pete. Now it's the same Peter who's changed his tune. He says don't return evil for evil - bless those who revile you. He's learned a new way of dealing with injustice. I'm sure it started with Malchus. Jesus picked up the severed ear out of the dirt, and miraculously reattached it to Malchus' head. He returned good for evil, blessing for cursing - shouldn't his followers do the same? In the coming days Peter saw Jesus take all the hate the world could muster, and retaliate with love. And in doing so, He won our forgiveness. Peter had always wanted to follow Jesus, now he's finally learned how. (Adams, Sandy)

John 13:36–38 (NKJV) ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." ³⁸ Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

The Jesus Example

v.9 – not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling - Peter tying back to chapter 2, showing us the "Jesus Example" when it come to not counter reviling, but to pronounce a blessing upon those around you, especially if they may be the reason for your suffering.

1 Peter 2:21–25 (NKJV) ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Matthew 5:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:43–44 (NKJV) ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

Evil – Revile / Render Blessings – Reward will Inherit Blessings

V9. but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. -

Peter said the believers are called to receive a blessing, and in order to receive it they should invoke blessing on others, even those who injure them and revile them. They should not return "evil for evil" (kakon, wicked and injurious talk) nor "railing for railing" (loidorian, slander, reproach). Instead they should render "blessing" (eulogountes, commendation, benediction). As a reward, they will inherit a blessing which is explained in verse 10

Those that render blessings shall inherit blessings. So to inherit blessings you must render blessings!

(1 Peter 3:10 NKJV) For "

He who would love life

And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil,

And his lips from speaking deceit.

Quote Psalm 34

Here in verse 10-12 Peter is quoting from Psalm 34:12-16.

See Good Days / God Wants to Bless Us / Satan says Withholding

v.10 – he would love life And see good days- to see blessings come upon us, that is why He says - "he who would love life and see good days". Satan has done a wonderful job in telling that lie to us that God is keeping something from us (all the way back in the garden). He tells us that God is keeping something from you, rules, rules, rules, the cosmic killjoy. It is on the contrary, God says I know what you need, and if you do the things I say to do, you will love life and see good days.

Genesis 3:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Watch Tongue / Murmur – Complain / Why Me – Why Now

v.10 - Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.- Peter says that when hard times come, watch your tongue. He starts with the abc's of suffering. It is easy to start murmuring, complaining, and say why me, why this, why now? Peter says if you want to love life and see good days, watch your tongue. Whatever your suffering is, if it is your marriage, your kids, your job, your finances, your health, your parents, if you want to love life and see good days, watch your tongue. (go back to our study in James for the "Test of the Tongue")

Hey, think before you speak. Remember the acrostic... T-H-I-N-K. "T", is it true?, "H", is it helpful?, "I", is it inspirational or encouraging?, "N", is it necessary?, "K", is it kind? If it's not all five, then zip your lips!

(1 Peter 3:11 NKJV)

***Let him turn away from evil and do good;
Let him seek peace and pursue it.***

Quote Psalm 34

Here in verse 10-12 Peter is quoting from Psalm 34:12-16.

Psalm 34:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² Who is the man who desires life, And loves many days, that he may see good? ¹³ Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. ¹⁴ Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. ¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. ¹⁶ The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

Turn from Evil / Easy to get Carnal

Verse 11 says to turn from evil: It is easy when hard times come to get carnal, to let your guard down, to say I just need a break, check out for a while, as you call in for that pay-per-view movie, meet up with the old crowd. Peter says don't do it if you want to see good days. Do you want bad days, call in, stop by into evil things. These words are to help us in hard times, not to put us on some legalistic trip.

Seek Peace

v.11 – Let him seek peace and pursue it - Is there someone you need to seek peace with? As we see in the context those who do inherit a blessing, and those who do/are righteous, they're in right standing with the Lord, and those who produce the things that are not peace or not in this category with the Lord as right.

Hebrews 12:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: ¹⁵ looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

So, who do you need to seek peace with? The word of God is meant to stir something, to stir us into some response. The word of God's never just to hear it as he says, and James be doers of the word not hearers only. So who do you have to seek peace with (that you have a means within your ability to reconcile)? So it's real easy, who you have divided, and you're the responsible party for the division, that's who needs to go and seek the reconciliation to bring peace.

James 1:22 (NKJV) ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

(1 Peter 3:12 NKJV)

***For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
And His ears are open to their prayers;
But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."***

Quote Psalm 34

Here in verse 10-12 Peter is quoting from Psalm 34:12-16.

Context of Righteous

These passages in this epistle are written to those who are suffering because of no fault of their own. Some are suffering because of their witness for Christ. So that will be the context over these studies. Sometimes we suffer because of our own personal sin and foolishness, and repentance is what is needed before anything else can be addressed.

Drawing Back OT / Psalm 34:12-16 / Writes to Remind Us

Peter is drawing back on the Old Testament, Psalm 34, verses 12-16. Peter knew the word, and he says when the hard times come, remember Psalm 34 (remember that is why he wrote to remind us the things written in the past). Well what is Psalm 34 about? It is was written by King David. The title of the Psalm says:

[A Psalm of David When He Pretended Madness Before Abimelech, Who Drove Him Away, and He Departed.](#)

David Writes the Psalm / Saul – Gath / Boxed In

David is writing this when King Saul was out to kill him. David ends up of all places in the Philistine city of Gath. Gath is where Goliath was from. It was the killing of Goliath that really started the whole thing with Saul, because the people were saying David killed his 10,000 Saul killed his thousand, and Saul goes insanely jealous over David and wants to kill him. The Philistines find out David is in this city, and so here it is that David has the Philistine seeking to kill the man who killed their champion, and Saul with his armies looking to do the same. David is boxed in, nowhere to go. What does David write, verse 1 - I will bless the Lord at all times, and he concludes that the Lord will deliver the righteous (v.22):

Yet What Does He Write / I Praise – Not Murmur / GOD KNOWS – NOT SURPRISED – ALLOWED IT

You see, David is in the place that he knows that God knows, where he is at, and what is happening, God is not surprised, and that God has allowed it. David starts this Psalm off with I will praise the Lord. David says rather than complain, I am going to praise. Praise will bring good days. You know why, complaining and murmuring won't change the situation, you will still be in the exact same place, just more depressed.

(Psalms 34:1 NKJV) I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

(Psalms 34:2 NKJV) My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad.

(Psalms 34:3 NKJV) Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.

Pure Power

I have found pure power in my life of suffering and trials when I am faced with choosing to dwell on what is happening to me, whether my fault or brought on by another, that rather than spending mind-time rehashing, rerunning the script, going over things play-by-play over-and-over-again, that I do what David did and bless and praise the Lord. For us, it is as easy as coming to Psalm 34 and picking a verse and mediating on that over and over again rather than my problems or issues. I have found a wonderful treasure, a true nugget, that certain times to just take one verse and simply sit (or go for a walk) and mediate on that one verse, and I find such a sweet treasure and presence of the Lord when I do. Meditate is the word used for a cow as it chews the cuds, over and over and over again.

(Psalms 34:1 NKJV) I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

(Psalms 34:2 NKJV) My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad.

(Psalms 34:3 NKJV) Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.

(Psalms 34:4 NKJV) I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.

(Psalms 34:5 NKJV) They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed.

(Psalms 34:6 NKJV) This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.

(Psalms 34:7 NKJV) The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

(Psalms 34:8 NKJV) Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

(Psalms 34:9 NKJV) Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.

(Psalms 34:10 NKJV) The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.

(Psalms 34:11 NKJV) Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

(Psalms 34:12 NKJV) Who is the man who desires life, And loves many days, that he may see good?

(Psalms 34:13 NKJV) Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit.
(Psalms 34:14 NKJV) Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.
(Psalms 34:15 NKJV) The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry.
(Psalms 34:16 NKJV) The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
(Psalms 34:17 NKJV) The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.
(Psalms 34:18 NKJV) The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.
(Psalms 34:19 NKJV) Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.
(Psalms 34:20 NKJV) He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.
(Psalms 34:21 NKJV) Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.
(Psalms 34:22 NKJV) The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

(1 Peter 3:13 NKJV) And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?

We Can Rest

If we are followers of God, then we can rest, and I know that's a hard word to hear in the middle of hurting and hard times.

But God is saying, no one can harm you except to the degree that I will allow it. To which again is hard to accept, unless we come to a complete faith that we trust in all, and everything that He does in our lives

God not Pacing / Praise or Complain

When you are suffering, know that God is not surprised or pacing the Throne Room of heaven, ohh no what are we going to do. God knows what He is doing and going to do, the question is what are we going to do? Will we choose praise or complain.

Why Draw on Psalm / Key to Life – Isn't having a Cushy Life / Opposite Society

Why does Peter draw back on this Psalm and apply it to these people he is writing to who are going through struggles and suffering? Because Peter is giving a key to life, a key to loving life, a key to having good days, a key for all of us here today, the key? The key is not having a life that is cushy and easy or free from difficulty or challenges - that is what our cultural and society says to us; our society says if you could just make life a little easier, just make you life problem free, escape the adversity, insulate yourself from the hard times, then you will have a good life. David through the Holy Spirit says just the opposite.

When Things Bleak – In Gath / Vision Sharpened – God In Control – I Can Praise

It is when you wonder where do I go when school is over; where is the next check coming from, what will the doctor say. It is when things are bleak and blue, it is when you feel like you are in Gath, boxed in, it is there that you will see God move. It is a vital principle, hard times sharpens your vision, for if we take the attitude of David in that Lord you know it, you have allowed, you are not surprised by it, therefore you are in control of it, and I will praise and you worship you for that.

What if we Believed This

Now what if we really bought into this, believed this, claimed James:

(James 1:2 NKJV) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

Not Seek Escape / Seek Discovery

If we bought into this, believed this, we would not be trying to make our life cushier and softer, but we would say Lord I will discover you in a new deeper way. Peter knew these things because he lived them, and the Holy Spirit inspired him to write these things, and reference back to King David and Psalm 34.

(Psalms 34:4 NKJV) I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.

(Psalms 34:5 NKJV) They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed.

Altitude – Where we look during Suffering – 1 Peter 3:14-17

They introduce the important spiritual principle that the fear of the Lord conquers every other fear.

(1 Peter 3:14 NKJV) But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed.

"And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

(1 Peter 3:15 NKJV)

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

Quotes Sermon on Mount

In verse 14 Peter is quoting Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Peter didn't just quote Jesus, he lived it. I say don't get bummed on not being to quote Scripture, just do (live) the Scriptures and they quote themselves:

(Matthew 5:10 NKJV) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Quoting Isaiah 8

Isaiah 8:12-13 (NKJV) ¹² "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. ¹³ The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread.

Quotes Isaiah / Ties Psalm 34 / God the Same / Nothing New

So Peter here at the end of verse 14 and 15, quotes Isaiah 8. He is tying Psalm 34 and David's experience to here in Isaiah and what was going on there hundreds of years apart. Peter is saying God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So whatever you are going through is nothing new to God or for one of His people. So here again we see it is good to be skilled in the Word.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Malachi 3:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *"For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

Situation – Assyrians from North / Brutal People – Fish Hooks – Pyramid Skulls – Skin Alive

The situation in the writing of Isaiah 8 is that the brutal Assyrians are coming down from the north. The Assyrians are brutal, brutal people, they used to put fish hooks in the mouths of their prisoners and lead them hundreds of miles across the desert back to their land. They would build pyramids of human skulls outside the gates of the cities they conquered, basically "your name here" if you get out of line. They would skin captives alive.

Syria & Israel / God said No Go / Now 3 to 1

Now also, the Syrians (not Assyrians) and the King of Israel (for the Kingdom was divided at this time) came to Ahaz the King of Judah and said join us to fight against the Assyrians. God told Isaiah to tell the king not to do it, so Syria and Israel get mad and say then we are going to attack you. So now it is three kingdoms against Judah.

Read 911 / Focus on God - Altitude

Verse 12 says don't fear the events around you, but let God be your fear and dread, which means "see and focus on His power and might". This is the Altitude, climb high. And verse 14, He (God) will be your sanctuary, that place of safety:

(Isaiah 8:11 NKJV) For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

(Isaiah 8:12 NKJV) "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.

(Isaiah 8:13 NKJV) The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread.

(Isaiah 8:14 NKJV) He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The world says join us, join our ways..... but God says "Join Me", my ways are higher than the world!

Isaiah 55:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.*

Hurt Physically / God will Deliver / Releasing the spirit / 10 Years - Terrorists

They might hurt you physically, but God knows how to deliver His righteous. God will deliver His righteous, and sometimes that means releasing the spirit from the body, and calling them home with Him in heaven.

(Matthew 10:28 NKJV) "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The Altitude / Look at things Differently / Suffering gets us Living for Heaven

The Altitude, people going to heaven can take a whole lot of things of this world a whole lot less seriously. But if a person is living for this world, they will take things a whole lot more seriously. You see suffering gets us to live for heaven, as Peter will remind us in chapter 4 - the Lords return is soon..

Cuts the Cord / Hurricane Victims / Lightens our Grip / Keep Main Thing – Main Thing

Suffering in our lives is like knives and scissors cutting the cords that are holding us so closely to this earth. Why is that important, because the lighter our grasp is on the things we think are so important. It is like the unfortunate people in Florida whose homes were destroyed in the hurricane. Had they known their home were going to be destroyed, I doubt any of them would have done those home improvements the months prior. They would have said why bother. Now, imagine if they knew a loved one was going to be lost in that storm. They would have known time is short, I want to invest time with them, be with them. That is why the Lord allows some hardships and struggles in this world for us, so we will lighten our grip on this world and the temporal things, and focus on the eternal things. Suffering frees us up from the worlds pull. A key principle to understand in suffering is that it will keep the main thing the main thing.

Sanctify Heart / Confusion & Fear

Verse 15 - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: Set Jesus apart in your heart. The altitude is the Lord, but His control center is in your heart. What does it mean to “sanctify Christ as Lord” in our hearts? It means to turn everything over to Him, and to live only to please Him and glorify Him. It means to fear displeasing Him rather than fear what men might do to us. How wonderfully this approach simplifies our lives! It is Matthew 6:33 and Romans 12:1-2 combined into a daily attitude of faith that obeys God’s Word in spite of consequences. It means being satisfied with nothing less than the will of God in our lives (John 4:31-34).

You see, if you miss this principle in suffering, if you allow the surrounding and circumstances into your heart, then fear and confusion will come in, and you will be at the mercy of your emotions. But let the Lord rule in your heart, and you will have the peace to deal with whatever comes upon you.

God not Mad

If you are going through suffering, set apart His unconditional love, know that He loves you. Sometimes when we are suffering we think it is because God is mad at us. Jesus did not leave the throne, become lowly man, be spit upon, whipped, nailed to a cross and crucified, so He can be mad at us. He went to the cross because He loves us. And we suffer, because we live in a fallen world, and God applies the principles we are studying through the suffering. The altitude is to set apart our hearts for the Lord.

Nero’s Conspiracy

Peter is pulling this quote in from Isaiah because Nero is/will be starting those rumors about the Christians. A conspiracy, a conspiracy, the Christians eat flesh and drink blood, they say they are the light of the world, they burned Rome. Peter said don’t fear their threats and lies, but see the awe of your God. This is the altitude we must climb to.

(1 Peter 3:15 NKJV) But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; (1 Peter 3:16 NKJV) having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

Ready Defense

Ready defense is the word used for "apologetics". This verse is used to always be ready to give a defense of the Scriptures, and that is cool, we need to be able to discuss Creation, Uniqueness of the Bible, etc. But truly, this Bible needs no defense. As Charles Spurgeon said, the Bible doesn’t need defending, it’s like defending a caged lion, all you have to do is open the door and let the lion out.

Ready Hope

Peter in the context is saying be ready, because people are going to see and know you are going through it, and they are going to say you should be hating life, you should be murmuring, you should be freaked out and bummed out, but instead you are having good days, you are still loving life. We are to be ready to tell them why, it's the Lord.

Astronomers tell us that at this moment there are 1,096 stars visible to the naked eye. Yet in the morning, you can't see even one of them because the brightness of the sun obscures the beauty of the stars. It is only when darkness falls that the stars become visible. That's us!

Bad Conscience

A bad conscience will clam you up, you won't be ready to give a defense of your hope if your conscience is not good. Ever been there, you can tell someone is clearly searching for answers, but you know if you say something they are going to be what, you, you're a Christian. I know the places you go, the people you hang with, the things you do. A bad conscience will clam you up. That is one of the beauties of serving in a ministry, you'll be like I can't do that, I can't go there, that will blow my witness.

(1 Peter 3:17 NKJV) For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

God's Will

No one like this idea, but there is suffering in this life that God allows, and it is actually His will:
[\(1 Peter 4:19 NKJV\) Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.](#)

The Cross

The cross was the will of God:

[\(Isaiah 53:10 NKJV\) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.](#)

A good life, comes through hard days, that is so opposite of the worlds thinking.

Peter writes this, he knows.

[John 13:36–38 \(NKJV\)](#) ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." ³⁸ Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

And we can miss, the next verse..... Jesus says "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me!

[John 14:1–4 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

The Outline for this Study:

- Attitude – How we look at Suffering – 1 Peter 3:8-14
- Altitude – Where we look during Suffering – 1 Peter 3:14-17

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)

- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need