

Suffering Persecution

1 Peter 4:12-19

A Proper Perspective on Persecution

- God allows the suffering of persecution...
 - To purify His people, supercharge our testimony, and turn our hearts toward heaven
- The future suffering of the godless will be infinitely more intense than the present suffering of believers

Preparing for the Future

- Accept that it is inevitable. Our (relatively) peaceful experience is the exception, not the norm.
- Fight the temptations of discouragement and doubt
- Know that God is sovereign, even in the suffering of His own people

Responding in the Present

- When one part suffers, we all suffer with it
- Four ways we can bring hope, starting today:
 - Learn. Get educated about the reality of persecution
 - Pray. Especially for faith and strength.
 - Give. Meeting practical needs
 - Go. In person or through a Missionary

For Life Group Discussion

1 Peter 4:12-19

1. Do you feel distant from those who are persecuted for their faith? In what ways can you relate, and in what way is it difficult?
2. Read 1 Peter 1:6-7; 3:15-17, and 4:12-14 and 19. How should persecution shape our faith? What is God's intended result?
3. Read 1 Pet 4:17-18. Should there be a sense of urgency in our evangelism? Who comes to mind when you think of the fate of unbelievers? Also read Hebrews 10:31
4. How is our boldness and our level of persecution related? Is it possible that we don't experience persecution because we are too timid?
5. Which of the 4 action steps listed did you pursue this week? If you haven't done anything, how can you get started?

Resources

- The Voice of the Martyrs (www.persecution.com)
- Open Doors (opendoorsus.org)
- www.thegospelcoalition.org/topics/persecution/
- "Tortured for Christ" - The testimony of Richard Wurmbrand (book)
- "I am N" - Christians facing Islamic extremism (book)