

Confusion and Clarity

August 29, 2021

Scriptures: 1 Peter 4:1-11; Proverbs 10:12

Bottom Line: Don't let what's confusing distract you from what's clear

How to Deal with Confusing Passages

1. **Literary Context** - What can you learn from the passages *around* the confusing one?
2. **Historical Context** - What can you learn about the author and the audience?
3. **Focus on What's Clear** - Don't let the confusing distract you from what's clear

1 Peter 4:1-6

Physical Suffering Will End Sin In Our Lives?

- Peter is talking about suffering in this life, not physical suffering
- Jesus was resolved to suffer for good instead of sin. When we share that resolve, sin's influence over us diminishes

Preaching the Gospel to the Dead?

- God's justice extends to all people, even the dead
- Death doesn't excuse the guilty, and those who respond to the gospel in life are saved by it after death

1 Peter 4:7-11

Focus on the Clear, Not the Confusing

Don't be distracted by Peter's assumption that Jesus' return is imminent. Instead, take seriously his urgent call to:

- **Love Others** - Love cuts off cycles of sin
- **Show Hospitality** - Make your home a safe and generous place
- **Serve from your Gifts** - God has given you grace to give to others

LISTENING

Have someone in your group share something about their week. They could answer one of the following questions:

- What was a big challenge or problem you faced this week? How did you handle it?
- Where did you experience God this week? Or where do you wish you had experienced God this week?
- Based on your life experience this week, what do you think God is trying to teach you right now? What is He trying to build in you?

After the person shares, the group can respond. Make sure you let them know you heard them: tell them what you heard, offer wise advice where it's asked for, share from your own experience as well.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Review Sunday's message. What stood out to you? What challenged you? Are there any lingering questions?
2. Where do you need to choose love and cut off a cycle of sin and hurt?
3. How can you be a safe place for the Church to come and experience love and care? Is it your home? Attitude? Generosity?
4. What gifts has God given you to give to someone else? How can you serve the Church from your passions and giftedness?