

Resilient Faith: A Study of 1 Peter

Group Guide | March 15

Open with prayer (10 minutes).

Begin your group time with a brief prayer of thanksgiving. In our culture today, we do not have to wrestle with suffering as a Christian to the extent that Christians have in the past or around the world. Thank God for the peace, security, and freedom of religion we enjoy.

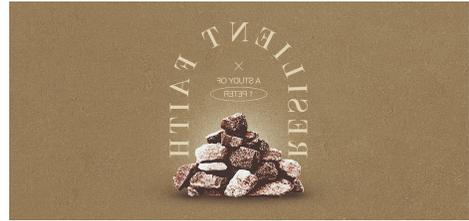
Additionally, however, spend a few moments taking turns praying out loud for Christians who suffer for their faith around the world today. Here are a few prayer points:

- Pray for these Christians to be bold and faithful for the gospel.
- Pray for them to have opportunities to spread the gospel despite hardship.
- Pray for God to use their suffering as a witness to unbelievers of the truth of the gospel.

Once finished, transition to sharing about Sunday's sermon.

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19 and then discuss the sermon (30 minutes).

- What stood out to you most from Dan's sermon? What challenged you from this passage?
- In this sermon Dan pointed out that in 1 Peter 4:12, Peter tells us not to be surprised by "fiery ordeals." Why do you think our first instinct is often to be shocked or even offended when life gets hard? How would life and faith look different if we went from expecting ease and comfort to expecting difficulty?
- In the message, Pastor Dan walked us through five different "sources" of suffering: personal sin, others' sin, original sin, spiritual attack, and



righteousness. Why is it important to discern the source of our pain before we react?

- Personal reflection: Pick a current struggle in your life. Which of the above categories does it likely fall into, and how does that impact your response?
- Pastor Dan joked that we sometimes confuse suffering for righteousness and suffering because of poor life choices. How can we tell the difference between being truly persecuted for our faith and simply being difficult to work with or live around? What practical advice would you give? Why is this distinction so important for the reputation of the church?
- Towards the end of his message, Dan showed us how Peter wants us to know that there are three positive things that happen when we “commit ourselves to God during suffering:” (1) We experience unity with Jesus; (2) We experience a blessing; and (3) We continue to do good. Why are these three important things to remember? Which of these is the easiest for you to lose sight of? How might the sting of suffering be lessened for you (even a little!) if you held onto these?
- Pastor Dan showed us in the book of Acts that suffering didn't stop the mission; it accelerated it. When things get tough, why are we so tempted to "check out" and head for the "La-Z-Boy"? How can this group help you "continue to do good" even while you are walking through a season of pain?
- Pastor Dan's friend described how God tangibly pulled closer during his darkest months. Have you ever experienced a “Job 42:5 moment” where your ears had heard of God, but through suffering, your eyes finally saw Him? If willing, describe that season and what you learned about God in the valley that you couldn't see from the mountaintop.



If applicable, reflect on the 90-Day Bible Reading Plan (10 minutes)

- What was your time reading the New Testament and Psalms like for you this week?
- What is something you learned?
- What stood out or challenged you from God's Word?

Finish with prayer (10 minutes).

As you finish, break out into groups of 2-3. Share what's is going on in your life – any wins, any struggles. Then, pray out loud over one another in your smaller groups.