

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of September 3rd - 9th

Getting Started

1. The letter of 1 Peter is one of the most precious epistles in the New Testament. If you have some familiarity with it, is there a portion of this letter that is especially meaningful to you? If so, please share with the group.

Digging Deeper

2. At just five chapters, 1 Peter isn't long. Take some time as a group to read through it together. As you do, keep your eyes peeled for the theme(s) persecution, trials, and suffering for righteousness' sake. As you read, what stands out to you in particular? Discuss your initial impressions together.

Open Your Bible to 1 Peter 1:3-9...

3. In 1 Peter 1:6, Peter introduces a major theme of his letter as he speaks of being “grieved by various trials”. What truths in vv.3-9 are uniquely important for us to bear in mind during times of suffering. Explain.

4. The pairing of “suffering” and “glory” occurs no fewer than four times in this letter (1:11; 4:13; 5:1; and 5:10). What is Peter doing by bringing this unlikely pairing together? What practical effect might this have in our lives if we called these things to mind (or reminded one another of them) more often?

5. In 2:13-3:7, we encounter three human institutions within which varying degrees of suffering tend to take place. What are they? What is Peter’s tailor-made advice for sufferers in each case? What sorts of life applications do you find here for you, those in your family, our church, etc? (*hint*: as slavery in the 1st century Greco-Roman world was often a voluntary arrangement for economic reasons, try making the application for vv.18-25 to your vocation, place of work, employer-employee relationships, etc.)

6. When we arrive at 3:13-4:19, we find ourselves in the central portion of Peter's exhortation to the church regarding the suffering that comes our way because of our allegiance to Christ. Considering this section in three parts (3:13-22; 4:1-11; 4:12-19), what do we learn in each about suffering in the context of our mission to be and make disciples of Jesus?

7. Chapter 5 is initially addressed to local church elders (vv1-4) and then to the congregation more generally (vv.5-14). How do Peter's words provide help and hope for each as they face both suffering and sin inside and outside the church? Are there any portions of chapter 5 that speak to you in a powerful or timely way? Please share with the group.

8. Close your time as a group by praying for one another in view of all that you've gleaned from 1 Peter about the nature of suffering for righteousness' sake. As we come to the end of our study, do you find yourself convicted, encouraged, or both? Explain.