

1 PETER LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 7: EXILE ENDURANCE IN SUFFERING

Primary Passage: 1 Peter 2:18-25

Secondary Passages: 1 Peter 1:3-7, 3:8-17, 4:12-19; 2 Corinthians 4:8-11 and 12:9; Matthew 5:11; Romans 8:18; Psalm 62

“Jesus lost all his glory so that we could be clothed in it. He was shut out so we could get access. He was bound, nailed, so that we could be free. He was cast out so we could approach. And Jesus took away the only kind of suffering that can really destroy you: that is being cast away from God. He took it so that now all suffering that comes into your life will only make you great. A lump of coal under pressure becomes a diamond. And the suffering of a person in Christ only turns you into somebody gorgeous.”

- Tim Keller

LifeGroup Study Guide

Leader Notes: Anytime we talk about suffering on a Sunday or during our Lifegroup, it's a particularly beautiful opportunity to be family with each other and draw near to the throne of God together as His kids (Hebrews 4:14-16). As a leader, be sensitive to anyone dealing with and/or talking about suffering that they've never talked about before. Help prevent the people in your group from responding with cliché answers that accidentally communicate “I don't really care about you.”

Feel free at any point to stop and pray for someone specific if they're hurting. At the end of this study guide we'll encourage your whole group to spend some time hurting together and pouring out your hearts regarding sin and suffering to the Lord.

Read 1 Peter 1:3-6. Peter mentions that these believers have “been grieved by various trials”.

- What types of suffering mentioned in the sermon did you connect with? What are the worst seasons of you suffering you've endured in the past?
- Are there any ways you are suffering currently?

Leader Notes: These are both ice breaker questions to get the conversation going, but they could lead to any of the above mentioned situations.

Read 1 Peter 2:18-20. Where have you seen examples (in your life or others) of what Peter describes as enduring suffering for doing good?

Read 1 Peter 2:21-22 and 3:9. How are you most tempted to react to suffering with a sinful response?

Leader Notes: Get your people to really think. What are ways they're tempted to respond to evil with evil? (gossip, backstabbing cold shoulder, revenge, etc.)

Read 1 Peter 2:23 and 4:17. What does it look like to actively entrust ourselves to God knowing that He judges justly? How is this great comfort in our suffering?

Leader Notes: The theology here is that because God judges justly, no sin will go unpunished. Which means if we never see all of the punishment and justice that we long to see on this planet, all of that punishment and justice will be ultimately established in the day of the Lord.

But the practical experience of being able to take comfort and rest in this fact is very different than just knowing it. This looks like forgiveness, growing in trust that God will take care of us no matter what happens, and fighting for justice even while loving and praying for our enemies who have caused our suffering.

Read 1 Peter 2:24-25 and Psalm 62. Through Jesus' life, death and resurrection, God is our rock, our refuge, our shepherd and by His wounds we have been healed.

- So spend some time as a group **pouring your heart out in prayer** (Psalm 62:8) before Him about any amount of suffering you've been enduring.
- **Pray** for those who are hurting and brainstorm practical ways to love and serve them.