

## Summary Notes

### 1 Peter 4:12-19

- The three big themes we have seen in the letter are:
  - Living Godly lives (because of who we are)
  - Suffering
  - Christ's ultimate example
- Peter makes it really clear in these verses that the suffering he's talking about is for being a follower of Jesus. It's there in v13, it's Christ's suffering we're sharing in. In v14, it is because of the *'name of Christ'*.
- Peter lists the attitudes we should have towards suffering:
  - we should not be surprised
  - we should rejoice
  - overjoyed
  - blessed
  - praise God
  - continue to do good
- Peter gives his hearers, including us, lots of reasons to be willing to suffer for being Christian.
- i) In v13, we share in Christ's suffering. We should be clear by now, that ever since Jesus, the pattern is suffering now, and glory later. So we should be happy to follow in his footsteps (2v21). If that's not enough, we also know that Christ's suffering and death, won our salvation, so we have nothing to fear from suffering and even death in this life, because suffering can't endanger our inheritance, or take away our life in the Spirit.
- ii) in v14, we're to count suffering as a blessing, *'because, the Spirit of Glory and of God rests upon you'*. The blessings of having God's Spirit dwelling in us includes sharing in the suffering of Christ. In this sense, suffering for being a Christian should give us great assurance. If by the suffering and death of Christ, we are alive in the Spirit (3v18,21;4v6) - the Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing our glorious future in heritage (Eph 1v13-14), then suffering can do nothing; insults cannot drive the blessing of the Spirit from us, in fact, we can even count suffering a blessing, as it reminds us that we're following in Jesus footsteps of suffering now, glory later (1v6,v11;4v13;5v10). This is a new thought from Peter. We saw in 3v14 that if we suffer for being Christian *'you will be blessed'*. Now Peter makes it even more explicit - *'you **are** blessed'*.
- iii) The 3<sup>rd</sup> motivation Peter gives is in v17, and has to do with a Fatherly/family judgement from God now in the present, ahead of final judgement for the non-Christian. Like 1v6-7 & 17 (see the language of 4v12 that points us to 1v7), God seems to use trials and suffering as present judgement, or *discipline* – so that our faith will be proved genuine, so that we stand fast and will not be judged/condemned on the final day. (See 1 Corinthians 11v29-32; James 1v2-4). Loving discipline from God now that helps us stand fast, is far better than condemnation on the last day! End judgement is also in view. It is a how much more argument, if we find judgement uncomfortable, as God acts and judges to keep us

for that day, how much more uncomfortable will judgement be for the unbeliever?  
We're not being encouraged to rejoice in others judgement.

- V.19 is a summary sentence of all which we have looked at so far, showing that we should be suffering for doing God's will and commit ourselves continually to living the 'good' lives Peter talked about previously.

How does Peter help us to stand firm in our faith from this letter?

How can this passage help us when we are facing times of suffering for being a Christian?