

In Christ: **FUTURE MINDED**

1 Peter 4:1-19

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Week Beginning 23 March 2009

Discuss (5 minutes as a group)

What do you think is the purpose of suffering?

Why do you hold this view?

Read, Reflect and Apply

Read v1-6

1. How did Christ suffer in his body?
2. What do you think it means to 'arm ourselves with the same attitude' as Christ?
3. Have you known people who find the Christian life 'strange' because of the difference in what Christians spend time doing? If so, what was particularly odd to them?
4. Have you ever had people 'heap abuse' on you for 'being different' as a Christian? (physical, verbal, direct, subtle etc.) How did you feel? What helped you to persevere through the abuse?



Read v7-11

5. If "the end of all things is near", why is it so important to pray?
6. What can make it hard for you to pray?
7. Peter instructs us to be clear minded and self controlled so that we can pray. Why might these two attributes be so vital to prayer?
8. Peter then goes on to compel us to show our love for one another by our service towards each other. How does serving one another allow us to act as 'administrators of God's grace'? What added motivation does this give us to serve one another?
9. What does Peter state as the ultimate aim in doing all these things? Why is this significant?

Read v12-19

10. Why might Peter tell us not to be surprised in trials and suffering?

11. What makes suffering hard?

12. For what reasons can we rejoice in suffering? (See also James 1:2-4)

13. Verse 19 reminds us that suffering is part of God's will. How does it help you to know that every trouble in your life is part of God's greater purposes? When is it hard to accept this to be true?

14. What hope do these verses give us in the midst of suffering?

15. How can we respond to others who are going through particular times of suffering? What things does this passage encourage us to say to others in times of suffering?

Pray

- Thanks that God is bigger and better than anything we might suffer or lose in this world
- For one another in the sufferings we face, that we would hold to God as our most treasured possession
- That we would strive to live according to God's will and for his glory
- Thanks that Jesus enables us to live according to God's will and for his glory
- That we would continue to grow in loving the gift of prayer, through which we have relationship with our heavenly father
- That we would identify opportunities to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ and administer the grace that God has given us.



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