

Discussion Guide

1 Peter 4:1-6

Opening Prayer

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed.

Recap

Summary of 1 Peter 4:1-6

In 1 Peter 4:1-6, Peter returns to the theme of suffering for following Christ. He encourages his readers to arm themselves with the same purpose that Christ had in suffering, that of honoring God. He also states that the one who suffers for Christ has evidenced a life of true conversion. The sins that characterize the unbelieving world must no longer characterize the Christian's life. Peter emphasizes that it is the believer's God-honoring life that draws out the ire of non-believers. Though believers subsequently face persecution, God will judge the persecutor and deliver all those who have put their faith in Him.

Understanding the Text

1. Arming for a Purpose: What is the "same purpose" that we as believers must arm ourselves with and in what way is our suffering related to ceasing from sin?
2. Two Ways to Live: What are the two ways that Peter identifies that a person may live and what are the characteristics of each?
3. Gentiles: How is Peter using the term Gentile here and how does it support his point about the two ways a person may live?
4. The Catalyst of Persecution: What does Peter say brings about persecution and why are the "gentiles" surprised by it?
5. Coming Judgment: What is Peter's pastoral reason for verse 5?
6. The Good News: How does Peter weave the gospel into his theme of being judged by men but vindicated by God?

Practical Application

1. Personal Reflection: How does understanding our need to arm ourselves to suffer impact how you will share the gospel with others?
2. Living a new Way: What is an area of your life that you have not or are not living for the will of God? How can we encourage each other in these areas?
3. Responding to Persecution: How do you handle being mocked and maligned as a Christian and how does coming judgment help us to respond humbly?
4. The End of the Story: How does Peter's focus on the Gospel equip you to persevere in living a life "for the will of God"?

God Has More to Say

1 Peter 4:1-6 emphasizes the need for believers to equip themselves for suffering since those who walk in the will of God will face persecution. Here are some related verses for your consideration:

1 Peter 4:1-6: Peter commends us to God's love and Christ's example in suffering. Here's a list of related passages:

1. 1 Peter 4:19: A passage in the near context that points us away from our suffering and to our faithful Lord.
2. 1 Peter 2:11-12: Peter appeals to the believer's exile and sojourner status to encourage them to continue to live holy lives among unbelievers that it may result in their ultimate salvation.
3. Ephesian 4:17: Paul calls the Ephesian Christians to walk no longer like Gentiles and instead pursue holiness.
4. Hebrews 5:8: The writer of Hebrews details Christ's own determination to do the will of God even when it would bring about ultimate suffering.
5. Matthew 5:10-12: Jesus says that those who are persecuted for doing the will of God are actually blessed.
6. Romans 13:13: Paul calls for the rejection of the sinful life of the world using very similar examples those in 1 Peter 4:3.
7. Matthew 12:36: Christ warns that every careless word will be accounted for in eternity. Therefore, every word of derision cast upon God's people will have to be accounted for in the final judgment.

Prayer - End with prayer, focusing on specific requests related to the sermon's themes, personal struggles, and applications

