

# 1 Peter Week 7

## Read 1 Peter 4:1-19

### Suffering for Doing Good

#### Introduction

This week we are continuing to look at the way Peter responds to the social persecution that his audience is experiencing.

It is important to reiterate (as we stated in our [Orientation lesson](#)) that the persecution that Peter describes in his letter is not state-wide or empire sanctioned persecution (i.e. Christians being thrown to the lions).

Though this did occur in some specific cases, what we see in 1 Peter tends more toward social oppression, marginalization and verbal abuse (and sometimes legal action) from a hostile population toward a peculiar Christian religion.

If 1 Peter only speaks of martyrs, then we are fairly separated from that context (unless one lives in the Middle East or China.) But if 1 Peter is concerned with overcoming the insults and intimidations that sometimes come with being a Christian then the letter speaks to our social situation today.

It provides a ready answer to the question: How can we live out our Christian life faithfully within a largely secular (and sometimes even hostile) society.

#### Read 1 Peter 4:1-5

#### Questions to reflect on the passage

1. In 4:1, Peter talks about Christ's passion and death ("Christ has suffered in the flesh"). What are his instruction to his audience members and how does that help them given this fact?
2. What does Peter consider to be "the lusts of men"? Provide a definition of each element in 4:3.
3. In 4:4, what is the reaction of the Gentile population toward Christians who want to do "God's will"?

## Questions to reflect on your life

1. How does Christ's sacrifice help you cease from sin?
2. Are there behaviors in 4:3 that used to characterize your life before coming to Christ? Explain. What would an abominable idolatry be today?
3. How does one keep their moral integrity in a world awash with sensuality, moral excesses, and the social pressures to join in the "world's party".

## Read 1 Peter 4:12-16

### Questions to reflect on the passage

1. What is Peter's advice to his audience in 4:12? Does it surprise you? What is the purpose of this "fiery ordeal"?
2. What is Peter's advice to those who are persecuted in 4:13.
3. In 4:14 and 16 Peter suggests that people will "revile" you for the name of Christ and that you will suffer for being a Christian.
4. What affirmation and what encouragement does he give based on these facts? Does this surprise you?

## Questions to reflect on your life

1. How do you react when social persecution comes your way? Are you surprised that this would happen to you? Do you consider it a “testing”?
2. How do Christ’s sufferings help you when you are experiencing social persecution for your faith?
3. Have you been the victim of mockery, marginalization, discrimination or mistreatment simply because of your Christian faith? Explain.
4. Do you feel as if God’s spirit rests on you during these times? Do you glorify God?