

Life in the Lion's Den: A Study of 1 Peter
10.30.22

Life as Exiles: When Suffering Comes

1 Peter 3:8-4:11

Theme

Peter seems to have anticipated a near-horizon persecution event that would challenge his readers. It's not a matter of "if" you suffer when living in enemy territory, but rather "when" you suffer...how will you respond? Jesus taught Peter to expect this. "In this world you will have trouble..."

Dinner Table Questions

"Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good?" (1 Peter 3:13)

- Do you think that is generally true? Clearly it is not always true. But are those who are "eager to do good" generally harmed less often than those who are "eager to do evil?"

Open Bible Questions

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12 together.

- Notice the word in 1Peter 3:8 translated "like-minded" in the New International Version of the Bible. Look up that verse in several other translations. How does that word get translated elsewhere? That word is a conjunction made from a word that is typically translated "together" along with a word that is typically translated "understanding." What do you think Peter means? Why is it so hard for people to be "like-minded"...even people in the same church or family?
- In 1 Peter 3:10-12 Peter quotes from Psalm 34. Jesus (along with other rabbis of his day) often used a teaching strategy sometimes called "hinting." He would refer to a part of scripture and assume you knew the rest of the story or the psalm. Read Psalm 34. How does the rest of that song, written by David, connect with what Peter is writing in this letter?
- Particularly in this section of this letter, Peter seems to encourage a very passive response to the evil and mistreatment that his readers are likely to experience. We know that he is writing to people who are foreigners and exiles living in a time and place where they have very few rights or recourse. How much of his recommended passivity is simply practical advice for survival in that environment and how much of it is a deeper spiritual principle or posture that applies regardless of the circumstances?

Monday Morning Questions

- Do you anticipate a specific environment where you will find it challenging to put 1 Peter 3:8-9 into practice? At home? At work? At church? Somewhere else?
- Does the first part of 1 Peter 3:14 ring true for you or is it strange and unfamiliar and maybe even offensive? What about the second part of that verse? Where will that be challenging to believe this week?
- Is there a person or a situation that specifically comes to mind when you read 1 Peter 3:15-17?