

Learning To Suffer Graciously (Injustice)

Before you read through this study, read the book of 1 Peter. This book of the Bible was written to people who were suffering great hardship and injustice. It was intended to encourage them and give them a much broader perspective of the trials they were facing. Some were suffering personal loss of property, violence committed against them or family members, or oppression of various sorts due to their faith in Christ. Peter wanted to assure those hurting people that there was a reason behind the suffering, there was grace and strength in the midst of it, and there was a great reward ahead of it. The same principles are true for us today. Keep in mind that God loves to heal people who have been hurt and loves to forgive people who have sinned and repented. As you read this book, make a note of each verse you come to that encourages the people to focus on the future or on heaven, rather than on the present suffering or offense.

To suffer means “to bear or undergo pain, inconvenience or loss; endure distress or injury; permitting; allowing.”

1 Peter 3:1-6 Chapter 3 begins with the word *likewise*, or in other words, *therefore*. *Likewise* means God is about to compare one concept to another. The key to the submissive behavior in chapter 3 is found in the comparison of submissive behavior in chapter 2.

1 Peter 2:18-23 There are to be no strings attached as conditions for giving patience, love, respect or reverence. Difficult circumstances are not grounds for anger, resentment, disrespect, or abusive behavior. Instead, they are an opportunity to display the character of Christ, for in grace, and obtain a sure reward.

When you are misunderstood, mistreated, falsely accused, ignored, or used, how do you usually react?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Study Christ as your example. **1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:21; 4:1**

Refuse to harbor anger or use deceit. **1 Peter 2:1-2**

Begin to overcome bitterness toward your oppressor with reverence to God first.

- Submit yourself to God. **1 Peter 4:19**
- Submit yourself to others. **1 Peter 5:5**
- Submit yourself to authority. **1 Peter 3:5**
- Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. **1 Peter 2:13**
- Submit yourself to your master, with all fear. **1 Peter 2:18**

Endure grief and overlook faults. **1 Peter 2:19-20; 4:8**

Do not retaliate! Look to God for understanding and justice, not to your abuser. **1 Peter 2:23**

Refuse to fight, tear down, or engage in a destructive war of words. **1 Peter 3:9-10**

Have compassion and pity on your abuser; God will hold him responsible for his sin! **1 Peter 3:8; 4:18**

Be active, while submitting to God. Being submissive does not mean we are to be passive.

- Pray **1 Peter 3:12**
- Appeal by reason **1 Peter 3:15**

Make sure you are suffering for well doing, not evil doing. Keep a clear conscience; quickly right your wrongs. **1 Peter 3:16-17; 4:15**

Rejoice and be thankful, no matter how ridiculous it seems or how you feel! **1 Peter 3:14; 4:14, 16**

Expect to give an account of how you handled your suffering. **1 Peter 1:17**

Expect a future reward for suffering graciously. **1 Peter 1:7; 3:9**

Recognize that God allows your suffering. **1 Peter 2:15; 3:17; 4:19**

Recognize that suffering is temporary. **1 Peter 1:6; 5:10**

Recognize that there is always purpose in suffering and always a promise that God will change to good that which Satan meant for evil when we look to Him to do so.

- To promote your spiritual growth, faith, maturity, strength, and peace. **1 Peter 5:10**
- To win the conversion or repentance of your oppressor. **1 Peter 2:12; 2:15; 3:1, 16**

- To glorify God by your faith and trust. **1 Peter 4:11**

Learning to Suffering Graciously—Verse Study

- Suffering steers us away from error. **Psalms 119:67**
- Suffering motivates us to draw near to God. **Psalms 57:1-2; James 4:8-10; Matthew 11:28**
- Suffering teaches us to pray. **Psalms 50:15; 61:1; 116:1, 3-4**
- Suffering gives us the opportunity to see God's power. **Jeremiah 32:17; 33:3; Psalm 27:13; 28:7**
- Suffering is God's way of correcting us. **Revelation 3:19; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 59:1**
- Suffering provokes us to recognize and judge sin in our lives. **1 Corinthians 11:31-32**
- Suffering teaches us obedience that we may be blessed. **Hebrews 5:8**
- Suffering deepens bonds of friendship and love within the church body. **Hebrews 10:34**
- Suffering develops inward character—faith, patience, wisdom. **Romans 5:3-5; James 1:3; 1 Peter 1:6-7; Psalm 119:72-73, 75**
- Suffering redirects our attention from temporal to eternal. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**
- Suffering conquers our pride and generates humility. **Proverbs 13:10; 29:23; Luke 14:11; 1 Peter 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 12:7**
- Suffering openly demonstrates and warns of sin's consequences. **Proverbs 16:6; Galatians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 11:28-30**
- Suffering reveals our ability or inability to trust God. **Matthew 8:25-26**
- Suffering teaches us how to appropriate God's promises and comfort us so that we in turn may comfort and guide others. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**
- God often uses suffering to change the directions of our lives. See the lives of Esther, Joseph, Daniel, Joseph and Mary, and Ruth. Suffering was used in Their

lives to put them in the right place at the right time so that they might be used of God and receive great reward.

- Suffering reveals satanic oppression and alerts us to the reality of our enemy. **Ephesians 6:11-18; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:4; James 4:6-7**
- Suffering makes us understand our human frailty and God's strength and ability. **2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Psalm 108:6**
- Suffering is evidence that God loves us. **Hebrews 12:6-7, 10-13**
- Suffering enables God to ultimately bless us and reward us. **1 Peter 4:12-13, 19; 5:6-7**
- God uses suffering to conform us to Christ-likeness. **Romans 8:28-29; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13; Isaiah 64:8**
- All suffering is allowed by God and in God's control. **Job 2:10; 1 Corinthians 10:13**
- All suffering can be used for our ultimate good. **Romans 8:28**
- Not all suffering is necessary. **Jeremiah 2:19; Galatians 6:7-8; 1 Corinthians 11:31-32**

Read Romans 12:9-21. List 23 things God wants us to do when people mistreat us, and list 6 things He does not want us to do when we are mistreated.