

1 Peter: A Living Hope (7 of 8)
“Faith On Trial”
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
March 19, 2023

Big Idea: Jesus is our living hope, who sustains us through the trials of life.

How Do You **Overcome** When Your **Faith Is On Trial**?

1. Expect It

¹² Dear friends, **do not be surprised** at the **painful trial** you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But **rejoice** that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are **blessed**, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. **1 Peter 4:12-14 (NIV)**

Therefore, since we have been **justified through faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also **rejoice in our sufferings**, because we know that suffering produces **perseverance**; ⁴ perseverance, **character**; and character, **hope**. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. **Romans 5:1-5 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

2. Evaluate It

If you suffer, however, it must **not be for** murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people’s affairs. ¹⁶ But it is **no shame to suffer for being a Christian**. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name! ¹⁷ For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God’s household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God’s Good News? ¹⁸ And also, “If the righteous are barely saved, what will happen to godless sinners?”

1 Peter 4:15-18 (NLT2)

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. **Galatians 6:7-10 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

3. Entrust Your Life To God

So if you are suffering in a **manner** that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and **trust** your lives to the God who created you, for **He will never fail you.**

1 Peter 4:19 (NLT2)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” **1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)**

And we know that in **all things** God works for the good of those who love him, who have been **called** according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God **foreknew** he also **predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If **God is for us, who can be against us?** ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? **Romans 8:28-32 (NIV)**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 8:35-39 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

➤ Are you trusting God enough to stand up for your faith?

My next right step, I will:

[] Make sure my actions are kind, good, and honoring to Jesus.

[] Trust God in the good and bad times.

[] Accept Jesus as my Savior.

[] Invite a friend to Easter. 1. _____ 2. _____

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[This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss.]

Big Idea: The depth of our faith is revealed when we are refined by fire.

Open your group with a prayer.

Icebreaker:

What kind of pain affects your life the most, physical or emotional?

Read and discuss:

Commentary: 4:12 When the city of Rome burned, the Romans believed that their emperor, Nero, had set the city on fire, probably because of his incredible lust to build. In order to build more, he had to destroy what already existed. The Romans were totally devastated. Their culture, in a sense, went down with the city. All the religious elements of their life were destroyed—their great temples, shrines, and even their household idols were burned up. This had great religious implications because it made them believe that their deities had been unable to deal with this conflagration and were also victims of it. The people were homeless and hopeless. Many had been killed. Their bitter resentment was severe, so Nero realized that he had to redirect the hostility. The emperor's chosen scapegoat was the Christians, who were already hated because they were associated with Jews, and because they were seen as being hostile to the Roman culture. Nero spread the word quickly that the Christians had set the fires. As a result, a vicious persecution against Christians began, and soon spread throughout the Roman Empire. The MacArthur Study Bible.

Study:

How Do You **Overcome** When Your **Faith Is On Trial**?

1. Expect It

Read 1 Peter 4:12

What false assumption does Peter set straight in verse 12?

How often are you surprised at the trials of life?

Read 1 Peter 4:12-14

Read Romans 5:1-5

How is rejoicing in our suffering different than just enduring suffering?

What effect has past suffering had on your commitment to God?

2. Evaluate It

Read 1 Peter 4:15-18

How are we to evaluate our suffering?

Why does Peter call attention to God's judgement on believers?

Read and discuss:

Commentary: 4:17, 18 This refers not to final judgment but to God's refining discipline (Hebrews 12:7). God often allows believers to sin and then experience the consequences. He does this for several reasons: (1) to show us our potential for sinning, (2) to encourage us to turn from sin and more constantly depend on him, (3) to prepare us to face other, even stronger temptations in the future, and (4) to help us stay faithful and keep on trusting him. If believers need earthly discipline (judgment) from God, how much more will unbelievers receive it? If the righteous are barely saved (only because of God's mercy), what chance have those who reject Christ? Life Application Study Bible.

4:19 Everywhere the Bible counsels that we trust God—in good times and bad, during sunny skies and thunderclouds, when we have a pocket full of change and a pocket full of sawdust. How does trust work? (1) *Trust overcomes fear*. Genuine trust in God says, "Whatever mess I'm in, my heavenly Father will lead me." (2) *Trust overcomes depression*. No matter how overwhelming the situation or how low it makes you feel, God can draw you back to the light. (3) *Trust overcomes hate*. When careless or cruel people hurt you, sometimes irreparably, you can hate forever or you can trust God, but you can't do both. God is there to steady even the worst situation—always with a promise, always with hope. Commit your life to him for safekeeping. Rely on him when you face your worst circumstances. Life Application Study Bible.

3. Entrust Your Life To God

Read 1 Peter 4:19

What form does your suffering for Christ take?

How does verse 19 assure you?

Read Romans 8:35-38

What kind of things did Christians in the past go through? What is our confidence?

How can you be an encourager to someone this week who is going through a difficult time?

Close in Prayer: Start praying. Be bold and pray specifically.

Snack schedule: