

As we continue our study in 1 Peter we find ourselves stumbling into a subject we would rather avoid – suffering. In this section of our text, Peter answers the question the early church was wrestling with: “is it really worth it?” Why should I suffer for doing the right thing?

## Sermon Outline:

### 1 Peter 3:8-17 (Suffer for what?)

Truth: We all suffer.

- Christian or not, good person or not ... suffering is part of life in a broken world.

#### **Avoid the pain game:**

- We are all tempted to avoid the pain of suffering at all costs.
- Our desire to avoid suffering CAN potentially lead us into sin because there are times we would **rather sin than suffer**.

READ 1 Peter 3:8-17

1. Godly Character leads us to BLESSING: (verse 8-14)

- *“Unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, and humility ... not repaying evil for evil.”*

2. Godly Character will often lead us through SUFFERING: (verse 15-17)

- *“But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed.”*

Truth: Following Jesus does not make you *immune* to suffering.

Truth: Integrity matters. Doing the right thing (even at great cost to yourself) will ultimately lead to the blessing of God.

**Suffering is not the worst thing that can happen to you.**

The worst thing is - missing out on the blessing of God that comes through obedience and faith.

YOU WILL SUFFER ... *no avoiding it!*

The real question is:

Will you suffer for doing good or for doing evil?

## GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP QUESTION

- What is the most painful physical injury you have ever experienced? What happened?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever tried to avoid something that was difficult or painful ... only to discover that it led you to more pain? (*example – lying to avoid punishment, not going to the dentist until it was too late, etc.*)
- In what way are you playing the “avoid the pain game” right now?
- Do you think it is true that ... we would rather sin than suffer? If so, is there a way that we can overcome this natural tendency?
- Do you believe that godly character (doing the right thing) will actually lead to blessing? Have you experienced this in your life or the life of a loved one?
- We know that godly character leads to blessing, but what about the middle - have you ever suffered for doing the right thing? What did you learn about the nature of God as you went through suffering?
- Pray together (especially for those who are in the midst of difficulty and hardship).

## Additional Reading / Devotions:

- Psalm 23 (the faithfulness of God in dark times)
- 1 Peter 5:10; Romans 8:18 (our hope while suffering)
- Isaiah 43 (God's present faithfulness)